

**Violence Against Women and Girls in the  
Pastoralist Communities of Oromia and  
Afar Regions: The Case of Fentalle and  
Mille Districts**

**A Thesis submitted to The Institute of Gender Studies**

**Addis Ababa University**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement of master of**

**Arts in Gender Studies**

**BY: Ahmed Mohammed Yusuf**

**May, 2007**

**This paper is dedicated to the Ethiopian women and girls who lost their lives and who injured their bodies due to various violence acts committed against them. It is also dedicated to all Ethiopian women and girls who are daily suffering from such crimes, especially to the women and the girls in the research sites of the pastoralist communities.**

**The researcher**

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**Institute of Gender Studies**

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# Acronyms

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CAT</b>	Convention Against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman Treatment
<b>CEDAW-</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CODESRIA</b>	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
<b>CSA</b>	Central Statistical Authority
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>GTF</b>	Guddina Tumsa Foundation
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>MOWA</b>	Ministry of Women's Affairs
<b>NCTPE</b>	National Committee on Traditional Practices of Ethiopia
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OXFAM</b>	Oxford Committee for Famine and Relief
<b>PADS</b>	Pastoral Areas Development Study
<b>PCDP</b>	Pastoral Community Development Project
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

## **Abstract**

Violence against women and girls is a pervasive phenomenon in the pastoralist communities of the research sites. Violence against women and girls is considered as a normal way of life among the communities in the research areas. Women and girls in Fentalle and Mille are daily suffering from various violence acts against them.

Research methodologies used by the researcher are both the qualitative and the quantitative methodologies, where as the research methods employed are: focus group discussion, key informant interview, case studies, participant observation and survey. In focus group discussion 120 women, men, girls and boys were participated. Again in-depth interview was carried out totally with 24 women, men, boys and girls. For the survey method, 200 women and girls, men and boys with different social backgrounds were randomly selected from the sample population. The cases of 12 victim women were also included in this research.

The findings of this research identified 6 areas of violence against women and girls such as violence committed in 4 customary marriages, FGM, wives and girls battery. The research findings indicated that women and girls are forced to marry against their interests. Their consent is not asked and if they are found to refuse the marriage they are physically, socially, psychologically and economically sanctioned.

Female genital mutilation is another form of violence committed against women and girls in the research sites. All types of FGM such as clitoridectomy and infibulations are practiced on women and girls in the research areas. Girls who are not mutilated are considered by the communities as supper sexy who cannot be afforded by their husbands; as those who violated the norms of their communities, and as a result no body marries them. Especially girls and woman in Afar communities are highly suffering from infibulations.

Regarding wives and girls battery, the findings indicated that girls are usually beaten by their fathers, mothers, their brothers and even by their relatives, with the intention to make them submissive for their future husbands. Women are also usually beaten by their husbands in the name of punishment and correction. Families in the research areas give mandates for the husbands to beat their wives and as a result wife beating is official among the communities.

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*WOMEN ARE OUR MOTHERS,  
SISTERS, WIVES, DAUGHTERS AND  
GOOD FRIENDS. NO ONE IS OUT OF  
ONE OR MORE OF THESE  
RELATIONSHIPS.*

*SO, WHY WE COMMIT VIOLENCE  
ON THEM. WOULD ONE BE HAPPY,  
IF THE SAME VIOLENCE IS  
COMMITTED ON HIS OWN  
MOTHER, SISTER OR DAUGHTER?*

*WE SHOULD CRITICALLY THINK  
ABOUT THESE ISSUES AND  
DEDICATE OURSELVES TO  
REVERSE THE CONDITION.*

*The Researcher*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **I. Introduction**

In Ethiopia, violence against women and girls occurs every where, including in homes, at work places, in schools, on streets, at market places, on buses and other transport facilities and etc. In general, there is no safe place for them to relax and enjoy their lives as a human being because of the sex they are born with.

Violence against women and girls is a crime that seems to be tolerated by the society at large. This unhealthy tolerance is deep-rooted in cultural, traditional and religious discourses. Discrimination and oppression of women and girls is a normal phenomenon, taken for granted and unrecognized pattern of every day life in many societies. People including women and girls accept and go through it, even without recognizing it. It is accepted as part of custom, tradition and culture of the society. Ethiopia has been a patriarchal society that has kept women at a subordinate position, using religion, culture and tradition as an instrument. Men in almost all parts of the country have high status positions, while women and girls have a subordinate position in their socio-economic and cultural lives [Eshetu, 2000:29].

Violence against women and girls is a major health and human rights concern. Women can experience physical or mental abuse through out their lifecycle, in infancy, childhood and/or adolescence, during adulthood or older age. While violence has severe health consequences for the affected, it is a social problem that warrants an immediate coordinated response from multiple sectors (WHO, 2006:1).

Violence against women takes a dismaying variety of forms, from domestic abuse and rape to child marriage and female circumcision. Behaviors included in the broad category of violence against women include homicide, intimate partner abuse, and psychological abuse, dating violence, same-sex violence, elder abuse, sexual assault, date rape, acquaintance rape, marital rape, stranger rape and economic abuse. (Wikipedia, 2006:1).

Violence affects the lives of millions of women world wide, in all socio-economic and educational class. It cuts across cultural and religious barriers, in hiding the right of women to participate fully in society. Violence against women can negatively affect a woman's reproductive health, as well as other aspects of her physical and mental well-being. Long-term risks include chronic pain, physical disability, drug and alcohol abuse and depression. Women

with a history of physical or sexual abuse also have an increased risk for unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and adverse pregnancy outcomes. The vast majority of violence against female is perpetrated by men (Ibid).

The issue of the advancement of women's right has concerned the United Nations since the organization's founding. Yet the alarming global dimensions of female targeted violence were not explicitly acknowledged by the international community until December 1993, when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of violence against women. Until that point, most governments tended to regard violence against women as a private matter between individuals. And not as a pervasive human rights problem requiring state intervention (Wikipedia, 2006:1).

According to the data obtained from the 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, Ethiopian women comprise about half of the total population of the country. But, regardless of their large number of population they are daily suffering from various discriminatory practices. In all Regions and City Administrations, women and girls are victims of various violence acts against them. The prevalence rate for violence against women and girls is relatively more in rural areas than urban areas. And it is also more rampant in marginalized communities like the pastoralist ones. As these communities have been devoid of information, violence against women and girls is considered as a normal way of life. Women and girls in these areas accept and go through it, whatever violence is committed on them without even knowing that it is violence against them.

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights of women and girls. Unless this condition is changed it is impossible to talk about democracy and human rights. This thesis is therefore, designed with the objective of showing the magnitude of the problem, so that policy makers and other concerned organizations could focus their attention on reversing the situation. This research consists of the Statement of the problem, Research questions, Objectives, Research methodologies, Methods of data collection, Rationale for selecting the research sites, Sampling techniques and procedures, Data entry and analysis, Significance of the study, Limitations of the study, Brief description of the study areas, Literature Review, Brief analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of the Ethiopian Laws and Policies, Research findings, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Violence by men on women is alarmingly widespread across a variety of cultures. It has been and remains prevalent in so-called traditional societies, in Africa and elsewhere, and is also apparently on the increase in developed societies (CODESRIA, 1997: VII)

Violence against women in particular is a global problem, in the home, in the neighborhood and at work, with rape, assault, wife beating, and sexual harassment are among the most obvious manifestations. These are recognized as gross violations of human rights by the United Nations and other world bodies (ibid). Male violence against women takes various forms. It could be symbolic, in discrimination owing to custom, tradition or law. It could be institutional violence, meted out from the state apparatus such as when the political rights of women are denied, women are raped in official custody, or the laws and the military are used to brutalize women, as happened in Ghana in the aftermath of the 1979 and 1981 revolutions. Male – perpetuated violence against women could also be at a personal level, and sexual abuse occurs. Whatever the form male violence against women takes, it has been noted to make deep physical and psychological scars on women (CODESRIA, 1997:4)

Violence against women is profoundly political for as long as it results from the structural relations of power, domination and privilege between men and women in society. Violence is central to maintaining those political relations at home, at work and in all public spheres. If violence and domination are understood as a politically constructed reality, then it is possible to imagine deconstructing the system to build a better and just interaction between the sexes (Bunch 199).

Violence against women comes in numerous forms, from psychological manipulation to murder. Studies show that violence against women in families may be one of the most important precipitating factors of female suicide, and is closely associated with homicide. Global evidence suggests that most homicides of women are committed by a male partner or ex-partner (United Nations, 200:51).

The effect of such violence on the physical and mental well-being of women is to deprive them of the equal enjoyment, exercise and knowledge of human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the right to life, the right to physical integrity, and the right to health. An underlying consequence of these forms of gender-based violence is to undermine women's exercise of their civil and political rights as well – perpetuating conditions that keep women in subordinate roles, impedes their political participation and leads to lower levels of education, skills, and work opportunities for them (ibid).

Violence against women gets attention recently as a form of violation of human rights. It is also stated as an agenda in big world conferences, like the Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985 and Beijing 1995 (Theodros, 2004: 2)

It is also indicated in CODESRA (1997), that violence against women is recognized as gross violations of human rights by the United Nations and other world bodies. An international bill of rights for women, the Conventions on the Eliminations of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), was adopted by the United Nations as long ago as 1979, and over 160 countries are party to it. In addition, women are protected by the Convention Against Torture and other cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) 1984, and the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and other cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1975), (CODESRIA, 1997: VII).

But, even if violence against women is considered as a threat for human development at global level and even if countries ratified various conventions on women, women and girls are still daily suffering from various violence acts against them. Yet the problem at grass roots is getting worst throughout the world. In Ethiopia for instance, regardless of their large number of population and their big share in economic and social activities, women and girls suffer daily from various discriminatory practices, and their work is less recognized and undervalued in almost all societies. And they suffer daily from various violence acts against them.

In Ethiopia, the prevalence rate for violence against women and girls is different from place to place, from community to community and etc. Its prevalence rate is more in rural than urban areas. And it is also more rampant in marginalized communities like the pastoralist ones.

Violence against women and girls is considered as a normal way of life among the women and men, boys and girls in the pastoralist communities.

Women and girls in the pastoralist communities, suffer daily from various violence acts against them, in addition to their back breaking domestic workloads. The following 6 areas of violence against women and girls were identified during the preliminary assessment of the research areas.

1. Violence committed in Cross- Cousin (Absuma ) marriage
2. Violence committed in Levirate ( widow inheritance) marriage
3. Violence committed in Sororate ( girls substitution ) marriage
4. Violence committed in Early childhood martial promise
5. Female Genital Mutilation
6. Wives and girls battery

My purpose is not to blame the whole aspect of Cross-Cousin, Levirate, Sororate and Early childhood marital promise marriages. As these Social Institutions are beneficial to the communities in the research areas, they are not considered as violence by themselves. My intention here is to investigate the areas where violence against women and girls are committed in these 4 types of customary marriages through my research on Fentalle and Mille pastoral communities.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research tries to answer the following guiding research questions:-

1. What kinds of violence acts are prevalent in the study areas? What does the magnitude of the problem looks like?
2. What are the attitudes of the communities in the research areas towards violence against women and girls? What perceptions do men, women, boys and girls in the research areas have on violence?
3. What are the justifications behind FGM and other forms of violence?
4. What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the existing laws and policies on the rights of women and girls? What are the major problems in implementing the laws and the policies of the country on women?

5. What should be done to minimize and eliminate violence against women and girls?

## **1.3 Objectives**

### **1.3.1 General Objectives:-**

The over all objective of this research is to assess and investigate the magnitude of violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities of Fentalle and Mille districts.

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To assess and analyze the different forms of violence against women and girls and to show the magnitude of the problem.
2. To dig out the attitudes of the community towards violence against women and girls
3. To find out the justifications given by the communities for violence against women and girls
4. To review the strengths and the weaknesses of the country's laws and policies on the rights of women and girls .And briefly to indicate some barriers for implementing the laws and the policies of the country on women
5. To suggest some practical recommendations for change.

## **1.4 Research Methodology**

The researcher of this study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, as these methodologies support each other and as both are important in research activities.

### **1.4.1 Methods of Entry**

Areas of study like the pastoralist communities, where the people are closed and live in a very traditional way, it is difficult for an outsider researcher to penetrate the community. It needs carefully selected methods to conduct research. Therefore, the researcher recruited an advisory group of community stakeholders who provide direction to the research process from

community perspective. Advisory group members were made up of clan and religious leaders, women affairs, women, youth and peasant Associations, woreda administration officials, law enforcement bodies, NGO workers at woreda level, and public mobilization offices. The advisory group helped a lot in recruiting the participants and in identifying key informants and case studies as members of the community. The group members were also used as focus group discussants at woreda level to get pre-hand information about the research topic before going into the community. In general, the advisory group recruitment was very successful and it was a good strategy used by the researcher of this study.

#### **1.4.2. Methods of Data collection**

##### **1.4.2.1 Qualitative Methods**

###### **1.4.2.1.1 Focus group discussion**

Focus group discussion was held with advisory group of community stakeholders at two woredas before going into the community. Furthermore, focus group discussions were held with women and girls, men and boys at each kebeles. Totally 10 focus group discussions were held at two woredas and 4 kebeles. Each focus group discussion had 12 members with different back grounds. The participants were purposefully selected together with the facilitators and the advisory group of community stakeholders.

Women and men focus group discussants were separated, because in the pastoralist communities women are shy to talk in front of men. Especially, it is difficult for them to talk about their own experience of violence in the presence of men. Therefore, women and girls were separated to make them freely express their feelings.

Each woman focus group consists of married, divorced, widow, illiterate girls, girls in school, different age groups and the like. And again each men focus group consists of married men, religious leaders, clan leaders, illiterate boys and students with different age groups. 60 women and girls, 60 men and boys were participated in the focus group discussion. Totally, 120 women, men, girls and boys were participated at two woredas and 4 kebeles. .

###### **1.4.2.1.2. Key informants (indepth interview)**

In depth interview is the main qualitative methods of feminist research. Understanding women's lives from the stand point of women themselves is a driving concern of the feminist interview method. It is also important to know the attitude of men towards women in in-depth interview. Therefore, in-depth interviews were carried out with women and men, girls and boys. In-depth interview was carried out with 2 women, 2 men, 1 boy and 1 girl at each kebel. In-depth interview was carried out with 8 women, 8 men, 4 girls and 4 boys. Totally, 24 women, men, boys and girls were participated at 4 kebeles. Key informants were selected from the focus group discussion participants depending on their reaction in the focus group discussion.

#### **1.4.2.1.3 Case studies**

Various case studies were identified especially in Afar region with the help of the facilitators and advisory group members. Totally 12 cases of victim women and girls are presented in this research from Mille (Afar) and Fentalle (Oromia) woredas. These case studies are about the victim girls and women at the research sites which will strengthen the research findings collected by other tools.

#### **1.4.2.1.4. Participant Observation**

The researcher was at the research areas for about 2 months, observing the actual social environment in which the women and the girls are found. He was observing the life of women at market places, at community meetings, at home with their domestic chores, at mosque places and etc.

### **1.4.2.2 Quantitative Methods**

#### **1.4.2.2.1 Survey**

The researcher also used survey to verify information that has been collected using other methods. Therefore, together with the community advisory groups and facilitators, 100 women and girls, 100 men and boys with different social backgrounds were randomly selected from 200 house holds. These are marital status, educational background, age sex and the like. Totally, 200 respondents were used for the survey method.

#### **1.4.2.3 Secondary Data**

Relevant books, documents, magazines and other publications were thoroughly reviewed for this research.

### **1.5 Rationale for selecting the research sites**

The researcher has selected Fentalle district in Oromia Regional state and Mille district in Afar regional state. The rationales for selecting these two sites are that, as pastoralist communities are found in different parts of the country, selecting one site in one Region cannot be representative of all pastoralist communities. Therefore, the researcher has assumed that, if this research is conducted on these two districts from the two different Regions, its representation will be assured.

The other justification for selecting these two sites is that, as these two Regions are neighbors and are also found on the same route, they are relatively accessible in terms of transportation and other facilities. The third justification for selecting these two sites is related to the magnitude of violence against women and girls. As the researcher identified in his preliminary assessment of these two research areas, the magnitude of the problems of violence against women and girls is high and no research has been conducted on this problem. Regarding selection of the kebeles, 4 kebeles were selected for this research to make it more representative of the population. 2 kebeles are relatively nearer to the capital towns where as the remaining 2 are relatively far away from the towns. Kebele selection was made together with the advisory group of community stakeholders.

### **1.6 Sampling techniques and procedures**

The sampling technique and procedure the researcher has adopted in this study was the stratified random sampling. The stratified random sampling was chosen by the researcher, because various variables, such as age, sex, marital status, educational background and etc were used in this research.

According to the data obtained from The Fentalle Pastoral Development Office (2006) and The Central Statistical Authority (1996), the four kebeles selected for this research such as Gelcha, Gara Dima, Hintimegeta and Hidesa, Geiraruna Anaekalo have a total population of 8973, out of which 4780(53.3%) is female. According to this data, the four kebles have 1855 house holds, out of which female headed represents 196 house holds. From 1855 house holds therefore, 200 house holds were randomly selected. House numbers were given for all the

houses before randomly selecting the 200 households. After randomly selecting the households, the residents of the households whose ages are 13 and above were registered by sex, age, educational background and marital status. The counting of the household members indicated that 915 residents whose ages are 13 and above live in the randomly selected 200 households. Then, the population was stratified according to boys in school, illiterate boys, girls in school, illiterate girls, married women, and married men.

After grouping the total population into different strata, the sample was randomly selected according to the following criteria:

1. 72% of the sample should be married men and women
2. 28% of the sample should be unmarried boys and girls
3. 50% of the boys and girls should be illiterate
4. 50% of the boys and the girls should be students
5. The sample size of boys and girls should be proportional, i.e. 50; 50%
6. The sample size of married women and men should be proportional, i.e. 50, 50%

Depending on the above criteria sample population was randomly selected from each strata until the desired sample is reached. Accordingly, 72 married women, 72 married men, 14 girls in school, 14 boys in school, 14 illiterate girls and 14 illiterate boys were randomly selected from the two districts.

### **1.7. Instrument Design and Procedure for Data Collection**

The languages used for data collection were Afan Oromo (Oromo language) and Amharic. All the research instruments were prepared in Amharic and Oromo languages. As the researcher is the native speaker of the Oromo language, he did not use translators in communicating the Fentalle community. Therefore, except for the survey method, he directly involved with the community in data collection. But, in Afar community he used two facilitators from the community who helped him in translating the points from Amharic to Afar and from Afar to Amharic.

The researcher totally used three female facilitators with the educational background of BA, and Diploma levels. Again 17 enumerators were also used for questionnaire filling. Female enumerators were used for female respondents and male enumerators were also recruited for

male respondents. The enumerators and the facilitators were selected from the community itself. Regarding the educational background of the enumerators, one is 2<sup>nd</sup> year university student, 10 are 10<sup>th</sup> grade complete and 6 are 8<sup>th</sup> grade complete. Enough training was given for the enumerators and the facilitators on the methods of data collection. After they have finished their training, they were given practical exercise to fill the questionnaires among themselves by dividing them into the respondents and the enumerators.

Depending on the questionnaire they filled therefore, again additional training was given to them. Pre-test was done to check the questionnaires. Each enumerator filled one questionnaire and then the filled questionnaires were carefully read and minor adjustments were made. Pre-test was also made for the qualitative research instruments at woreda levels.

### **1.8. Data Entry and Analysis**

Appropriate editing was made on all data and information collected. An encoder fed the questionnaires into the SPSS/DE computer program. The data entry process was frequently checked and supervised by the researcher himself, and tables required for report writing were produced. The focus group discussion, the key informants and the case studies were also transcribed from the tape-recorders by the researcher himself. The translation works from Amharic and Oromic to English were also done by the researcher.

### **1.9. Significance of the Research**

No research has been conducted on violence against women and girls in the study areas of the pastoralist communities. The issue of violence against women and girls has not been given the deserved attention. The Governmental and Non Governmental Organizations working in the study areas have been mainly targeting on the provision of social services that help women in their domestic workloads. Therefore, the researcher of this study believes that this thesis will fill the gap in our knowledge of the situation of women and girls in the pastoralist communities in Ethiopia. It is assumed that this research will show the reality of women and

girls in the pastoralist areas, which will help to call attention for further research and urgent intervention.

The research results will benefit the following:-

1. Governmental and non governmental organizations will benefit from my research results because; it will provide them information about the magnitude of the problem which will help them to focus their attention on addressing the problem. The women in the research areas will benefit from the results, because their problems will be exposed, and as a result more attention might be given to address the problem.
2. Policy makers will benefit from the results, because it helps them to formulate new policies
3. Institutes of gender studies and Institute of Ethiopian Studies will benefit from the results, because it contributes for the research needs of the two Institutes. It will also help them as a reference for further research and academic purpose.
4. The Addis Ababa University students and other researchers will benefit from the results of my research, because it helps them to obtain information either for knowledge building or for their research
5. The media will also benefit from the results of my research because, the information in the research will help them to do more media works on the subject under study.
6. The surrounding community will benefit from the results, because various efforts might be made to raise their awareness about gender equality.
7. The results of this research will contribute to similar research works and provide practical experiences for academic institutions.

#### **1.10. Limitations of the Study**

Getting secondary data in the research sites regarding violence is a limitation for this study. The other limitation is that, as the pastoralist areas are not developed in infrastructure, it was some what difficult for the researcher to go on foot a long distance to reach the target population. The other limitation for this research is that, the researcher of this study was sick food poisoning for almost one month, while he was in the field which had some impact on this research.

#### **1.11. General Background of the study Regions and the study areas**

### **1.11.1. General background of the Oromia Region**

Oromia is one of the nine Regions of Ethiopia and is the most populous Region in the country constituting about 30 percent of the country's population and the Regional population is 21.7 million divided in about equal proportion between males and females (The Regional Government of Oromia, 1999: XI). The rural population comprises about 89 percent and the economically active population is estimated at 81 percent of the 15 to 64 age group (ibid). The average figures for expectation of life at birth are 50.4 years (ibid).

On the basis of the current border delineation, the land area of Oromia is estimated at 354,000 square kilometers and the Region occupies nearly 30 percent of the country's total area and is contiguous with all Regions except the Tigray Region (ibid). According the unpublished data obtained from the Office of the Regional Government of Oromia, the Region is divided into seventeen zones which are further subdivided into 257 districts. The Region can be divided into three distinct geographical areas: the Western highlands and associated lowlands, the Eastern highlands and associated lowlands and the Rift Valley system. Generally, the elevation varies from less than 500 meters to 4,400 meters above sea level (ibid).

Large parts of Oromia have a climate and rainfall which are suitable for agricultural production. Rainfall varies according to altitude with some zones suffering from recurrent drought and famine, particularly to the east and south-east. The average rainfall in southern Oromia bordering Kenya is generally considered inadequate for crop production and the area is often vulnerable to recurrent drought. Much of the land suffers from erosion due, in large measure, to the high concentration of livestock population and over-grazing, coupled with the denudation of forest cover resulting from centuries of cultivation and high water run-off (ibid).

Oromia possesses considerable potential for economic development. The Region's varied agro-ecological zones permit the cultivation of an equally varied range of crops. While the highlands are characterized by sedentary agriculture with a mixture of crop-livestock system, the lowlands are inhabited mainly by nomadic pastoralists and support a large livestock population. In addition to agricultural resources, Oromia has considerable potential for the development of mineral resources, and also possesses an abundance of both surface and underground water resources (ibid).

The major and most promising rivers offering opportunities for the development of large-scale irrigated agriculture are the Awash and the Wabeshebelle, the Omo-Ghibe, the Ganale-Dawa, the Baro, etc. Several rivers in Oromia are tributaries of the Nile River and make it the mighty river that it is, but several of them also have, in their own right, tributaries of their own. Many of the rivers have the potential for the development of irrigation in the lower parts of their basins and hydroelectric power in their headwater areas. In the long run, and indeed even over the medium term, these resources promise prospects of sustainable economic growth leading to substantial improvements in standards of living for the population, given appropriate policies and strategies (ibid).

### **1.11.2. General Background of the Afar Region**

Afar Region is one of the nine regions of Ethiopia located in the North Eastern part of the country. It is bordered in the North by Eritrea and Tigray, in south by Oromia, in the East by Djibouti and Somalia, and in the West by Amhara Region. As one of the Federal Regional States, Afar National Regional State occupies a vast area covering 10,086 square kilometers of land. It stretches from the Djibouti-Diredawa railway in the South to the Bori peninsula in the North and from the shore of the Red Sea to the Eastern planks of the Ethiopian plateau. Geographically speaking the Region is located in North Eastern Ethiopia stretching from 8° 40' 13" to 14° 27' 29" North latitude and from 39° 51' 13" to 42° 23' 03" East longitude (UNICEF, 2007; unpublished).

Altitude of the Region varies from about 1500 meters above sea level at the bottom of the escarpment bordering the highlands in the west to as low as 120 meters below sea level in the Dankil/Dallol depressions in the East. The temperature varies from 20°C in higher elevation to as high as 48°C in lower elevations. The Region in general is drought prone and the recurrent drought occurrence results in the heavy losses of livestock, the most important economic source and livelihood sector of the Afar community (ibid).

The Region is divided into 5 zones, 29 woredas including a special Woreda of Argoba and it has 323 kebele Administrations. Concerning the climatic condition, Afar Regional state is generally characterized by desert and semi desert agro-ecological zones. The climate is characterized by high temperature and low rain fall. The rainfall patterns is usually bi-modal

through out the Region and the mean annual rain fall is generally below 500 mm and goes on descending to below 150mm as one proceeds from the western escapements to the arid areas of the east. The main rainy season is known as "karma" in the local language, which runs from July to August, and the short rain season known as "Sagum" runs from March to April. Likewise the Region faces two dry seasons completely hostile to the inhabitants and particularly to the pastoralists. The seasons are locally known as "Gilale" a cool period which runs from September to March and " Hagele" the hot dry spell that extend from May to June (ibid).

According to CSA statistical Abstract of year 2000, the total population of Afar Region is estimated to be 1,539,007. Out of the total population (44%) are females. Demographically, 15% of the population is under-5 years of age. Women in reproductive age group (15-49 years) hold 22.4% of the population. The dependency ratio in the region is 72.6% as compared to the National 87.2%. The Regional population density is estimated to be 12 persons per Km square (ibid).

### **1.11.3. Background of the study Areas**

#### **1.11.3.1. Geographic location**

East Shewa Zone is one of the 17 zones of Oromia National Regional State located in the central part of the country and North East of the Region. The zone shares common boundaries with Afar Regional State, the Amhara National Regional State, with Southern Nation, Nationalities and peoples Regional state and with Addis Ababa City Government ( PCDP 2005: 6).

Fentalle is one of the Districts under East Shewa Zone, and it has boundaries with Afar and Amhara Regional state, Awash Fentalle woreda of Afar Regional state and Anchar Woreda of Oromia Regional state, Arsi Zone and Boset woreda of Oromia Regional state. The district's capital town, Metahara is found 195 km away from the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa (ibid).

On the other hand, Mille Woreda is one of the 29 woredas of Afar Region and it is found in Zone one of the Afar Regional state,(CSA, 1996). It has common boundaries with Dubti, Chifra, Telalak

and Gewane districts of the Afar Regional state (UNICEF, 2007). The district's capital town Mille is located at about 530 km. away from the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa (CSA, 1996).

### **1.11.3.2. Population**

Fentalle district is divided into twenty administrative Kebeles, out of which two are urban and the remaining eight and ten are regarded as pastoral and agro-pastoral Kebeles, respectively. According to the data obtained from the Woreda cooperative promotion office, the total human population of the woreda is estimated to be 65, 701 with female accounting for 61.5 percent of the total where as 38.5 percent are male ( PCDP 2005:10).

As can be observed from the data, the female population is by far higher than the male population for Fentalle district. This is related to the pulling factors of the district especially the Metahara town. Metahara sugar factory and the geographical location of the Metahara town are the major pulling factors for many women and girls to be attracted to the town. As Metahara town is found in the midway from the Addis Ababa City, many heavy vehicle drivers and other passengers prefer to stay at Metahara town which could attract many prostitutes and other women towards the town. Many women also migrate to the town to get the job opportunities available in Metahara sugar factory.

According to the same source, the total rural household of the woreda is estimated to be 8, 376 of which 1,023 households (12.2%) are female headed. In terms of ethnic and clan composition of the district, the Karrayu clans of Oromo ethnic holds the major proportion with small number of Itu clan ( clan of Oromo ethnic) and Somali (ibid).

Regarding the population of the two research sites from Fentalle woreda, the data obtained from Fentale Pastoral Development Office, Gelcha and Gara Dima kebeles have a total population of 4861, out of which 3080 are females. The two kebeles also have 827 households, out of which 160 are female headed households. From 827 house holds therefore, 100 house holds were randomly selected. The two research kebeles were selected together with the advisory community group depending on the prevalence rate of violence against women and girls in the district (ibid).

Concerning the Mille woreda population, the woreda is divided into 15 rural and 3 urban administrative Kebeles. According to the data obtained from the 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, the district has a total population of 66,472 out of which 28, 907 are females. This data only shows the rural population, while the total population of the 3 towns under Mille district is 3945, out of which the female number constitutes 1886 (CSA, 1996).

The data from CSA (1996), also reveals that Mille woreda has 11, 868 house holds. The two kebeles selected for this research have a total of 1028 house holds. From these 1028 households, sample of 100 households were randomly selected. Kebele selection was done together with the advisory community group depending on the prevalence rate of violence in the woreda (ibid).

### **1.11.3.3 Topography**

Fentalle district is located in the Great Rift Valley System. The altitude ranges from 750-2126 meters above sea level with the highest peak being mountain Fentalle which is about 2126 meter above sea level. The woreda has three landscapes namely:- Flat land, mountain/ hills and valley ( PCDP 2005:6).

Again, according to the unpublished data obtained from the National Meteorological Agency of Ethiopia (2007), Mille Woreda has an altitude which ranges from 420-650 meters above sea level. The woreda has two types of landscapes namely: - vast flat land and very few hills (The National Meteorological Agency of Ethiopia, 2007: unpublished).

### **1.11.3.4. Climate and Temperature**

According to the data obtained from Fentalle Woreda pastoral Development office, Fentalle has semi- arid dry land agro- ecological climate. The rainfall is low, erratic and scattered and is concentrated in a few heavy storms. The area receives average rainfall of 600-700 mm per annum. Generally, it is low and unreliable and evapotranspiration is very high. The district has semi- arid and arid dry land agro ecological conditions. It has four seasons (ibid).

According to the same source, in terms of temperature the months of March through June are the hottest months of the year. December, January, and February are the average months of temperature where as September through November are the coldest months (ibid).

Regarding the climate and temperature of the Mille woreda, the data compiled from the National Meteorological Agency of Ethiopia (2007), again shows that, the district is characterized by desert and semi-desert agro-ecological zones. The climate is characterized by high temperature and low rainfall. The mean annual rainfall is 130-584 mm. According to the same source of data regarding the temperature of the district, the months of April, May, June, July, August, September and October are the hottest months of the year. March and November are the average of temperature, where as December, January and February are the coldest months (the National Meteorological Agency, 2007).

## CHAPTER TWO

### **2. Literature Review**

#### **2.1. The Concept of Violence**

There is no universally accepted definition of violence against women and girls. Some human rights activists prefer a broad-based definition that includes 'structural violence' such as poverty, and unequal access to health care and education. Others argue for a more limited definition in order not to lose the actual descriptive power of the term (The African child policy forum 2006: 11).

### **2.1.1. Generic Forms of Gender -Based Violence**

Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women, categorizes generic forms of violence against women, as recognized by the International Community. These include:

**Physical:** punching, kicking, choking, stabbing, mutilation, disabling, murder.

**Sexual:-** rape, unwanted touching or other acts of sexual nature, forced prostitution.

**Verbal or psychological:-** Threats to harm a woman's children, destruction of favorite clothes or photographs, repeated insults meant to demean and erode self-esteem, forced isolation from friends and relatives, threats of further violence.

**Financial:-** Taking away a woman's wages or other income, limiting or forbidding access to family income, other forms of control and abuse of power (Ibid).

The declaration provides a list of abuses that presumably constitute gender violence.

*“Violence against women’ shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to , physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the community, including battering, sexual abuse of female children, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non spousal violence, violence related to exploitation, sexual harassment, and intimidation at work, in educational institutions, and elsewhere, trafficking in women, forced prostitution, and violence perpetrated or condoned by the state (United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women 1993 ,cited in Rakeb, 1997:VII).*

The definition of gender based violence was developed by the United Nations population Fund (UNFPA) as follows:

*"Gender based violence is violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim; and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Violence is directed specifically against a woman because she is a woman, or affects woman disproportionately. It includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological harm (including intimidation, suffering, coercion, and/or deprivation of liberty within the family, or within the general community). It includes that violence which is perpetrated or condoned by the state (The African child policy form 2006: 12).*

### **2.1.2. Structural Violence**

Structural violence is closely related to economic violence which prevents women from exercising their fundamental rights. It is defined as:-

*"any situation where woman is disadvantaged solely because of her gender--particularly when she is deprived of fundamental rights, such as the freedom to exercise a profession, or to have a bank account of her own. These inequalities, which are often ingrained in societies, engender violence against women and encourage men and boys to perpetrate it" (Committee on equal opportunities for women and men 2000, cited in African child policy forum).*

Structural forms of violence are part of the very fabric of society, and are self-perpetuating, since they relate to differences and inequalities in society and the power structures that create and legitimize this inequality. Because it is less obvious and less direct than physical violence, its magnitude is often under-estimated (The African child policy form, 2006:13).

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework of Violence**

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (1997), indicated that existing theories in the explanation of violence are classified into three. These are intra-individual, social-psychological and socio-cultural theories (CODESRIA, 1997:5).

### **2.2.1. Intra-Individual Theories**

Intra-individual theories explain violence in terms of the individual actor. Some of these theories see personality, abnormality or defects and alcohol and drug use as causing violent psychopathological tendencies in humans (Gelles and Strauss 1979, cited in CODESRIA).

Others see chromosomes and hormones in males to be medically linked to violence. It is suggested that, the chromosomes in males are productive of low intelligence, which correlates with low educational levels, limited occupational opportunities, and increased frustration to cause anti-social behavior and violence (Jarvick et al. 1993, cited in CODESRIA). Studies have also found a causal relationship between aggression and level of androgens such as testosterone (Dabbs and Morris, 1990) and Serotonin (Mckenry et al. 1995, cited in CODESRIA). Still other theories have linked organic brain syndrome to violent outbursts (Monroe 1970, cited in CODESRIA)

Certain gaps have been identified in the use of these theories. For instance, Scut (1991) identified that alcohol may be associated with violence, but does not cause it. In many families, drunkenness may occur without any violence being precipitated, while violence may occur without any alcohol being consumed. For Leonard and Blane (1992), the relationship between alcohol use and violence is moderated by both man's level of hostility and level of marital satisfaction, (CODESRIA 1997: 6).

### **2.2.2. Social-Psychological Theories**

Social-psychological theories examine the interaction of the individual with the social environment, that is, with other individuals, groups and organizations. Under the category of social psychological theories we find various theories, such as the frustration aggression theory, the social learning theory, the exchange theory, the resource theory and the conflict theory.

### **2.2.3. Socio-Cultural Theories**

Socio-cultural theories focus on macro-level analysis. Hence such theories place marital violence within a wider explanatory frame work that considers the impact of social institutions and social structures on social behaviour (CODESRIA, 1997:8). Under the socio- cultural theories, we find theories, such as structural theory, Marxist theory and Feminist theory.

From the above mentioned three broad categories of violence theories, the researcher selected feminist theories from the socio-cultural theories and social learning theory from the social-

psychological theories to fit his research. The general views of these theories and the rationale for selecting these theories are briefly presented in the following paragraphs.

### **A. Feminist theories**

Feminist theories highlight the oppressive character of structural inequality based on gender. For feminists, gender itself is a social construction of male and female identified with unequal social value. The institution of patriarchy, a system of male dominance, conditions women psychologically into accepting a secondary status by embracing a process of sex-role stereotyping. While women are expected to be expressive in outlook, men are conditioned to demonstrate instrumental traits. Social pressure is seen to keep women conforming to the expressive role, a role of nationality and power (Eisenstein 1984; Sheffield 1987; Glenn 1987, cited in CODESRIA).

It criticizes male female relationships as gender constructions. Marital violence is seen as the most overt and effective means of husbands social control of wives, in that it is used when other and more subtle methods of control do not elicit submission (Hoffman et al. 1994: 132, cited in CODESRIA). The problematic nature of marriage for women has been linked to its centrality in patriarchy, the devaluation of women's work and the hierarchy of gender (Glenn 1987; Feree 1990, cited in CODESRIA).

Feminist theories argue that most domestic violence within families is due to the imbalance of power between men and women (Stanko 1985; Bogard 1988; Yllo and Straus 1990; Yllo 1993; Hansen 1993; Lenton 1995; McCloskey 1996; Sugarman and Frankel 1996; Anderson 1997, cited in Natarajan, 2002:304). This perspective centered on the patriarchic nature of society, emphasizes the privileged position of men and the subordinate position of women in explaining why women are subjected to violence in intimate relationships (Dobbash and Dobbash 1979; Gelles and Straus 1988; Straus 1994, cited in Natarajan). It argues that men's aggression within the family serves to control women.

### **B. Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory views violence as a learned phenomenon. Together with the role modeling theory, it assumes that children learn violent behaviour when they see their parents or other significant others resolving problems by means of violence (Abraham 1995, cited in CODESRIA). The children then model this role of violent interpersonal behavior when they themselves become parents.

Social learning theory is built around the use of reinforcement and extinction as well as association stimuli. When children see violence on the television, for instance, they become desensitized and no longer respond to environmental cues that inhibit their own tendencies towards violence.

Thus people learn and internalize social and moral justifications for abusive behavior (CODESRIA 1997: 7).

### **2.3. Application of Theories**

As mentioned earlier, the researcher found that feminist theories and social learning theory are appropriate for his research. Because, the research findings of his research indicated that, the different types of violence acts such as FGM, wives and girls beating, violence in customary marriages are committed on women and girls simply because women and girls are inferior and men as well as boys are superior in the communities of the research sites. Female Genital Mutilation, for instance, is practiced on women and girls to make them submissive and docile for their husbands ignoring their own sexual desires. The same is true in wife beating. Wives are beaten and even murdered by their husbands in the name of punishment or correction. But, the husbands are not beaten even if they are found guilty by their wives, because the wives have no power to do so.

The communities in the research areas accept wife beating and approve authorities of the husbands over their wives what so ever it is. In the various customary marriages dealt in this research, the girls and the women are not asked their consent and they are forced by their parents or their clans to marry. The girls and the women have no power or right to decide on their own marriages, and the power lies in the hands of their parents and their clan which is male dominated.

The researcher also selected the social learning theory for his research. He believes that children learn the whole practices and experiences in their families including women's subordinate position and violence against women and girls through their socialization. They see their fathers beating their mothers, they observe their families doing FGM on their sisters, and they see their parents forcing girls for marriage without their consent. In general they are shaped in a way that they internalize women's oppression and subordination, is a normal phenomenon taken for granted which they apply in the same manner in their own families

when they grow up. The same is true for the illiterate boys and girls in the research areas. These boys and girls want to maintain the traditions of their communities which they learnt through their socialization. As a result they support violence acts such as FGM, customary marriages and wife abuse. Therefore, this theory indicates the need for changing the negative attitudes of the socializing agents towards women.

When it comes to specific theories, there are various feminist theories around the world. The Liberal Feminist theory, the Radical, the Socialist, the Orthodox (traditional) Marxism, the Psycho-analytical, the Post- Structuralist / Post Modernist, and etc, are the major ones. Therefore, from these specific theories, the researcher found Radical Feminist theory appropriate for his research.

Radical Feminist theory interested in the structural change of the society. It views patriarchy as the basic system of power upon which human relationships in society are arranged. It seeks to challenge this arrangement by rejecting standard gender roles and male oppression.

Some Radical Feminists see women's role in reproduction as both motivating and enabling men to take power over them, others emphasize the wish of men to control women's sexual availability or to use their unpaid domestic labor in marriage (Wikipedia, 2006).

Radical feminists believe that, society must be changed at its core in order to dissolve patriarchy, not just through acts of legislation. They suggest that the domination of women is the oldest and worst kind of oppression in the world. It is the rigid gender role system that has created oppression, and the radical feminist mission is to overthrow this system by any possible means. They completely reject these roles and all aspects of patriarchy. The ultimate aim is to change gender relations fundamentally by eliminating male power and values. Radical feminists emphasize their difference from men. They form groups that exclude males completely. They must struggle as women to overthrow patriarchy and oppression in women only groups (ibid).

As indicated above, the researcher selected the Radical Feminist theory for his research, because as the experience of our country shows us the Liberal feminist theory which Ethiopia has been applying, could not bring the desired change on the rights of women. As revealed in

chapter 3 of this research, Ethiopia has taken various legislation measures to improve the condition of Ethiopian women. We can generally conclude that the country has beautiful laws and policies regarding the rights of women. But, these legislation measures could not change the various violence acts committed on women, mainly due to the negative societal attitudes towards women and girls. Regardless of these beautiful laws and policies, Ethiopian women and girls are still daily suffering from various violence acts and other discriminations.

Therefore, it is proved from our experience that legislative measures alone cannot bring the desired change on women. Unless the power relations between men and women are altered through the radical structural change, whatever laws are enacted and whatever legal reforms are made, no major change is expected. What is more important is changing the negative attitude of the society towards women by mass awareness creation of the society at large. As high lighted by the Radical feminists, to emancipate women, patriarchal attitudes of the society should be changed by removing the rigid gender roles which assigns women to the domestic spheres and men to the public sphere. This is possible through the conscious and organized struggle of women themselves. Therefore, to bring about genuine equality between women and men the society should be changed at its core. In other words to bring the desired change, social, cultural and attitudinal change should be introduced in to the society.

As described above the researcher used Radical Feminist theory for his research. But, this does not mean that this feminist theory should be copied and adopted as it is. It does not also mean that this theory is perfect in all aspects and it goes hundred percent with our context. The use of artificial means of reproduction for instance, does not fit to our context both in technological advancement and cultural aspects. And again, even if the active struggle of women themselves is important in alleviating their problems, the role of gender sensitive men is also equally important to change the existing gender relations. Ignoring men does not bring the desired change. Therefore, the need to adjust this theory to our context should be recognized.

### **2.3. Some Statistical Data on Violence**

Women and girls across all regions, ages, religious, classes and political affiliations are vulnerable to violence. Their safety is guaranteed neither in the home nor in public spheres (Purna Sen, cited in Oxfam focus on gender, 1988:8).

Women in rural areas and 56 percent of women in urban areas had been abused by their husbands (Bradly 1994, cited in Oxfam). And in Brazil in 1985, over 70% of all cases of violence against women and girls reported to the police occurred within the home (Thomas 1994, cited in Oxfam). Again in Costa Rica, it was found that 95% of pregnant girls under 16 years of age were victims of incest (UNIFEM 1992, cited in Oxfam).

Tanzanian survey found that 90 percent of employed women responded that sexual harassment threatens their jobs and 100% of house wives said they had been sexually harassed in the streets (Tanzania Media women's Association 1994, cited in Oxfam).

The data from countries in transition and developed countries also show the prevalence of violence against women and girls. In Russia police figures indicate that 14500 women die each year due to domestic violence (Family violence prevention fund 1997, cited in Oxfam). 51% of women in Canada have experienced some forms of violence in their adult lives and an average of 75 women is killed each year by their husbands (Johnson 1996, cited in Oxfam).

At the same time, the world wide statistics shows violence against women and girls is a pervasive phenomenon. The World Health organization estimates that at least one in five women have been physically or sexually abused by a man or men at some time in her life time (WHO 1997, cited in Oxfam focus on gender 1998:2). And according to a study by the World Bank drawing on data from 35 countries, one quarter to more than half of women report having been physically abused by a present or former partner, while far more have suffered emotional and psychological abuse. (Heise 1994, cited in Oxfam).

Girls in Africa are particularly vulnerable to various forms of violence both by virtue of their gender and because of the socio-economic and cultural conditions prevailing in their communities. African girls experience violence in the classroom, at home and in the community, and in times of conflict and crisis, are special targets of violence. In their communities, girls face physical, sexual and psychological violence, and are harmed through inequalities in access to resources. (The African child policy forum, 2006:2).

According to a retrospective survey conducted in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda by the African child policy forum on 1500 urban girls, on an average, eight out of every ten girls are being physically abused by the people who they are supposed to trust most. And the majority of girls will be sexually abused (95% in Uganda, 85.2% in Kenya and 68.5% in Ethiopia) (Ibid 2006:8).

At the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, it was observed that at least 60 million girls who would otherwise be expected to be alive are missing from various populations, predominately in developing countries, as a result of sex selective abortion, infanticide or neglect (ibid:13).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as many as 40 million girls under the age of 15 are victims of violence every year (Ibid:2). And around 130 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation, most of whom live in Africa (ibid:8).

When it comes to Ethiopia, there is no country wide data which shows the prevalence of violence against women and girls. But, some research works conducted by some institutions indicate that the prevalence rate for violence against women and girls is high. Research sponsored by the Ethiopian women lawyers Association conducted on 300 women and students in Addis Ababa shows that 53.5 percent of the total student respondents have reported sexual harassment of breast touching (Melese Damte, Original W/Giorgis and Emebet Kebede, 2004: 20-78).

Again, the data gathered by the Walta Information Center in collaboration with the women's affair office on abduction and other violence committed against women and girls in the different parts of the country shows that 507 girls were abducted, and 2,263 women and girls were raped in just one year. (Walta Information Center 2000, cited in EWLA 2004).

The other data gathered by EWLA from yearly police statistics report at the 28 woredas police stations in Addis Ababa shows that in 7 years time 21987 wife battery cases, 1955 rape cases, 280 attempted murder cases and 194 abduction cases were reported to the police station in Addis Ababa city only (EWLA).

Again a retrospective survey conducted by the African child policy forum on Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda also shows that violence against girls in Ethiopia is very high. According to this survey, on an average group of ten girls, nine will be physically abused, and seven will be also sexually abused. And again all ten will be made to feel inferior having suffered repeated psychological abuse (The African child policy forum, 2006:40). The survey also indicated that Ethiopian girls suffer from physical, psychological, sexual violence and sexual exploitation, and harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, early marriages and abduction (ibid).

According to this survey results, three out of 10 girls in Ethiopia will be raped at least once before they are 18 years old. And almost all of the girls respondents reported abuse in one way or another (ibid:9). The survey also indicated that, nearly seven in every ten girls are sexually abused in Ethiopia. Finally, the survey also shows that more than two fifths of the Ethiopian girls respondents (42.2 percent) have been subjected to female genital mutilation (Ibid).

## **2.4. Literatures on Some Specific Types of Violence**

### **2.4.1. The Consent of Women and Girls for Marriage**

The Ethiopian civil code of 1960 recognizes three forms of marriages as valid. These are; civil marriage:- marriage concluded or celebrated before an officer of civil status; religious marriage:- marriage celebrated before religious authorities, and customary marriage :- marriage celebrated according to the custom of the society (yonas 1998). The newly revised family code of Ethiopia in its articles 2,3 and 4 also recognizes the three forms of marriages including customary marriage (Federal Negarit Gazetta, 2000:3). But, in all customary marriages the consent of women and girls is not asked.

Some literatures also indicate that, girls and women in Maghreb countries are not asked their consents in their marriages. Except in Tunisia, a woman does not have the right to enter in to marriage herself even though she is of legal age throughout the countries of Maghreb. Her guardian arranges for it in her place. Accordingly, article 11 of the Algerian family code provides that “the conclusion of a marriage for women shall be incumbent upon her matrimonial guardian, who is either her father or one of her close relatives. The judge shall be the matrimonial guardian for a person who has no fathers or close relatives “(United Nations,

2000: 41-42). All guardians must be males, have good judgment and be of legal age. These same rules were reproduced in article 7 of the Libyan Marriage code (ibid).

Although the situation in Morocco was similar to those in Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Moudawana reform introduced through the act of September 1993 requires real consent on the Part of the woman to marriage and prohibits any constraint on the part of the wali (legal guardian). Furthermore, article 12 reads as follows: “A woman of legal age who is fatherless shall have the right to conclude marriage herself or to delegate the task to a wali (guardian) of her choice” (ibid).

In Tunisia, article 6 (the new text) provides the marriage of minors (girls and boys ) shall be subject to the consent of their guardians-the father or his representative- and the mother, where as girls who have attained legal age are free to marry without a matrimonial guardians (ibid). Thus, mediation by the women’s guardian for the purpose of contracting marriage is contrary to the basic principles of equality of rights between men and women and of their complete freedom when the marriage is entered into (ibid).

## **2.4.2. Customary Marriages**

### **2.4.2.1. Cross - Cousin Marriage (Absuma)**

Wikipedia (2006), the free encyclopedia, defines cross cousin as an anthropological term describing kin who are in the same descent group as the subject (ego) and are from the parent’s opposite-sexed sibling. Simply put, a cross cousin is a first cousin who is the child of the mother’s brother (maternal uncle’s child) or of the father’s sister (paternal aunt’s child) (Wikipedia, 2006).

Bilateral cross cousin marriage systems are a form of direct exchange marriage in which two lineages or families establish permanent alliances and exchanges through marriages to each other’s women. In some cases, these exchanges are formed without an explicit cousin role. For example, among the Tive Nigeria, a man’s marriage requires him to provide a bride to a member of his in-laws family from among the Women of his own group. In other instances, the continuity of such paired exchanges is guaranteed by the regular arrangement of marriages on the basis of specified cousin relationships (Brian Schwimmer, 2003:1).

Cousin marriage is a marriage among many tribes/castes of Andhra Pradesh and other South Indian states, between a maternal uncle and his niece or between cousins, similar to Islamic, Jewish and Zoroastrian traditions (VEPACHEDU, Educational foundation, 2003:1). Telugus distinguish between two kinds of first cousins: cross cousins and parallel cousins, and allow marriage of cross cousins only. Sons and daughters of a maternal uncle or a paternal aunt are cross cousins, for example, his mother's brother's daughter is matrilateral cross cousin and father's sister's daughter is patrilateral cross cousin. All other first cousin related through one's paternal uncle or maternal aunt are parallel cousins and considered brothers and sisters. Marriages between uncles and nieces are also permissible in Jewish law (ibid).

The cross cousin marriage, which is common in South Indian nationalities, is prohibited in some of the North Indian (Hindustani) nationalities and tribes/castes. Among Marathi Communities such as Marathas, Kunbis, Malis, Mahars, etc, the marriage of a brother's daughter with a sister's son is common. The other form of cross cousin marriage, i.e. the marriage of the brother's son to the sister's daughter is practiced by some Gonds and other tribes among whom it is considered as doodh lautna (give back the milk). Murias and Brills of North/Central India also practice cross cousin marriage (Ibid).

Cousin marriages have been widespread in rural areas. The practice is still popular in much of the Muslim world, including the Indian continent that is home for approximately half a billion Muslims (half of the total Muslim population of the world), and about 700 million Hindus (including the Dalit-and Hindu- Christians). In the Middle East, over half of all marriages are consanguineous where the most common type of consanguineous marriage is that of patrilateral first-Cousins. It is estimated that 20% of marriages worldwide are between relations who are first cousins (Ibid).

When it comes to Ethiopia, cross cousin marriage is practiced among some Nationalities. As some research works indicate, this type of marriage is very common among the Afar communities. Cross cousin marriage in Afar is known as "Absuma" and an Afar often marries his cross cousin. This type of marriage helps in maintaining access to means of production and to consolidate the material benefit from economic activities (Ministry of agriculture and rural development, 2004: 393).

Absuma refers to a marriage where girls are forced to marry the sons of their mother's brothers (Halima seid, 2006). According to Halima (2006), Absuma marriage is widely accepted and is a common kind of marriage in Afar. In this type of customary marriage, consent of the girls is not asked and as a result there have been reports of girls who preferred to commit suicide rather than accepting this marriage (ibid). Absuma marriage is assumed by the Afar society at large to have various benefits. It is assumed to increase the size of the clan, promote harmonious relationships between the spouses and it is also assumed to retain properties within clans (ibid). This type of marriage also helps to avoid rape. Because, as every Afar girl is expected to marry one of her uncle's sons, she is assumed by the community that she has a husband. And as a result the probability for rape is very minimal (Halima, 2006).

Awel Yusuf (1999), in his senior Essay entitled "Afar Women in the process of socio-economic and political Development of Afar National Regional state" also identified the problems that Afar women are facing especially in customary marriages. According to Awel (1999), Marriage pattern in Afar region is dictated by customs and traditions. Although men are relatively far from strong influence by customs as compared to women, both are not free to establish their own marriage and to develop selected social relationships that suit their interests (Awel, 1999:14). Afar custom dictates that both men and women should marry their first cousins. That is, men should marry the daughters of their fathers' sisters, for which the Afar term "Absuma" is used, and women must marry the sons of their mothers' brothers for which the Afar term "Abino" is used (Ibid).

Though it is believed that cross-cousin marriage has some advantages like facilitating and strengthening mutual support between the families of the spouse, it also adversely affects women in several ways. Primarily, the marriage is not based on the basic interest and consent of the girls. And as a result, women are exposed to some social problems, such as committing suicide and migrate to other places where they may not find any support. Secondly, cross-cousin marriage also forces women to marry old men. In Afar the minimum age of marriage for a girl is 9 years and the girl is forced to marry a man whose age is perhaps four times or more than that of her age. And as a result, women suffer from maternal and other reproductive health problems which in turn affect their socio-economic well-being (Ibid).

#### **2.4.2.2. Levirate (widow inheritance) Marriage**

Wikipedia (2006), the free encyclopedia, defines levirate marriage as the practice of a woman marrying one of her husband's brothers after her husband's death, if there were no children, in order to continue the line of the dead husband. Levirate marriage has been practiced by societies with a strong clan structure in which exogamous marriage outside the clan was forbidden. Groups that have practiced levirate marriage include the Punjabis and Jats, Israelites, the Xiongnu, the Mongols, and the Tibetans (wikipedia, 2006 : 1).

Levirate marriage has also been practiced by many Central and Southern African peoples and is, to a certain degree, still in practice. In countries like South Africa, the obligation to do levirate marriage is on the decline due to the increased influence of western's women's rights. Yibbum or levirate marriage, in Judaism, is one of the most complex types of marital unions mandated by Torah law, and which is not presently practiced in its full application. From the Torah, Judaism teaches that a "yabham in Hebrew, is a specific term denoting a childless man's brother, who has an obligation to marry his dead brother's wife" (ibid).

Levirate marriage is marriage with a brother's widow. In some cases it is the duty of a man to marry his brother's widow even if she has had children by the deceased, but in most cases it occurs when there are no children, as among the Hindus (Ibid).

Britannica concise also defines levirate marriage as customs or laws regulating marriage following the death of a spouse, or in some cases during the lifetime of the spouse. The levirate decrees a dead man's brother to be the widow's preferred marriage partner (Britannica Concise, 2006:1). In ancient Hebrew society, this practice served to perpetuate the line of a man who died childless. Often, the brother who marries his sister-in-law is a proxy for the deceased and no new marriage is contracted, since all progeny are acknowledged as the seed of the dead man (Ibid).

In some African cultures, death does not end a marriage, and a widow is expected to move into a "levirate" arrangement with her brother-in law or other male relative or heir nominated by his family. The children conceived are conceived in the name of the dead man. In other ethnic groups she may be "inherited" by the heir. Many widows resist these practices, which are especially repugnant and also life threatening in the context of AIDS and polygamy.

Refusal to comply may be answered with physical and sexual violence (Encyclopedia of Death and Dying, 2006:1).

While in earlier times such traditional practices effectively guaranteed the widow and her children protection, in recent decades, because of increasing poverty and the breakup of the extended family, widows discover that there is no protection or support, and, pregnant by the male relative, they find themselves deserted and thrown out of the family homestead for food. Millions of widows, are very young when their husbands die but may be prevented by custom from remarrying, even if they wish to do so (Ibid).

When it comes to Ethiopian case, Wife inheritance is another type of customary marriage where the widow woman is inherited by one of her husband's brothers or clan members. Wife inheritance or levirate marriage is practiced in Ethiopia among different religious and cultural traditions. As described by Yonas (1998), wife inheritance is a long tradition practiced among the Oromos to inherit the wives of their deceased brothers. If the man does not have any brother, she is expected to marry one of his uncles or any one of his nearest relatives (Yonas 1998:23).

The marriage arrangement is made after one year has lapsed for the death of her husband and this one year is considered as a period of sad or sorrow. After one year, the widow and her mother in law prepare a ceremony and call all the relatives of the widow and of the deceased. On this day, the elders decide about the man who will inherit the widow. Then the man who is selected to inherit will enter the house of the deceased and sit on his bed showing that he has inherited the women (Ibid).

According to Yonas (1998), wife inheritance is assumed to have five benefits: First, It is believed that the children of the deceased will not be comfortable with an outsider man who will marry their mother. If their mother marries an outsider man, their stepfather may exploit the property of their father. But, if the brother of their dead father marries their mother, he will protect the property of their father.

Second, it is designed to protect the widow from inconveniences created by her marriage to a person outside of the family bond. Especially, in older times when the virginity of the woman is considered as a crucial element in marriage, a widow who concludes a second marriage may face difficult times with her new husband if she marries an outsider.

Third, it is intended to keep up the integrity of the family of the deceased. If a widow marries a man of her choice, she is obliged to leave all the property of her dead husband and his house. She is obliged to move to the house of her new husband. This means at the same time separation of the children from their mother and the breakdown of the family.

Fourth, if the widow marries a man from a different clan or family line, she may give birth to additional children which mean additional claimants of the inheritance of the property of the deceased husband through their mother. The fifth and the last reason is that it is designed to protect the transfer of property from the wife to an outsider husband (Yonas, 1998: 24-25).

Yonas (1998), finally concluded that the primary factor for wife inheritance is the economic factor. Land being the main source of income of the family, they do not want to transfer it to a person who is not related to the family line of the deceased (Ibid).

Research conducted on harmful traditional practices in Dubti Woreda (Afar) by Halima (2006), also indicated that wife inheritance is highly prevalent in Afar. In wife inheritance the consent of the woman is not asked and if she is found to refuse the marriage and chooses the man of her interest, she will be evicted and both her children and her properties will be taken away from her (ibid). The other problem mentioned by Halima (2006), in this marriage is, that the widow and the person who inherits her do not know their HIV/AIDS Status. And as a result, the marriage can be one of the ways for the HIV/AIDS transmission (ibid).

Hirut (2000), in her dissertation entitled “A study of Female Genital Mutilation and Reproductive Health, the case of Arsi Oromo” also dealt with wife inheritance (Dhaala) as one form of marriage among the Arsi Oromos. According to Hirut (2000), Dhaalaa (levirate) is marriage by inheritance. In this type of marriage, up on death of a husband, one of his younger brothers inherits the deceased brother’s widow with her children and the property of his brother. If the deceased does not have a brother, the next chance to marry the widow goes to

one of the sons of his father's brothers, his classificatory brothers (Hirut, 2000:113). In Arsi Oromo the practice is said mainly to maintain the deceased man's family from complete disintegration and to perpetuate the lineage. The person who marries the widow assumes all responsibilities and performs all activities expected of him as husband or head of family (ibid).

Hirut also identified that, a woman who rejects such an assignment when her deceased husband's brother refuses to take her, could go and live with a lover. But, the children of such a woman bears are reckoned as those of the man she had married as a virgin bride (Ibid).

As the above literature on levirate marriage indicate the inherited women are not asked for their consents in the marriage. It is also indicated that if the women are found to refuse the marriage and choose the men of their interest, they will be driven out from their homes and both their children and their properties will be taken away from them. This is the means by which women are forced to accept their inheritance. This is purely violation of their rights to live with their children and to own property.

#### **2.4.2.3. Sororate (Sisters Substitution) for Marriage**

Wikipedia (2006), the free encyclopedia, defines sororate marriage as the sociological custom of a man marrying (engaging in sexual activity) with his wife's sister, usually after the wife is dead or has proved infertile. From an anthropological standpoint, this practice strengthens the ties between both groups (the wife's family or clan and the husband's) and preserves the contract between the two to provide children and continue the alliance. The Inuit people of northern Alaska, Canada and Greenland commonly engage in this type of relations (wikipedia, 2006:1).

The Sororate decrees the marriage of a man to his deceased wife's sister or, under so-called sororal polygyny, to the wife's younger sisters as they come of age. The latter was practiced by some American Indian tribes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continues among the Australian Aborigines (Britannica Concise, 2006:1). Sororate marriage is when a woman is barren and she asks her sister to marry her husband to conceive children and remove shame from his/her family name (Wow Essays, 2006: 1).

Sororate marriage or girls substitution for the deceased wives is another form of customary marriage that is practiced in Ethiopia. In her dissertation on Arsi Oromo, Hirut (2000), identified sororate marriage as one form of customary marriage practiced by the Arsi Oromos.

According to Hirut (2000), Sororate marriage is termed by Arsi Oromos Bimbetoo and it is one form of marriage in Arsi. It refers to the custom where, upon the death of his wife, her kin group supplies the wife's sister as a wife to the widower. This happens on request from the widower's side by saying to the parents of the deceased wife to dry/wash their tears off (imimmaan Nurraa dhiqaa) by replacing the deceased (Hirut, 2000:114). This marriage is known as Hirphaa, Meaning 'to replace' (Mamo, 1995, cited in Hirut).

Hirut also identified that such type of marriage is not mandatory for the girl's parents in Arsi. A replacement can be agreed upon, if the earlier relation between the widower and the family of the deceased woman was pleasant and the dead daughter's lineage would like to continue the affinity between the two families (Hirut: 2000:114). It is believed that the sister is the best replacement for her sister's children than any other person, even if the man has another wife. The sister who is given as replacement will inherit all the property of her deceased sister and nothing that belonged to her sister is transferred to the other wife or wives (ibid).

#### **2.4.2.4. Concerning Early marriage**

The practice of boys and girls marrying at a young age is most common in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia. However, in the Middle East, North Africa and other parts of Asia, marriage at or shortly after puberty is common among some groups. There are also parts of west and East Africa and of South Asia where marriages much earlier than puberty are not unusual (UNICEF, 2006:1). It is hard to know the number of child marriage as so many are unregistered and unofficial. There are exceptions such as Bangladesh, where a survey in 1996-97 reported that five percent of 10 to 14 year-olds were married (ibid). Small-scale studies and anecdotal information fill in the picture. They imply that marriage at a very young age is wide-spread:-

- A 1998 survey in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh found that nearly 14 percent of girls were married between the ages of 10 and 14.

- In Ethiopia and in parts of west Africa, marriage at the age of seven or eight is not uncommon
- In Kebbi State in Northern Nigeria, the average of marriage for girls is just over 11 years, against a national average of 17 years (Ibid).

Again, according to UNICEF's Innocent Research Centre, there are specific parts of west Africa and East Africa and of South Asia where marriages before puberty are not unusual. However, the Centre also notes that marriage shortly after puberty is common among those living traditional lifestyles in the Middle East, North Africa and other parts of Asia. Marriages of female adolescents between sixteen and eighteen are common in parts of Latin America and Eastern Europe (Unicef's Innocent Research Center, 2006:1). Some girls are forced into this union (early marriage), others are simply too young to make an informed decision. Consent is made by some body else on the child's behalf. The child does not have the opportunity to exercise her right to choose. For this reason, early marriages are also referred to as forced marriages (ibid).

Parents choose to marry off their daughters early for a number of reasons. Poor families may regard a young girl as an economic burden and her marriage as a necessary survival strategy for her family. They may think that early marriage offers protection for their daughter from the dangers of sexual assault, or more generally, offers the care of a male guardian. Early marriage may also be seen as a strategy to avoid girls becoming pregnant outside marriage. Gender discrimination can also underpin early marriage. Girls may be married young to ensure obedience and subservience within their husband's household and to maximize their childbearing (UNICEF, 2006:1).

According to UNICEF's Innocent Research Center, again there are a number of reasons why the tradition of child marriages continues. Fear of HIV infection has encouraged men in many countries to seek younger 'partners'. Early marriage is one way to ensure that young girls are 'protected'. Families in rural Albania encourage their daughters to marry early to avoid the treat of kidnapping. In conflict torn Somalia, families married their daughters to militia members in exchange for protection for the girl, as well as for themselves (UNICEF's Innocent Research centre, 2006:1-2).

Further more, where poverty is acute, early marriage is also seen as a strategy for economic survival. In Iraq, for instance, early marriages are on the increase in response to poverty inflicted by the economic sanctions that have been imposed on the country. In situations such as this, the risk of exploitation is great. A recent study of five poor villages in Egypt, for example, found that young girls were being married off to much older men from the oil rich Middle Eastern countries via brokers (Ibid). In Bangladesh, poverty-stricken parents are persuaded to part with their daughters through promises of marriage, or false marriages, which are used to lure the girls into prostitution abroad. Police in Cambodia say that hundreds, perhaps thousands of young women have been lured to Taiwan with promises of marriage to wealthy men, only to find themselves sold to a brothel owner (Ibid).

In many countries, especially among the poor, migrant or displaced communities, marriage at a young age is common. Usually it is girls who marry early (though it can happen to boys as well). The gender inequality present in all aspects of society, including education, leads to girls often lacking life skills and negotiating power. Therefore, while most boys have a say in when and who they marry and what they do once they are married, many girls do not get the chance to make these decisions. Early marriage can be a violation of children's basic rights-to a childhood, to an education, to good health and to make decisions about their own lives (save the children UK, 2006:1).

According to the research sponsored by UNICEF (2005) and conducted by EWLA on harmful traditional practices, early marriage is a common occurrence in many parts of our country. The national rate is 54% while studies conducted on 25 ethnic groups including Amharas, Oromos, Tigres, and Gurages show that the occurrence rate is in the area of 50 to 80% (EWLA, 2005:12).

Early marriage is attributable to both economic and cultural causes for its prevalence. In some parts of the country, it is not uncommon for parents to wed their daughters at early ages in turn for monetary and material benefits they derive by a way of dowry. In others parents agree to early marriage to protect their daughters from abduction. At times late adolescence marriage is not regarded as an acceptable way of wedding one's daughter. Still in others, girls are early wed to strengthen kinship and socialties. But the girl is not yet physically and mentally

prepared to shoulder the consequence of marriage when she is early wed. This exposes her to different harms and abuses (EWLA, 2005:13).

According to the Baseline Survey on Traditional Harmful Practices of Ethiopia (1998), early marriages are practiced to a large degree, over 60 % as reported by the sample population. In Amhara (82 %), Tigray (79%), Benishangul /Gumuz (64%), and Gambella (64%) (NCTPE,1998:66). Over 50% of girls were married under the age of 15 in Amhara (62 %), Tigray (53%), Addis Ababa (51 %) and Benishangul/ Gumuz (50%) (NCTPE, 1998).

Child marriage can have serious harmful consequences for children, including:-

- **Denial of Education:-** Once married, girls tend not to go to school. While marriage does not have to mean that a girl's or boy's education finishes, the attitudes of parents, school and spouses in many societies mean that it often does. Husbands of young wives are often older men, who expect their wives to follow tradition, stay home and under take household and child-care duties. A girl may be unable to go against her husband's wishes and the husband's family may refuse to invest their scarce resources in the wife's continued schooling (UNICEF, 2006:2].
- **Health problems:-** These include premature pregnancies, which cause higher rates of maternal and infant mortality Teenage girls are also more vulnerable to sexually-transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS (ibid].
- **Abuse:-** Many girls who are forced to marry early suffer from prolonged domestic violence. Abuse is common in child marriages. In addition, children who refuse to marry or who choose a marriage partner against the wishes of their parents are often punished or even, killed by their families in so - called 'honour killings' (Ibid).

### **2.4.3. Female Genital Mutilation**

As described by Hirut (2000), Female Genital Mutilation involves the removal of some or all of the external female genitalia and is usually performed on children by traditional birth attendants, midwives or old women that traditionally perform this practice in the community. The operation usually takes place under unhygienic circumstances with the operator lacking basic surgical training and with out anesthesia. According to Hirut (2000), therefore female genital mutilation is bound to result in serious health complications up to death. Those who

escape dramatic complications are left with major disabilities, which affect their physical and psychic health in later life (Rush wan, 1996:1, cited in Hirut ,2000:7).

World Health organization (1995), also defines FGM as Constituting all procedures which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non therapeutic reasons (WHO, 1995).

#### **2.4.3.1. Types of Female Genital Mutilation**

**Perforation:** involves an incision or sacrifice of the clitoris or clitoral prepuce. This seems to be done for symbolic purposes and is not popular in Ethiopia ( Hirut, 2000:7).

**Clitoridectomy:** “Sunna circumcision” is removal of the prepuce covering the clitoris. The only practice, (Out of the many that are encompassed by the term), which can correctly be termed circumcision, and which bears some resemblance to male circumcision (Ibid).

**Excision:** involves cutting of the tip of the clitoris, or the entire clitoris itself as well as the adjacent parts of the labia minora. This operation results in extensive scar tissue and permanent damage to the vaginal opening (Ibid). This is the most common form of female genital mutilation, 80% of those affected in Africa under go excision (Dorkenoo, 1994:5, cited in Hirut, 2000:8).

**Infibulation:** involves clitoridectomy and the excision of the labia minora as well as scraping or excision of the inner layers of the labia majora. The raw edges are stitched with thorns and sewn together subsequently to the excision and scraping. The vagina is effectively sealed except a small opening for the draining of urine and menstrual blood, (Boddy, 1982: 1989:51; Cloudsley, 1984:110; Light Foot Klein, 1989: 49-50; Dorkenoo, 1994:5, Cited in Hirut, 2000).

#### **Deinfibulation**

Deinfibulation is the reverse of the Process of infibulations and is usually performed where there is a need to get penetration in the vagina either during consummation of marriage or whenever there is a need for any vaginal or pelvic operation. It involves cutting through the scar of the previous operation to enlarge the vaginal introits. Sometimes, husband carry out

this process on their own under the crudest surgical conditions with razor blades or knives (Halima, 2006).

Halima (2006) indicated the case of victim girl who died as a result of de-infibulation by her own husband. The source she obtained from Dubti woreda court, reveals that, an old man who married an infibulated little girl couldn't disvirgin her. He repeatedly tried but he failed to do so. Finally, he used a sharp instrument to deinfibulate her and unfortunately he injured her very dangerously. And as a result the girl died because of excessive bleeding (Ibid).

### **Reinfibulation**

As its name indicates reinfibulation is the process of re-suturing of previously deinfibulated vulva. Reinfibulation is usually performed after delivery to make the vagina more narrower for the pleasure of the husband. In this situation also there is a very serious complication on the health of the woman. (Halima, 2006).

Hirut (2000) also indicated that in Ethiopia genital mutilation is practiced in many different forms, depending on the ethnic group. In the highland of Ethiopia in the area of Addis Ababa, all baby girls are excised, usually before they are 40 days old. In the areas adjacent to Somalia and in the Harar region, infibulations is most common similar to what is practiced in Somalia by its inhabitants (Hirut, 2000:10). An article published in Acta Tropica by Huber (1966) accounts that infibulations is prevalent in areas under the influence of the Arab and Islam in order to preserve virginity. Many other populations in the Ethiopian highlands practice excision. Included are the Amhara and the Beta Israel who are Jews and live north of Gonder and some of the Oromo, as well as Muslims, non-monotheistic groups and Cushitic populations in the south (Ibid).

The research conducted on Female Genital Mutilation by Guddina Tumsa Foundation (2003), also indicated that, female genital cutting has been practiced for several thousand years in almost 30 African and middle Eastern nations. It is also practiced to a lesser degree in parts of Asia. It is estimated that there are at present over 120 million girls and women who have undergone some form of genital mutilation. And that at least two million girls per year are at risk of mutilation. It is known that the physical and psychological effects of the practice are often very extensive affecting health, in particular sexual reproductive and mental health and

well-being. The damage done to the female sexual organs and their functions is extensive and irreversible. The age at which a girl is subject to this ranges from seven days old to young adulthood most commonly, it is performed between 2 and 15 years of age (GTF, 2003).

#### **2.4.3.2. Geographic Distribution of the Practice of FGM**

The practice of female genital mutilation occurs throughout the world. The International Planned Parenthood Federation estimates that between 85 and 115 million girls and women living today in the Arab world, sub-Saharan Africa, Malaysia, Indonesia, as well as in immigrant populations in Canada, the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, have undergone this traditional procedure (DuRocher, 1992:11 cited in Canada department of justice). Furthermore, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that up to 2 million girls are at risk of female genital mutilation annually (World Health Organization, 1994 cited in Canada department of justice).

Currently, only anecdotal accounts outline the range and forms of female genital mutilation allegedly practiced in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Data does exist, however, for the regions where FGM remains a traditional custom. Sunna circumcision continues in North and South Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Southern Algeria. Cases of excision are found throughout Africa, including Egypt, Mozambique, Botswana, and Lesotho. Infibulation remains customary in Somalia, Ethiopia, the Sudan, Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso and parts of the Ivory Coast. Although little information is available, it has been documented that this procedure is practiced by Muslim populations in the Philippines, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru (DuRocher, 1992:11, Cited in Canada department of justice).

#### **2.4.3.3. Justifications for FGM**

Although it has been documented that FGM is practiced by Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Animist, atheist, and agnostic communities, a common justification for the practice is that it is a required Islamic custom (Dorkenoo and Elworthy, 1992: 13 cited in Canada department of justice). Further examples of cross-cultural religious and cultural justifications for FGM have been collected and documented by Omer Hashi as follows (Omer Hashi, 1993 (b) cited in Canada department of justice).

- To ensure chastity before marriage

- To facilitate the marriage of young women
- To decrease the risk of nymphomania
- To reduce female sexuality and prevent masturbation
- To improve and facilitate cleanliness
- To increase fertility
- To keep the genital region smooth for aesthetic reasons
- To remove obstruction to sexual intercourse caused by a very large labia
- To tighten the vagina to increase sexual pleasure for men
- To be accepted as a full member in social groups, tribes, religious orders, etc.
- To fulfill religious requirements
- To confer the right for women to speak at public meetings
- To enter a mosque in some communities
- To attain the right to inherit property
- To avoid disgracing the family

Baseline survey on harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia also identified the following reasons for practicing FGM by different ethnic groups (NCTPE, 1998).

1. Avoidance of Sexiness
2. Avoidance of Trouble to Husband
3. Respect for Tradition
4. To Control the Woman's Reaction/Emotions (tranquilizer)
5. To Avoid Shame, Ostracization
6. To Avoid Stigmatization
7. Hygienic Reason
8. For the Good of the Woman
9. Esthetics Reasons
10. To Avoid Difficulty at Delivery
11. Religious Requirement

Research findings of Halima (2006), also indicated that the community in her research area (Dubti Woreda, Afar), gave three reasons for practicing FGM.

1. It enables to avoid or prevent sexiness of a girl (75% of the respondents said this).

2. It is a respect for the deep-rooted tradition (80% of the respondents confirmed this)
3. It is one of the religious requirements (85% of the respondents gave this reason)  
(Halima, 2006).

#### **2.4.4. Wives and Girls Battery or Physical Abuse**

Gender- based violence is seen as a profound health problem for women across the globe. A world Development Report in 1993 also identified rape and domestic violence as significant causes of disability and death among women of reproductive age in both the industrial and developing world (CODESRIA, 1997:10). The World Bank estimates that these account for 5 percent of the healthy years of life lost to women in demographically developing countries ( Heise et al. 1994, cited in CODESRIA).

Wife battering is seen as a form of torture (Copelon 1994,cited in CODESRIA) that is an independent violation of human rights. Wife beating is very much under reported and under documented, hence its prevalence is also underestimated around the world. The few statistics available, however, reveal the gruesome nature of the act. In the USA alone, over 2 million women get battered each year (Benokraitis 1996, cited in CODESRIA). Violence is said to occur at least once in two- thirds of all marriages, while one out of every eight couples admitted that there had been an act of violence between them which caused injury, and that between 40 and 60 percent of all police night calls were domestic disputes (Carrillo 1991, cited in CODESRIA).

Some 9500 and five million wife assault cases are reported annually in Sweden and Germany (Hyden 1994, Ampofo 1992, cited in CODESRIA) respectively. In France, 95 percent of victims of violence are women, while 25% of women cite battery as reason for divorce in Denmark (Carillo 1991, cited in CODESRIA). The first report of the British crime survey found that 10 percent of all assault victims were women who had been assaulted by their present or previous husband or lover. Analysis of assault on women in two Scottish villages in 1974 also revealed that wife assault was the second most common form of violent crime,

accounting for 25 percent of all crimes recorded by the police (UN 1989, cited in CODESRIA).

In developing countries the pattern seems to be the same even though statistics on the extent of the problem are incomplete. Carillo (1994) reports that in Chile, 80% of women found to be victims in a Santiago study, two thirds of rural women in Korea were periodically beaten by their husbands (CODESRIA, 1977:14). Furthermore, 50 percent of all married women were regularly beaten in Thailand while in Pakistan 99% of housewives and 77 % of working women were beaten by their husbands. Other reports have also found a high incidence of wife battering in such countries as Bangladesh, Colombia, Kenya, Kuwait, Nicaragua and Nigeria (ibid).

According to UNIFEM (1992), Kenya has the highest rate of wife battering in Africa (ibid). In Kenya a total of seventy one cases of domestic violence were reported in the news papers between the months of January and June 1997. Out of these, 37 were cases of violence against children and 28 were cases of violence against women by men in the family (ibid). The situation in Kenya as reported in the news papers reveals the extremely severe forms of violence which children are being subjected to. After serious domestic quarrels and fights, some parents vent their anger by punishing their innocent and defenceless children severely (ibid).

When it comes to Ethiopia, the country's women are relatively safer in the streets than they are in their home, because of wife battery by their husbands. Wife abuse is much under reported and under documented and hence it is under estimated in the country. Victims are often reluctant to report abuses because they feel ashamed of being assaulted by their husbands, or they may be afraid, or they may have a sense of family loyalty, and above all they are economically and socially dependent upon men who are abusing them. The use of violence by husbands against wives in the pretext of punishment or correction is widely accepted and many wives view this violence as an accepted part of life. In Ethiopia girls are also usually beaten than the boys. They are beaten by their fathers, their brothers and even by their relatives. Girls are also beaten by their boy friends.

Domestic violence against women is an extremely complex phenomena, deeply-rooted in gender based power relations. There are various barriers, which are prejudicial to women, which range from legislation to cultural beliefs that trap women in abusive relationships to the refusal of the police and the court to interfere in what they call “private matters”. Along this, lie a variety of mechanisms, from oral traditions to formal education, which accept that males are dominant and that violence is an acceptable means of asserting power and resolving conflict (Rakeb: 1996:Vii).

Rakeb (1997), in her another research also showed that, violence within the family is not a new phenomenon. However, the issue has only been recognized as a major social problem in the early1970s. The main reason for the delay in its recognition as a social problem is that the responses to domestic violence are influenced by social values (Rakeb, 1997: 47). According to her research, almost all societies consider the family a private place where no one should intervene, even when severe incidence of domestic violence is pertinent. The maintenance of the family as a unit takes precedence over the safety of women. In addition, because of the social acceptance of male dominance, women learn from an early age of acquiesce in make demands. Many societies condone, as well, the disciplining of wives and thus perpetuate violence in the family (ibid).

Rakeb (1997), in her research identified that among the women whom are victims of violence in the family, almost 82.8 percent responded yes, when asked if they have been hit, slapped, kicked, or otherwise physically hurt by their intimate partners, within one year. Her study further showed that 42.3 percent of the women were battered even when pregnant. One respondent admitted that she miscarried when she was three months pregnant because of the beatings (Rakeb, 1997:51).

According to the research finding of Rakeb (1997), among the battered women, only 24.14 percent reported the beating to the police. Among the 72.42 percent of women who never reported the violence to the police, 9.5 percent admitted that they did not report the abuse because they were afraid that their husbands will beat them again, 14.3 percent admitted that it is because they loved them, 4.8 percent believed that battering is common in every women’s life, 14.3 percent do not have enough money to sustain their children and

themselves, while 14.3 percent were embarrassed of what people might say, and 23.8 percent wanted to preserve the family secret (Ibid).

Solomon (1999) also indicated that, in all parts of Ethiopia and in all cultures, women have frequently been the victims of abuse by their intimates. As a result of negative societal attitudes towards women, women are forced to live in violent homes. Many women prefer to suffer in silence than reporting to the police. The reason for not reporting to the police is because of widely held belief that it is the husband's right to chastise or even to kill his wife, if she is regarded as sufficiently disobedient (Solomon, 1999:7). The norms and socialization process of a society are major factors that contributed to the toleration and manifestation of violence. Both men and women are raised in a patriarchal society and learn, therefore to behave in a gender appropriate ways that are further reinforced by other socializing agents and institutions (Kevin, 1996: 198, cited in Solomon). Women have been brought up to believe that they are inferior to men both physically and mentally. During their childhood girls are under the control of their fathers and brothers. After marriage, they will be under the custody of their husbands. There is a widely held belief that a good husband has to control his wife to keep the household in order (Solomon, 1999).

In many culture the notion of man as woman's protector and provider; the expectation that women should be passive and submissive have been the accepted notions. Some old customs and traditional practice still continue to support the common perception of men as dominant and women as weak and inferior. Invariably, the relationships between the sexes are marked by two cultural features. These are inequality between the sexes, in which men assume that they should play a dominate role, and a tendency for men to view women as "actual or potential sex objects" (Andargachew, 1996:7, cited in Solomon). Because of some cultural values many individuals believe that mild violence like slapping is acceptable and can even be interpreted as an expression of love. Among some ethnic groups of Ethiopia, wife battering occurs because beating shows that man loves a woman. It is believed that women also expect to be beaten, otherwise they fell rejected. Is addition, beating a wife or treating woman violently is a sign of being a man (Tigist, 1998: 19 cited in Solomon).

The perception of many individuals towards family privacy has also negative effects on the context of domestic violence. Women, who have been assaulted by their partners, would be fearful of mentioning the assault to a stranger (Margaret, 1993:23, cited in Solomon). They are seriously constrained from seeking help outside the family. Further more, the problem associated with domestic violence were worsened by the victim's and society's view of the family, the unwillingness of the victim to report the crime and the unwillingness of the authorities and society to accept domestic violence as a crime and as an issue to be addressed in public sphere (Center for Social Development, 1992:8, cited in Solomon).

The study on Gender and Cross-Cultural Dynamics by Habtamu et al. (2004), also shows that wives and child beating is common in Ethiopia. According to this research, Tigray (39.78), Agnuak, (38.82) and Gurage (29.06) seems to be harshest on their children, while the Agnuak (29.08), Oromo (9.39) and Afar (8.27) are the harshest on their wives (Habtamu et al, 2004:28)

There are various literatures on gender issues around the world. It is only very few of them presented in this research, because of time, space and resource constraints. When it comes to the Ethiopian case, the available literatures on gender issues are very scant. Majority of the available literatures are also focused on educational issue of women, micro finance, decision making, work loads of women and etc.

These are only very few literatures on violence against women and girls and majority of these literatures are focused on domestic violence and sexual harassment. They are mainly concentrated on wife battery, marital rape, psychological abuse of women and sexual harassment at educational institutions and the like. And most of the research works on violence also raise the issue from legal point of view. And again majority of the research works especially conducted by students concentrate on Addis Ababa and selected Regions. Pastoralist communities and far Regions are marginalized in research works. And finally, majority of the few research works on violence also see women in isolation from the powerful men who dominate the whole spheres of lives. In other words, they ignore to assess the perception of men towards women.

Therefore, this research on violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities of the Fentalle (Oromia) and the Mille (Afar) tries to fill the gaps mentioned above. This research tries to assess how violence against women and girls are committed in 4 customary marriages such as Cross-Cousin marriage, Levirate (widow inheritance), Sororate (sisters substitution for the dead wives) and Early marriage. Some of the research works on these marriages have also tried to see them from the harmful traditional practices point of view. I haven't come across any research which mentions about violence against women and girls in these customary marriages. But as mentioned in Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against women, any forceful or pressure act against women, whether it is psychological, Physical, social, cultural and etc. is considered violence against women.

When it comes to FGM, different research works have been done on this issue. But, majority of the research works concentrate on secondary data, and they are not that much detail. Many of them couldn't analyze the perceptions of men and women and their justifications behind FGM. The researcher so far only came across the dissertation of Hirut (2000), and the baseline survey on Traditional Harmful practices of Ethiopia (1998), which are detail and include various factors. Especially, Hirut (2000) has tried to analyze FGM in detail on Arsi Oromo's. Her research analyzes various factors such as perceptions of the communities and the justifications behind FGM. The National Committee on Traditional Harmful practices (1998) also tried to see FGM in wider geographical locations. The Study included 69 ethnic groups and it tried to identify the prevalence rate, the perceptions and the justifications behind FGM.

In this regard, this research on violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities of Mille and Fentalle will contribute its part on FGM. This research will try to analyze the perceptions of men, women, boys and girls about FGM and the justifications behind it. The research will also try to see the perceptions of illiterate boys and girls, as well as the opinion of in school boys and girls, on FGM. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will contribute its part for the existing few literatures on female genital mutilation.

When it comes to wives and girls physical abuse, majority of the research works concentrated on Addis Ababa and the surrounding areas. It can be said that except the research on Gender and Cross Cultural Dynamics (2004), no research has been conducted on wives and girls battery in the pastoralist communities of the research sites. As the preliminary assessments of this research indicated, women and girls in Mille and Fentalle are daily suffering from beatings. Therefore, this research will try to analyze the magnitude of the problems and the perceptions of men, women, boys and girls towards wives and girls beating and their justifications behind it. The research will also try to assess the perceptions of illiterate and in school boys and girls.

In general, the research on violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities of Fentalle and Mille has a wider scope than many other researches, because it deals with 2 different Regions( Oromia and Afar) and 4 pastoralist and agro pastoralist kebeles. The Research also encompasses various types of violence into one research, such as violence committed in 4 customary marriages (Cross-Cousin, Levirate, Sororate and Early Marriages), Female Genital Mutilation and Wives and Girls beating. It also incorporates the perceptions of women, men, boys and girls about violence against women and girls.

Therefore, this research has been assumed to contribute its part to the existing literatures and research works and fill the gaps that other researchers have not touched upon. And it is hoped that the findings of this research will have some impact on future policy and planning concerning violence against women and girls.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. Brief Analysis of the Strengths and the Weaknesses of the Ethiopian Laws and Policies Regarding the Rights of Women and Girls**

#### **3.1. The constitution**

Article 34 (2) of the Ethiopian constitution declares that marriage shall be entered in to only with **free** and **full consent** of the intending spouses [FDRE, 1995:92)

The constitution provided the rights of woman in Article 35 as follows:-

1. Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this constitution, have equal right with men.

2. Women have equal rights with men in marriage as prescribed by this constitution.
3. The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions.
4. The state shall enforce the right of women to eliminate the influences of cultural customs. Laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women are prohibited.
5. (a) Women have the right to maternity leave with full pay. The duration of maternity leave shall be determined by law taking into account the nature of the work, the health of the mother and the well-being of the child and family (b) Maternity leave may, in accordance with the provisions of law, include prenatal leave with full pay.
6. Women have the right to full consultation in the formulation of national development policies, the designing and execution of projects, and particularly in the case of projects affecting the interests of women.
7. Women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In particular, they have equal rights with men with respect to use, transfer, administration and control of land. They shall also enjoy equal treatment in the inheritance of property.
8. Women shall have a right to equality in employment, promotion, pay, and transfer of pension entitlement.
9. To prevent harm arising from pregnancy and childbirth and in order to safeguard their health, women have the right of access to family planning education, information and capacity.

### **3.2. The International Conventions**

Ethiopia is signatory to many international conventions for the promotion and protection of women's rights. The Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is one of the major ones among these. The convention focuses specifically on women's human rights and contains detailed provisions on gender discrimination. This convention was signed by Ethiopia in 1981 and contains guarantees of equality and freedom

from discrimination both by the state and the private sectors in all areas and public and private life (Panos Ethiopia, 2004:12).

Other international conventions signed by Ethiopia that have direct bearing on the rights of women are: The Optional Protocol to CEDAW; the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages; the Convention on the Political Rights of Women; the Convention for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons; the Convention on Discrimination in Employment and the International Labor Organizations' Equal Remuneration Convention (ibid).

At the regional level Ethiopia is signatory to the African charter on human and people's rights, which contains provisions that protect women (ibid). In order to domesticate these international conventions signed by the Ethiopian government, the 1995 constitution of Ethiopia provides in Article 9(4) that "all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are integral part of the law of the land. It also provides in Article 13 (2) the fundamental right and freedoms recognized by the constitution shall be interpreted in a manner conforming to the principles of the universal declaration of human rights, International conventions on human right and international instruments adopted by Ethiopia (FDRE, 1995:81).

### **3.3. The Amended Criminal Code**

Article 587 of the amended criminal code provides the following on **abduction**:

1. Whoever with intent to marry a woman abducts her by violence, or commits such an act after having obtained her consent by intimidation, threat, trickery or deceit,, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from three to ten years(criminal code, 2005:342-343).
2. Where the act of abduction is accompanied by rape, the perpetrator shall be liable to the punishment prescribed for rape in this code (ibid).
3. The conclusion of a marriage between the abductor and the abducted subsequent to the abduction shall not preclude criminal liability (ibid).
4. Nothing shall affect the right of the victim to claim compensation under civil law for the moral and material damage she may have sustained as a result of the abduction.

Article 588 of the criminal code also provides that, whoever knowing her conditions, intentionally carries off an insane, feeble-minded or retarded woman, one not fully conscious or one who is incapable or has been rendered incapable of defending herself or of offering resistance, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from five years to fifteen years (ibid.).

Regarding abduction of minor, articles 589 provides the following: Whoever abducts another by violence, or commits such an act after having obtained his or her consent by intimidation or violence, trickery or deceit, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from five years to fifteen years (ibid).

Article 620 of the amended criminal code also provides the following on **rape:-**

1. Whoever compels a woman to submit to sexual intercourse outside wedlock, whether by the use of violence or grave intimidation or after having rendered her unconscious or incapable of resistance, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from five years to fifteen years (FDRE, 2005: 361)
2. Where the crime is committed:
  - a) On a young woman between thirteen and eighteen years of age; or
  - b) On an inmate of an alms-house or asylum or any establishment of health, education, correction, detention or interment which is under the direction, supervisions or authority of the accused person, or on anyone who is under the supervision or control of the dependent upon him; or
  - c) On a woman incapable of understanding the nature or consequences of the act, or of resisting the act, due to old-age, physical or mental illness, depression or any other reason; or
  - d) By a number of men acting in concert, or by subjecting the victim to act of cruelty or sadism, the punishment shall be rigorous imprisonment from five years to twenty years ( ibid).
- (3) Where the rape has caused grave physical or mental injury or death, the punishment shall be life imprisonment.
- (4) Where the rape is related to illegal restrain or abduction of the victim, or where communicable disease had been transmitted to her, the relevant provisions of this

code shall apply concurrently (ibid).

Article 627 (1) also provides the following regarding sexual outrages committed on infants:-

1. Whoever performs sexual intercourse with a minor of the opposite sex, who is under the age of thirteen years, or causes her to perform such an act with her, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from fifteen years to twenty five years (FDRE, 2005: 365).

Article 582 of the amended criminal code also provides the following on **coercion of women or girls:**

whoever resorts to violence or to threats of a serious injury to the victim or to a third party tied to him by blood, marriage or affection, or by interfering in any other unlawful or improper way with the liberty of action of another, compels her (him) to do a things or to permit it to be done, or to refrain from doing it or from permitting it to be done is punishable, with simple imprisonment not exceeding three years, or fine (FDRE,2005:341).According to this Article, interfering in the freedom of a woman or girls not to conclude marriage on her own free will due to dowry is illegal.

The amended criminal code of the country, in its Article 565 provides that following on female circumcision. Whoever circumcises a woman of any age is punishable with simple imprisonment for not less than three months, or fine not less than five hundred Birr (FDRE, 2005: 332).

Regarding infibulations of the Female genitalia, the criminal code also provides the following in its article 566 (1) and (2).

1. Whoever infibulates the genitalia of a woman, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from three years to five years.
2. Where injury to body or health has resulted due to the act prescribed in sub-article (1) above, subject to the provision of the criminal code which provides for a more sever penalty, the punishment shall be rigorous imprisonment from five years to ten years (ibid).

The new criminal code in its Article 564 provides the following on violence against a marriage partner or a person cohabiting in an irregular union. According to this Article the relevant provision of this code (Arts 555-560) shall apply to a person who, by doing violence to a marriage partner or a person cohabiting in an irregular union, causes grave or common injury to his/her physical or mental health (FDRE, 2005:331).

Accordingly, Article 555 of the revised criminal code states the following:-

Whoever intentionally

- a) Wounds a person so to endanger his/her life or to permanently jeopardize his/her physical or mental health; or
- b) Maims her/his body or one of his/her essential limbs or organs, or disables them, or gravely and conspicuously disfigures her/him; or
- c) In any other way inflicts upon another an injury or disease of a serious nature, is punishable, according to the circumstances of the case and the gravity of the injury, with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding fifteen years, or with simple imprisonment for not less than one year(FDRE 2005:327).

Article 556 of the criminal code again, provides the following for common willful injury:-

1. Whoever causes another to suffer an injury to body or health other than those specified in Article 555 above, is punishable, upon complaint, with simple imprisonment not exceeding one year, or with fine.
2. The crime is punishable, upon accusation, with simple imprisonment from six months to three years where:
  - a) The criminal has used poison, a lethal weapon or any other instrument capable of inflicting injuries:
  - b) The victim is weak, sick or incapable of defending himself/herself (ibid).

The amended criminal code in its Article 558 provides that, whoever has caused grave -injury through criminal negligence, although his intention was to inflict common injury, is punishable with simple imprisonment from six months to three years (FDRE, 2005: 326).

Article 560 (1) of the amended criminal code also provides that, whoever assaults another or does him/her violence without causing bodily injury or impairment of health, is punishable,

upon complaint, with a fine not exceeding three hundred Birr, or, in serious case, with simple imprisonment not exceeding three months.(ibid).

Under Articles ( 555-560) of the criminal code,, women and girls are protected from acts of battery from their husbands, boy friends or any other persons.

Regarding the **spreading of human diseases**, the criminal code provides in its article 514 (1-3) the following:-

1. Whoever intentionally spreads or transmits a communicable human disease, is punishable with rigorous imprisonments not exceeding ten years.
2. Where the criminal:
  - a) Has spread or transmitted a disease which can cause grave injury or death, out of hatred or envy, with milieu or with a base motive: or
  - b) Without even the particular intent specified in sub-article (a) of this article has spread or transmitted a disease which can cause grave injury or death: or
  - c) Has transmitted an epidemic, the punishment shall be rigorous imprisonment not exceeding twenty years, or in grave case, with rigorous imprisonment for life or death.
3. Where the crime is committed negligently, the punishment shall be simple imprisonment or fine (FDRE 2005: 303-304).

### **3.4. The Revised Family Code**

Article 6 of the revised family code states that, a valid marriage shall take place only when the spouses have given **their free and full consent** (FDRE, 200: 4).

Article 14 (1) and (2) of the family code also **invalid consent extorted by violence**:

1. Marriage concluded as a result of consent which is extorted by violence shall not be valid.
2. Consent is deemed to be extorted by violence where it is given by a spouse to protect himself or one of his ascendants or descendants, or any other close relative from a serious and imminent danger or threats of danger (ibid).

Article 7 of the family code has increased the **minimum age of marriage** for **both girls and boys**. The article stated that:

1. Neither a man nor a woman who has not attained the full age of eighteen years shall conclude marriage.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-article (1) of this Article, the Ministry of Justice may, on the applications of the future spouses, or the parents or guardian of one of them, for serious causes, grant dispensation of no more than two years(ibid).

The Federal revised family code in its Article 9 (2), also prohibited marriage between a man and the sister of his wife ( **Sororate**) and a woman and the brother of her husband ( **Levirate**) (ibid).In relation to this the new criminal code Article 647 (1) provided that, whoever intentionally solemnizes a marriage forbidden by law, is punishable with simple imprisonment not exceeding three years, or fine not exceeding five thousand birr(FDRE,2005:376).

The revised family code also grants the wife and the husband the opportunity to bring request of divorce for whatever reason (Article 77(1) {FDRE, 2000; 24}.

According to this family code Article 76, marriage shall dissolved by **divorce** where:

- a) The spouses have agreed to divorce by mutual consent and such agreement is accepted by the court or
- b) The spouses or one of them made a petition, for divorce, to the court (ibid).

As provided in Article 77 (3) of this family code, the spouses are not even required to disclose the reason when they present their written divorce petition to the court (ibid).

### **3.5. The National Policy on Ethiopian Women**

The National policy on Ethiopian women was formulated in 1993 by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. And the policy has the following contents:

1. Ensuring the full development and advancement of women and guaranteeing them the enjoyment of their democratic and human rights so that they can participate in the economic, social and political life of their country on equal basis with men.
2. Modifying or abolishing existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which aggravates discrimination against women and facilitating conditions conducive to their participation in the decision making process at all levels.

3. Creating a situation where by societies discriminatory attitude towards women and women's complacence about it are eliminated through elevated awareness.
4. Making sure that women participate in the formulation of government policies, laws, regulations, programmes, plans and projects that directly or indirectly benefits and concern women as well as in the implementation there of
5. Encouraging research work on ways and means of lightening the work- load of women as well as increasing their income and compiling the results thereof for use by others, too
6. Coordinating all government programmes that concern women and follow up their implementation to make sure that they are free from duplication and that they do not involve unnecessary costs
7. Incorporating women's affairs in to government structures and entrusting a government body with it as well as establishing branches thereof in all Ministries and government organizations
8. Making sure that government policies, laws, regulation, plans and other activities are based on the following objectives:
  - Ensuring that discrimination on the basis of sex is not made and that a special attention is given to rural women in view of the fact that they face particular problems and shoulder a heavier burden
  - Ensuring that women are involved in the elaboration, implementation and decision making process
  - Making sure that women participate in the fields of development activity and enjoy the benefits thereof on an equal basis with men and guaranteeing them legal protection of their rights (ibid).

From the above brief analysis of Ethiopian laws and policies on the rights of women and girls, it can generally be said that Ethiopia has a very conducive environment with regard to the legal framework protecting and guaranteeing women's rights. The Constitution, the National Women's Policy, the Revised Family Code, the Amended Criminal Code, Ratification of the International Conventions and etc. are the positive measures taken by the government of Ethiopia. These laws and policies show the commitment of Ethiopian Government to change the lives of Ethiopian women. we can conclude that the country has beautiful laws with regard

to the rights of women. These laws are strong enough to protect the rights of Ethiopian women if they are correctly and effectively translated in to action.

But, the problem is related to the implementation of these laws and policies. When these efforts are brought to the ground, they face various implementation related problems. The societal negative attitude towards women and girls is the primary barrier for the implementation of the laws and the policies. This country has been male dominated society where male superiority and female inferiority is accepted as a norm. Women are considered as if they were created only to serve the interests of men and they are expected to be submissive and docile. Women themselves accept this as normal phenomenon given to them by God. And as a result, every discrimination and violence acts are committed on them. Therefore, unless this kind of attitude is changed, whatever laws are in acted and whatever legal reforms are made, no major change is expected.

The other problem affecting the implementation of the laws and policies is related to the Coexistence of statutory and customary laws. In traditional societies like ours, although there are statutory laws, there are also customary laws. In pastoral or peasant communities, people are not aware of these statutory laws. They use customary laws and these include the attitudes of the particular communities on gender relations. Given the co-existence, not seldom contradictory, of statutory and customary laws, anyone coming up with policies on gender relations and equality between the two sexes cannot afford to overlook this huge problem and has to come to terms with these customary laws when found necessary and reject some of them when they prove to be a deterrent to development ( Panos Ethiopia, 2004: 17).

The final problem in implementing the laws is related to the law enforcement organs. Lack of training, patriarchal values that underwrite these institutions, logistic difficulties and sheer absence of law enforcement personnel still stand in the way of effectively implementing the reform initiatives. Both the government and the civil sector need to take an intervention in the building of the capacity of law enforcement organs (ibid).

In a country where the law makes little impact on the daily lives of people, relying on legislation as a vital instrument of social change is untenable. It is therefore, important to

recognize that non - legal measures, such as advocacy, civic education and other grass root activities should remain important elements of government and civic sector concerns (ibid)

It is also indicated that the country has no gender policy. But, gender policy is important to make men internalize the problems that Ethiopian women are facing. Women alone can not bring the desired change. As the negative attitude of the society towards women is deep-rooted, the desired change will only come if our focus is on gender rather than on women. Women and men should join hand in hand to narrow the gender gap. Therefore, the country should formulate its gender policy.

As indicated in the theoretical framework of this research, legislative measures alone can not emancipate women from oppression. What is more important is changing the patriarchal attitude of the society by changing the structure of the society. In addition to the legislative measures, changing the existing unequal power relations between women and men through the conscious and organized struggle of women themselves is important.

As the negative attitude of the society also develops and perpetuated in the family, it is also equally important to change the socialization process of the society. This is important, because children learn the whole experiences of their families including the subordinate position of women and girls through their socialization. They learn from their fathers that men are superior and female are inferior and as a result they apply in their families when they grow up. Therefore, due to this fact oppression of women and girls continues for generations. Therefore, changing the socialization process of children is important to bring the desired change on the rights of women and girls.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. The Research Findings

#### 4.1. General Characteristics of the Respondents

A total of 200 respondents participated in the field survey using semi-structured questionnaires. Separate questionnaires were prepared for women and men. All the respondents were from rural pastoralist and agro pastoralist areas and both sexes were equally represented in the study. Demographic characteristics of the study population such as age, marital status, education, occupation, religion etc are shown on tables (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Majority of the respondents belong to the age group 25-30, followed by 19-24, 13-18 and 31-36. The age group 61 and above represent only 2%. Regarding religion of the respondents, 99% are Muslim where as only 1% represent the traditional (wakeffata) religion. 78% of the respondents are illiterate while 14% have formal education. Majority of the respondents are pastoralists (33%), followed by students (14%), and agro pastoralists (9%). Again by far majority of the respondents (72%) are married where as (28%) of them are single. The following tables show these general characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 1. Distribution of the respondents by age group**

Age	Frequency	%
13-18	32	16
19-24	36	18
25-30	56	28
31-36	24	12
37-42	22	11
43-48	10	5
49-54	8	4
55-60	8	4
61	4	2
Total	200	100

Source: Table Research on Violence against women and girls in the Pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 2. Distribution of the sample population by sex and religion**

	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Frequency	%
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Muslim	98	99	100	100	198	99
Orthodox	--	--	--	--		
Catholic	--	--	--	--		
Protestant	--	--	--	--		
Traditional (wakeffata)	2	1	--	--	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100	200	100

Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the Pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 3. Distribution of the sample population by educational background**

Education Level	Number	%
Illiterate	156	78
Read and write	4	2
Quranic education	12	6
1-4 grade	12	6
5-8 grade	10	5
9-10 grade	6	3
Total	200	100

Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 4. Distribution of the respondents by the type of occupation**

Type of occupation	Number	%
Pastoralist	66	33
Cowboy	13	6.5
Agro pastoralist	18	9
Student	28	14
House wife	72	36
Home servant	3	1.5
Total	200	100

Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 5. Distribution of the respondents by marital status**

Marital status	Number	%
Married	144	72
Single	56	28

Total	200	100
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Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the Pastoralist communities, 2007

As table 5 above indicates, in the survey method the researcher restricted himself only to the married and single respondents. Because, he wanted to assess the experiences of married women and men in their own marriages regarding violence against women and girls. He is also interested to know the opinion of un- married boys and girls on violence against women and girls.

Regarding the characteristics of the focus group discussion participants and the key informants, the participants were selected in consultation with the advisory group of the community stakeholders. The participants with different social backgrounds such as, married, unmarried, divorced and widowed women, illiterate girls and girls in school were included. Again, married, unmarried, religious and clan leaders, illiterate boys and boys in school were also included in the study.

## **4.2. The Findings**

### **4.2.1. Violence committed in customary marriages in the study areas**

The research findings indicated that violence against women and girls is committed in the following four customary marriages:

1. Violence committed in Cross-Cousin marriage [Marriage to the sons of the mothers' brothers or marriage to the daughters of the fathers' sisters)
2. Violence committed in Levirate (widow inheritance) marriage by the brothers of the dead husbands
3. Violence committed in Sororate marriage (substitution of the sisters for the dead wives)
4. Violence committed in Early Childhood Marital Promise

As identified by the focus group discussion and the key informants, in all these types of marriages women and girls are not asked their consent about their marriages. The marriages are decided by the families and the clans without any consent from the girls.

The survey findings also indicated that violence acts are committed on women and girls in 4 customary marriages practiced in the study areas. These are Levirate, Cross-Cousin marriages, Early Childhood Marital Promise, and Sororate marriages. The survey result also confirmed that in all these types of marriages women and girls are not asked their consent on their marriages.(see Annex I, table 6,7,8,9 and 10). The findings of each of these marriages, such as, Cross- Cousin, Levirate, Sororate, and Early Childhood Marital Promise marriages are discussed in the following sections:

#### **4.2.1.1. Violence committed in Cross-Cousin (Absuma) Marriage**

Cross-cousin marriage is prevalent in both Fentalle and Mille districts. But, there is a big difference between Fentalle and Mille regarding this type of marriage. In Mille girls have no option other than abiding to cross-cousin marriage. Every Afar girl must marry one of her uncle's sons. But, in Fentalle Cross-Cousin marriage exists as one option of marriage. Girls in Fentalle have many other options for their marriages. Abduction, exchange of girls between the brothers of the girls, chebsa ( sudden entry of the boys to the girls houses at night ), and asking parents or sending elders to the girls' parents are some of the options available to the girls in Fentalle. But what is common for Fentalle and Mille is that girls are not asked their consent in this type of marriage.

This type of marriage is called '*Absuma*' in Afar and every girl in Afar knows that one day one of her uncle's son will be her husband. But the girls do not exactly know which one of their uncle's sons would be their future husbands until their wedding days. As *absuma* marriage is obligatory for Afar girls, the girls in urban areas who are attending schools are also forced to marry their *absumas* in rural areas. Some of the female enumerators for my research are students of 8 and 10 grades living in Mille town. Two of them have their uncles' sons in rural areas who want to marry them. They told the researcher that their uncles' sons who live in rural areas asked their families many times for the marriage to take place. Therefore, they could not attentively follow their education, because their families may force them to marry any time. One of them told the researcher that she would disappear from the area rather than marrying and living in rural areas where life is difficult. Another one told him

that, as girls in Afar are relatively free to leave their husbands after giving their virginity, she would escape immediately after the wedding to continue her education.

In absuma marriage, the marriage is simply decided either by the families or by the clan members without any consent from the girls. The focus group discussion participants and the key informants confirmed that cross-cousin marriage is decided by the families and the clans of the girls. They also indicated that girls are not asked their consent in this type of marriage. All the participants agreed that in their culture asking girls for marriage is unknown and it is their families and their clans who decide marriages for them.

The survey result also indicated the same findings. Out of the total respondents (95%) confirmed that cross-cousin marriage is determined by the families of the spouses, while (5%) said that it is decided by the clans. The married women and men who married by this form of marriage were asked whether their consent (for women) and the consent of their wives (for men) were asked in their marriage. Out of the total married women respondents who married by absuma marriage 92% said that their consent was not asked. And again, out of the total married men respondents, 96% said that the consent of their wives was not asked when they married them. (See Annex I, table 11, 12 and 13).

The focus group discussants and in-depth interviewees were asked why girls are not asked their consents and what will happen to them if they refuse the marriages. The major reasons for not asking the consent of girls in their communities, according to the participants, are: asking the consent of girls in marriage is not known in their culture; girls see the physical appearances of men or boys, not their internal qualities, such as their character, their ability to administer their wives, their economic and social backgrounds, from which clan their husbands are, (there are certain clans for which inter-marriage is forbidden) and etc. Therefore, the families and the clans are anxious that, if girls are allowed to marry by themselves, or if they are asked their consents, they may marry outside the permissible circle. And as a result, they may face problems in their marriages. Their husbands may divorce them any time, or they may abuse them, or they may even kill them. In such cases, their families and their clans cannot defend them, because the clans of their husbands might not be known to the communities or the clans might not have smooth relationships with the families and clans of the girls. On the other hand, if the marriage is determined by the families or the clans of the girls, the families and the clans would defend the rights of the girls if any problem arises, as

every body is administered by the families and the clans. Some of the research participants also said that girls are not asked their consent, because they are subordinate in the community.

The survey result also confirmed the same finding. Out of the total respondents, 60% said that in their culture asking girls for their consent is not known, 26% said that girls do not know who would be their good husbands, and as a result, if they are given the right to decide on their marriage, they would simply be cheated by the physical appearances of the boys and the men, 14% said that girls are subordinate in their communities, and as a result, they are not asked their consent ( See Annex I, table 14).

The qualitative research finding of this study also indicated that girls cannot refuse this marriage. The focus group discussion participants and the key informants agreed that if girls are found to refuse the marriage, they are physically, psychologically and socially forced and pressurized by their families and their clans to marry according to the prevailing custom. They are beaten and tied up for refusing the marriage; and, even after they are beaten and tied up for refusing, they cannot escape the marriage bond.

The survey finding also indicated that if the girls are found to refuse their marriages for which their families and their clans decided for them, they are beaten, tied up and forced to marry by their families and their clans. Out of the total married women respondents who married by this form of marriage, 72% said that if they refuse the marriage they would be beaten, tied up and forced to marry, 28% said that they can not refuse the marriage as far as they are administered by their families. ( See Annex I, table 15 ).

The other point of discussion for the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was the justifications given by the community for cross-cousin marriage. Whether it is cultural or religious, whether they want the marriage to continue or discontinue. The participants of both focus group discussion and the key informants have confirmed that this type of marriage has nothing to do with the Islam Religion and it is entirely cultural. But, the religious leaders who participated in the focus group discussion and know the religion very well confirmed that in Islam religion marrying the daughter of the father's sister is permissible. But they stressed that forcing girls in marriage is related to culture. The religion

does not force women and girls in their marriage and it recommends that consent of girls should be asked, according to their opinion.

The benefits attached to cross –cousin marriage by the community members are:

1. It creates harmonious relationships between the couples. The assumption is that, since they are relatives, they will tolerate and sympathetic towards each other.
2. Absence of dowry. If somebody wants to marry an *outsider* girl, he has to pay 12 heads of cattle for the family of the girl in the form of dowry. But, in cross-cousin marriage, there is no dowry at all.
3. It strengthens the existing relationships between the clan members.
4. Retaining property within clans. As all men are expected to marry their relatives, property does not go *outside* in the form of inheritance.
5. It enables disabled and unattractive girls to have husbands. As marriage for boys is also determined by the families and the clans, boys are also forced to marry those girls.

Regarding their attitudes towards cross-cousin marriage, men focus group discussion participants and the key informants agreed that they want the marriage to continue in the future, because they do not want their long-standing culture to disappear. But, majority of the women participants said that *absuma* marriage has to be eliminated. And quite a large number of the women participants also agreed that it has to continue. On the other hand, the girls and the boys were divided into two. The illiterate girls and boys responded the same with the men, i.e. this marriage has to continue. But, both male and female students, on the other hand, responded negatively. They all agreed that this type of marriage has to be eliminated and marriage should be arranged with the consent of the girls

The survey result also shows that cross-cousin marriage is assumed to have three benefits: 62% of the respondents said that it strengthens the relations between the clan members and it

avoids dowry, 13% said that it enables disabled and non beautiful girls to get husbands, 10% of the respondents

said that, it maintains and preserves their culture. (See Annex I, table 16).

The survey result again confirmed the same finding regarding the attitudes of the respondents towards cross-cousin marriage. Majority of the married men respondents (91.7%) said that absuma marriage has to continue, while majority of the women (79.2%) said that they do not want cross-cousin marriage to continue. Again, majority of the boy respondents, (71.4 %) said that since absuma marriage helps to strengthens blood relationships between the parents of the spouses, and since it is their culture they want it to continue, while majority of the girl respondents, (71.4%) said that absuma marriage has to be avoided and the consent of the girls has to be asked. (See Annex I, table 17, 18, 19, and 20).

### **Violence Committed During Honeymoon in Cross-Cousin (absuma) marriage**

As the qualitative findings of this research indicated, every Afar girl in the research areas knows that one of her uncle's sons will marry her as this is the norm of the community. But, she does not know who exactly will be her husband. Even information about her wedding day and ceremony is kept hidden from her. As observed in the research sites, herding goat and sheep is undertaken by the girls. It is only some young girls under the age of 10 who are observed attending schools. Therefore, many girls at the age of marriage follow their cattle in the grazing-fields. While the girl is out in the field, her uncle's son sends elders to the parents of the daughter to arrange the wedding ceremony. Wedding ceremony is held and *neka* is tied (making the marriage in a religious way) in the absence of the girl. They do this because they know that the girl will refuse the marriage and, as a result, they suspect that she may disappear or she may take other measures including suicide.

In the evening, when the girl comes back home from the field the boy waits for her at the gate with his friends and tells her that he is now her husband. He forcefully takes her away with the help of his friends, to the place he prepared for the *honeymoon*. He takes her to the forest where nobody hears her screaming and come to help her to the hardships she faces. Before he tries to rape her, he ties her hands to her back to counter her resistance. She is kept in the forest until he takes away her virginity, no matter how long the process takes. The focus group

discussion participants and the key informants were asked why girls are taken to the forest. Women and men replied differently. Women participants said that:-

1. Infibulated girls are highly resistant to allow the taking of their virginity, because it is

highly painful for them. Because of this, they may cry for help and, as a result, their cries might be heard by others, if it is done in the house/hut. Therefore, the husband is

not free to do whatever he wants. Therefore, he takes her to the forest.

2. The other reason mentioned by the women participants was that, the houses or the huts of the pastoralists are too small and too hot, which is not convenient for the honeymoon.

3. Since the girl is forced to marry by her parents, she has no interest in the marriage, and, as a result, she may escape if the condition is convenient for her. Thus, she is taken to the forest where she cannot escape.

4. The boys are ashamed if they could not take the virginity of their wives. And as a result,

they take them to the forest where no body hears about it. Some of the focus group discussants also confirmed that there were some boys who disappeared from the area

due to this problem.

The men, on the other hand, indicated the reasons for taking girls to the forest as follows:-

1. To have privacy for the bridegroom and to establish good relationships between the partners

2. The hut or the house of the pastoralist is too small and too hot for the honeymoon.

The survey result also indicated that in Mille district, especially in the research areas, girls are taken to the forest or the trees during their honeymoons. All the Mille respondents, 100(100%) confirmed that girls in research areas are taken to the forest during their honeymoon. (See Annex I, table 21).

The survey respondents were also asked their opinion on why girls are taken to the forest or the trees. Out of the total men and boy respondents, (56%) said that girls are taken to the forest to establish good relationships between the spouses and to have privacy, while 34% said that the huts of the pastoralists are not convenient for the honeymoon. And, 10% of them said

to avoid their cries and their resistance during the intercourse. Again, out of the total women and girl respondents, 60% said that girls are taken to the forest to avoid their cries and resistance during the forceful sexual intercourse, and 40% said that the huts of the pastoralists are not convenient for the honeymoon. (See Annex I, table 22 and 23 ).

The survey research participants were finally asked their opinion whether they support or oppose the idea that marriage of girls and women should not be asked. Accordingly, the responses of men and boys, women and girls are different on this point. Out of the total men and boy respondents, 72% said that they support this idea, while 28% said that they oppose the idea. Out of the total women and girls respondents, 66% on the other hand, said that they oppose the idea that marriage of girls and women has to be decided by their parents and consent of girls and women should not be asked, while 34% said that they support that idea (see Annex I, table 24) .

We can conclude from the research findings on Cross-Cousin marriage that, there are certain violence acts committed on women and girls in this type of marriage. First, girls are not asked for their consents in this marriage and they are forced by their parents and their clans to marry. Second, they are also taken to the forest to disvirgin them, where they are tied their hands to their backs and their legs to the trees to counter their resistance. Girls are forced against their interests and wills in this type of marriage. These are two areas where violence against girls is committed.

#### **4.2.1.2. Violence committed in Early childhood marital promise**

Early childhood marital promise is another type of marriage in the research areas where violence against girls is committed. This type of marriage is typically prevalent in kerreyu community (Fentalle). In this type of marriage, baby girls are promised for marriage at their early ages, even while they are in the wombs of their mothers. Early marriage is also prevalent in Mille district (Afar). But, the difference between the Kerreyus and the Afars regarding this marriage is that, in kerreyu even if baby girls are promised for marriage at their infancy; they are not given away for the husbands unless they reach the marriageable age. Marriage ceremony is arranged later on at the age of 16 and 17. But in Afar (Mille), girls are given away for marriage at their ages of 14 and 15 years. However, as indicated in the criminal code

and the revised family code of the country, age at marriage for both boys and girls is 18. Therefore, it is obvious that early marriage is prevalent in both the research sites.

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants confirmed that female children are promised for marriage at their infancy, regardless of the age of men to whom the promise is made.

Even some times, children are promised while they are in the wombs of their mothers. The fathers of the boys go to the pregnant women and their husbands and say “if your baby is a girl, she is for my son or for me “and then they give rings for the pregnant mothers to put on their fingers to imply that their girl babies are promised for marriage. Again, when fathers know that baby girls are born, they go to families of the babies, and they spit on one of their fingers and then touch necks of the babies to imply that those babies are for their boys. In both cases, those babies can not marry other than the boys for whom the promises were made.

The survey result also indicated that girls are promised for marriage at their early ages. The respondents, who married by early childhood promises were asked about their ages when they were promised. The married women in Kerreyu responded against their ages at which they were promised in the following ways: out of the total married women respondents in Kerreyu, three of them said that they were promised while they were in their mothers wombs, two of them responded at the age of less than 1 year, seven of them said at their ages between 2-6, two of them said at their ages between 7-11, two of the them again said at their ages between 12-16 and finally one said at the age of 17. The married men who married by early child marital promises also responded to their ages at which they were promised as follows: out of the total married men who married by early promise, two said that they were promised at the age between 1-5, seven said between their ages 6 to 10, two said between 11 to 15, four said between 16 to 20, and two said 21 and above. (See Annex I, table 25 and 26).

The qualitative research participants again confirmed that in early childhood marital promise, if the husband for whom the promise was made found to be impotent, the clan of the husband selects someone from the clan members to be a sexual purpose husband, while the formal husband remains to play the other remaining roles of a true husband. The promise is based on dowry and it is made not only to the boys, but it is also to the older people who have already

wives. Although, the promises are made at an early age of the girls, the wedding ceremonies are held when the girls reach puberty.

The survey respondents who married by early child marital promise were also asked their opinion on what would happen to the girl if her husband happened to be impotent. Accordingly, 22 (64.7 %) of the respondents said that some one will be selected from the clan members by the clan of the impotent husband and made to sleep with the wife of the impotent man, while 7(20.6 %) of them said that she can divorce her husband. The remaining 5 (14.7 %) said that she lives with her husband being virgin. (See Annex I, table 27).

The same respondents were also asked their opinion on the legal father of the child conceived from one of the clan members. All the respondents, (100 %) who married by early childhood marital promise said that the legal father of the child will be the official husband, while the man selected by the clan plays the sexual intercourse role, In this process of sexual intercourse, the man who impregnates the woman has no legal rights over the children of the woman. The official husband is considered to be the legal father of the children (see Annex I, table 28).

In this type of marriage, the girl's consent is not asked and she cannot also refuse the marriage. As revealed by the focus group discussion participants and the key informants, in this type of marriage the consent of girls is not asked. The marriage is simply arranged by the families and the clans of the spouses. The girls have no right to refuse their marriage, even after they reach at puberty ages. The participants also indicated that if the girls are found to refuse the marriage, they are beaten, tied up and given away forcefully.

The survey result also strengthens the qualitative findings. Out of the total Fentalle respondents, 85% said that in this type of marriage the consent of girls is not asked, while 15% said that their consent is asked. The survey finding also indicated that, if the promised girl is found to refuse the marriage, she is beaten, tied up and given away. Accordingly, out of the total respondents, 80% said that she is beaten, tied up and given away, while 20% said that nothing will happen to her (See Annex I table 29 and 30 ).

In this early childhood marital promise, when the girl reaches the age of 10 she would be taken away from her parents to the family for whom the promise was made. They slaughter a bull (dibicha rako ) and put a piece of the meat on her neck and then send her back to her parents to show the community that she belongs to them. Therefore, nobody approaches her, because she is officially known that she is a wife of someone.

The justifications given by the community for this kind of marriage are:

1. There are some clans with whom marriages are forbidden. Therefore, they want their children to marry within the permitted clans.
2. They want to maintain their social structure through this kind of marriage
3. There are some families who have prestige in the community. Establishing marital relationships with those families are considered as having high values in the community. Therefore, they do this not to be preceded by others.
4. They want the girls to be free from any attachment with other boys or men, because the community members already know that those girls have husbands.

The focus group discussants and the key informants were also asked whether or not they want this type of marriage to continue. Majority of the women participants agreed that they do not want this kind of marriage to continue. When it comes to the illiterate girls, they said that they accept whatever their families and their clans decide for them. And as a result, they agreed that it has to continue. But, the girl students on the other hand are completely against this kind of marriage. They want their marriages to be decided by their own choices. When it comes to the men focus group discussants and the key informants, the elder men and the illiterate boys support the marriage to continue, while the boy students oppose it.

Regarding the survey result, opinion of the women and the girls is different from that of the men and the boys. Out of the total Fentalle women and girl respondents, 60% said that early childhood marital promise has to be avoided, while 40% said that since it is their culture it has to continue. Concerning the men and the boy respondents, out of the total Fentalle men and

boy respondents, 70% said that, since early childhood marital promise is their culture, it has to continue, where as 30% of them said that it has to be eliminated. (See Annex I, table 31 and 32)

From the research findings on early childhood marital promise, it can be concluded that there are certain violence acts in this type of marriage. Girls are not asked for their consents in their marriage and they are forced by their parents and their clans. Girls have no right to refuse the marriage. They are also forced to make sex with one of their husbands' clans, if their husbands are found to be impotent. In this type of sexual activity, the girls' consent is not asked. They are devoid their rights to choose their partners and they are also denied their right to decide on their sexual organs.

#### **4.2.1.3. Violence Committed in Levirate (Widow Inheritance) Marriage**

Widow inheritance is another form of customary marriage practiced in the research areas among the pastoralist communities. In these types of marriage, if a husband of some one dies, the wife whose husband died must marry one of her dead husband's brothers or relatives. The communities in the research areas believe that, it is the responsibility of the remaining brothers to take care of the children of their brother and his property. Therefore, the women whose husband died must marry one of her deceased husband's brothers. If one of the dead person's brothers does not inherit the dead brother's wife, it is considered by the community as shameful and if the woman marries another man, it is considered as a death for the remaining brothers. Therefore, by any possible means, she must marry one of her husband's brothers.

The focus group discussants and the key informants were asked whether or not the women are asked their consents in this type of marriage. All the women participants indicated that women are not asked their consents, where as majority of the participants agreed that in their culture which they were practicing it for generation, women are not asked their consents. Very few men participants on the other hand, said that women are asked their consents in this type of marriage.

The same participants were also asked as to what will happen to the woman if she refuses to marry one of her deceased husband's brothers and decides to marry someone whom she loves.

All the participants, including the women agreed that she has to immediately leave her children and the property of her dead husband's and go to the man with whom she is in love.

The survey result also indicates that, a woman whose husband died is expected to be inherited by one of her husband's brothers or clan members or relatives. 97.2 % of the married men respondents and all married women respondents, (100%) confirmed that a woman whose husband died must be inherited by one of her dead husband's brothers or the clan members. Again, majority of the men and the women who married by inheritance also confirmed that the consent of women is not asked in wife inheritance marriage. 87.5% of the inherited women and 81.3% of the men who married by inheritance said that the inherited women were not asked for their consent in this type of marriage. Only 12.5 % of the inherited women respondents and 18.7% of the married men respondents who used wife inheritance marriage for their marriage said that the consent of the women was asked. (See Annex I, table 33, 34, 35, and 36).

The survey respondents were also asked their opinion about the problems that would happen to a woman if she refuses marriage by inheritance. Out of the total married women and men respondents who married by inheritance, (62.5%) said that if a woman refuses her inheritance and wants to marry another man out side of the circle of her dead husband's relatives, her children and her properties will be taken away from her, where as (25%) said that she can stay with her children and her properties as far as she stops her intention to marry an outsider man. The remaining (9.4%) and (3.1%), said that she will be forced to be inherited, and nothing will happen to her, respectively. (See annex I, table 37).

The other point of discussion for the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was the justifications given by the communities for this kind of marriage, whether it is cultural or religious, and their attitudes towards this type of marriage regarding its continuity. As confirmed by the research participants, wife inheritance is assumed by the communities to have different advantages. These are:

1. Widow inheritance helps the children of the dead man to get proper care and protection, because the man who inherited their mother is also their uncle.

2. Property of the dead person will remain in the family and will help the economic security of the children and the family. But, if an outsider marries the widow, he may misuse her property and finish it which will finally expose the family to hunger.
3. Since the widow is his brothers wife, the man who inherited her will respect her and as result he may not abuse her. But, if she marries an outsider, he may abuse both her children and herself.
4. It helps to strengthen the relationships or ties among the clan members.

The survey result regarding the benefits of wife inheritance also confirmed the same finding. All the respondents, 100% confirmed that wife inheritance has three benefits, such as, it helps for the safety of the dead husbands' children, it helps for the security of the dead husbands' property, and it helps to strengthen the existing relationships between the clan members. (See annex I, table 38)

The other point of discussion for the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was the reason why women in the research areas have no right to decide on their marriages in this type of marriage. Accordingly, majority of the participants indicated that women have no right on their marriages, because they are subordinate in the community, and quite a large number of the participants also said that, women have no right to decide on their marriage because they are dependent on their families and their husbands, some of the participants also confirmed that the women have no right to decide on their marriage, because they have no ability in selecting their partners.

The survey result also indicated four reasons why women and girls in the research areas have no right in deciding on their marriage. Out of the total respondents, (52%) said that women and girls have no right, because they are subordinate, (25.5%) said that it is because women and girls are dependant on their families and their husbands, (15%) said that women and girls have no ability in selecting their partners, and (7.5%) said that naturally women and girls have no right. (See annex I, table 39)

It was revealed by the qualitative research participants that this type of marriage has nothing to do with the Islam religion and it is purely cultural. But, the religious leaders who

participated in the focus group discussion said that the Islam religion allows wife inheritance as one form of marriage for the protection of the children and the property of the dead man. They confirmed, however, that according to the Islam religion, the woman has to be asked her consent. According to these religious leaders, the religion prohibits forcing women in marriage and does not also prescribe that the woman whose husband died must be inherited by one of her dead husband's brothers. The religion simply allows someone if he wants to inherit the wife of his dead brother depending on her consent.

The other point of discussion for the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was their opinion towards the continuity of wife inheritance. Accordingly, almost all men and illiterate boys, except male students, confirmed that they support the marriage and they want it to continue.

But, the responses of women and girls are completely opposite to the responses of men and the illiterate boys. They all agreed that they do not support this type of marriage and they want it to be eliminated.

The survey result on wife inheritance also indicated the opinion of men, women, boys and girls. Out of the total boy respondents, 22(76.6%) said that they support wife inheritance, while only 6(20%) responded negatively. In this regard, the responses of girl respondents are different from that of the boys. Out of the total girl respondents, 20(71.4%) said that they don't support wife inheritance, while only 8(28.6%) said that they support this type of marriage. The responses of men and women are also different in this regard. Majority of the men respondents, (79.2%) said that they want wife inheritance to continue in the future, while majority of the women (65.3%) said that wife inheritance has to be avoided. (See Annex I, table 40,41, 42 and 43).

As can be concluded from the research findings on widow inheritance marriage, the communities in the research areas attach various benefits to this type of marriage. But as indicated in the findings, there are some kinds of violence acts in this marriage. First of all, women are not asked their consent in widow inheritance marriage. The women can not also refuse the marriage. Second, if the women whose husbands are died want to marry the men they love , they have to immediately leave their children and their properties for the families

of their dead husbands and go to the men they are in love. These are the two areas where violence against widow women is committed in this type of marriage.

#### **4.2.1.4. Violence Committed in Sororate (substitution of sisters for the dead wives)**

##### **Marriage**

Substitution of sisters for the dead wives is also another type of customary marriage where violence against girls is committed. In this kind of marriage, if someone's wife dies, a sister of the deceased woman is given to a man as a substitute. In this type of marriage, the consent of the substituted girl is not asked. The family and the clan of the dead woman decide the marriage simply by looking at the good conduct of the man whose wife is dead or his property or simply by looking the condition of the children of their dead daughter. The age of the man and the cause of death for their previous daughter is not considered, even if the cause is HIV/AIDS.

As the survey result on sororate marriage indicated, married women respondents confirmed that their husbands can marry their sisters if they die. The married men also indicated that they would marry the sisters of their wives, if their wives are dead. Out of the total married women respondents, (79.2%) said that their husbands can marry their sisters, while (86.1%) of the married men respondents responded the same way. In this type of marriage the consent of the substituted girl is not asked and the marriage is decided by the families and the clans. Out of the total married women and men respondents, 83.3% said that sororate marriage is determined by the families, while 16.7% said that it is decided by the clans. Regarding the consent of girls, again out of the total married women and men respondents, 89.6% said that the consent of girls in sororate marriage is not asked, and 10.4% said that it is asked. Concerning the rights of the girls to refuse sororate marriage, the survey result also indicated that girls cannot refuse the marriage. Out of the total married women and men respondents, 90.3% said that girls have no right to refuse sororates marriage, while 9.7% said that they have the right to refuse the marriage. (See Annex I, table 44,45,46,47, and 48)

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants were asked the reasons for the communities not to ask the consent of girls. Both women and men participants replied similarly to the effect that in their culture asking the consent of girls for their marriages is

unknown and it is shame to ask girls about their marriage. The reasons forwarded by the participants are that girls do not know men who can be good to them as husbands. And as result, they might be in love with men who have no property to administer a family, or those who could abuse them etc, simply by looking at their physical appearances. Others argued that, since girls are subordinate in the community they are not asked their consent, few of the participants also agreed that naturally girls have no right to decide on their marriage, and some of the participants again agreed that since girls are dependent on their families, they are not asked their consent. Therefore, it is maintained that marriages for girls should be determined or decided by the girls' parents and their clans.

The survey respondents were asked to point out the reasons why the substituted girls have no right to decided on their marriage. Out of the total respondents ,(52.%) gave the reason that girls are subordinate in the community, (25.5%) said that girls are dependent on their families, (15%) said that girls lack the ability to select their partners, and (7.5%) said that girls have naturally no right in deciding on their marriage.(See Annex I, table 49)

The next point of discussion for the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was the problems that a substituted girl could face, if she refuses to marry her dead sister's husband. All the participants agreed that, as long as she is administered by her parents and her clan, she must accept what her parents and her clans have decided for her, and if she is found to refuse the marriage, she would be beaten, tied up and given away forcefully. They further indicated that, she would be fired from home and no body marries her.

The survey respondents were also asked their opinion on the problem that would happen to the girl if she refuses marriage by substitution. Accordingly, out of the total respondents, (36%) said that she will be alienated from the community, (30.5%) said that no body marries her, (15.5%) said that she will be forced to marry, and (18%) responded that she will be driven out from home. (See Annex I, Table 50).

As confirmed by the qualitative research participants, the communities in the research areas believe that this kind of marriage has many advantages. These are:-

1. It protects the children of the dead wives from the hardships of stepmothers, because the substituted girl is their aunt.

2. It strengthens the existing relationship between the family of the dead woman and the family of the man whose wife is dead
3. It protects the property of the dead woman not to be inherited by an outsider woman.

The property as mentioned by the participants could be her clothes, or her traditional ornaments and kitchen utensils which she brought with her from her family on her wedding.

5. The last advantage mentioned was that, as this kind of marriage is accepted and had a long history in their culture, it keeps the identity and the existing social ties between the communities.

The survey result also indicated that Sisters substitution marriage has different benefits.

1. It protects the children of the dead wife from the hardships of the stepmother (75%),
2. It helps to avoid household utensils, cloths and traditional jewelries of the dead wife not to be inherited by an outsider woman (10%),
3. It helps to strengthen the existing relationships between the families of the dead wife and the husband (12.5%),
4. It preserves the existing culture of the community (2.5 %). (See Annex I, table 51)

Both the qualitative and the quantitative research participants confirmed that, in sororate marriage, the cause of the death for the first wife is not considered. No one gives attention. HIV test is also not known for sisters substitution and other forms of marriage in the research sites. All the married women and men respondents, and all the respondents confirmed that HIV test is not known in the research areas. (See Annex I, table 52)

The last point forwarded to the participants for discussion was that, whether this kind of marriage is related to culture or religion, their attitude towards this kind of marriage, whether they want this marriage to continue or discontinue. Majority of the married men and the illiterate boys have the same responses. They concluded that they support marriage by substitution and agreed that it has to continue in the future. But boy students, on the other hand, have a diametrically opposite opinion about this marriage. They agreed that this kind of marriage has to be stopped, because the consent of the girl is not asked. They said that, instead of forcing the girl to marry, she has to be convinced to accept the marriage. When it

comes to the women and the girl participants, majority of them agreed that they oppose this kind of marriage and it has to be discontinued. The reasons they forwarded were:-

1. The willingness of the substituted girl is not asked.
2. The man who takes the girl in substitution could be too old and, as a result, the girl will not enjoy her marital life.
3. The substituted girl may live for the children and, as a result, she may forget her own life and enjoyment. Very Few old women and few illiterate girls, on the other hand, said that this kind of marriage should continue for the protection of the children.

The survey research result also indicated the same findings on the continuity of sororate marriage. Out of the total married women respondents, 52(72.2%) said that they don't want this type of marriage to continue, while 20 (27.8%) responded that that they want sisters substitution marriage to continue. Out of the total married men respondents, 54(75%) said that they want marriage by substitution to continue, while 18(25%) said that they don't want marriage by substitution to continue. Girls and boys were also asked the same question. Out of the total boy respondents, 16(57.1%) said that they want this type of marriage to continue, while 12(42.9%) of the boys responded that they responded negatively. Regarding the girl respondents, 17(60.7%) said that they don't want this marriage to continue, and 11(39.3%) again responded positively. (See Annex I, table 53, 54 and 55)

In conclusion, as confirmed by the research findings, the substituted girls are not asked for their consents in this type of customary marriage. If the girls are found to refuse the marriage, they are physically, socially and culturally forced by their families and their clans to marry. The girls are denied their right to choose their partners. This is the area where violence against girls is committed.

#### **4.2.2. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

As confirmed by the focus group discussion participants and the key informants, Female Genital Mutilation is practiced in all four *kebeles* of the research areas. But, the types of

Female Genital Mutilation practiced in Mille and Fentalle are different. The Kereyus and the Itus in Fentalle practice clitoridectomy or sunna, while the Afar community in Mille practices clitoridectomy and infibulations. All the participants confirmed that FGM is practiced in their localities to varying degrees. But, they attested that there is a tendency of decreasing for FGM due to the teachings of religious persons.

Especially the Itu community indicated that since three years ago, the practice of circumcision seems to have stopped mainly for two reasons:-

1. For a fear of the government laws against FGM,
2. Due to the teachings of religious people or leaders.

But, the Itu community members are still in a dilemma whether to do it or not do it. In kerreyu the community is not happy about the government laws against FGM. They consider the laws as if they were formulated to spoil their culture. As a result they do FGM secretly.

When it comes to Mille (Afar), the participants from the two *kebeles* have different opinions. The participants from Hintimegeta and Hedesa said that infibulations shows a tendency of decreasing while clitoridectomy shows no change. According to their opinion infibulations shows a sign of decreasing due to teachings by religious leaders. They proved in focus group discussion that they used to do infibulations due to their ignorance in Islam. They had thought that Islam religion recommends FGM. But after they obtained religious education by religious leaders, they are on the way to stop it. But they confirmed that there are many people who do it secretly. They also confirmed that they have not stopped and they do not want to stop clitoridectomy (sunna).

On the other hand, the participants from Geiraruna Anaekalo kebele, revealed that they did not stop practicing FGM. Different types of FGM are practiced in this *kebele* according to their responses. The different opinion between the two *kebeles from the Mille district* is related to their exposure to information. Hintimegeta *kebele* is found on the main road, about 25km away from the Mille town. Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) has also a branch office in this area. There is also school in this locality. But Geiraruna Anekalo is found some- what on different direction and there is no school in this *kebele*. Few students from this *kebele* go to Mille town for their education. Thus their exposure to information is limited. The researcher observed the condition of reinfibulated woman after her delivery and the three

months age of infibulated baby girl in Geiraruna Anaekalo kebele. Their photographs are attached in Annex II.

The survey result also strengthens the qualitative findings. The respondents indicated that Female Genital Mutilation is highly prevalent in both research sites. The respondents were asked if FGM is practiced in their localities. Out of the total respondents, 150 (75%) said that FGM is practiced in their localities, where as 50 (25%) said that it is not practiced.(See Annex I, table 56)

As revealed by the qualitative research participants, the age at which female children are circumcised is different for Mille and Fentalle. At Mille Female Gentile Mutilation is performed at early infancy between 1-7 days, while in Fentalle it is practiced at the age of 7 and 8 years. The survey result also indicated the same finding regarding the age at which FGM is practiced. Accordingly, all the Mille respondents 100(50%) said that it is practiced at the age of 1-7 days, while all the Fentalle respondents 100(50%) said that it is practiced at the age of 7-8 years.(See Annex I, table 57)

Regarding the role of men in FGM, the focus group discussion participants agreed that men have no role in FGM and it is the women who take the whole responsibility for it. They indicated that men are only responsible for boys and not for girls. It is also confirmed by the survey research participants that it is the women who take the whole responsibility for FGM and the men are only responsible for circumcision of the boys. The entire respondents 200(100%) confirmed this (see Annex I, table 58).

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants were also asked whether they support the practice of FGM. Accordingly, majority of the participants agreed that they support the practice of FGM, while also a large number of the participants revealed that they oppose the practice. The survey result also indicated the same findings. Out of the total respondents, 65% said that they support the practice, while 35% responded that they oppose the practice of FGM. (See Annex I, table 59).

The other points of discussion forwarded to the participants were the justifications given for FGM and its relation to culture and religion. They all said that:

1. If girls are not circumcised and infibulated their sexual desire is very high and, as a result, they will not be loyal to their husbands,
2. If girls are not infibulated they will simply lose their virginity and at the same time infibulations protect dusts not to enter into the vaginas of the girls,
3. If women are not re-infibulated after delivery their vaginas will be wide and, as a result their husbands will hate leave them alone
4. As Female Genital Mutilation is deep rooted in their culture, no body will marry girls who are not mutilated and infibulated,
5. Clitoris is a dirty part of the vagina and, as a result, sleeping with a girl whose clitoris is not cut is awful or sin.

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants also confirmed that FGM is related to culture and it has nothing to do with the Islam religion. But, there were also many participants who held the opinion that Islam religion orders FGM. However, the religious leaders who participated in the focus group discussion revealed that the religion does not favor FGM.

The survey result also indicated the justifications given by the participants for FGM. Out of the total respondents who responded that they support the practice of FGM, 52(40%) said that, if girls are not circumcised their sexual desire is so high and they will not be loyal to their husbands, 30(23.1%) of them said that, if girls are not infibulated they will easily lose their virginity and at the same time dusts will enter in to their sexual organs, 19(14.6%) of them again said that if girls are not re-infibulated their vaginas will be wide and their husbands will hate them, 16(12.3%) said no body will marry girls who are not mutilated and infibulated, and 13(10%) said that sleeping with a girl whose clitoris is not cut is shame and awful.(See Annex I, table 60).

The survey result also showed that FGM is not related to the Islam religion and it is cultural. Out of the total respondents, 140(70%) said that the Islam religion does not prescribe FGM for females, while 60(30%) said that the religion prescribes clitoridectomy or sunna.(See Annex I, table 61).

The qualitative research participants were also asked whether or not the traditional FGM practitioners use different tools for different girls in doing FGM. Majority of the participants agreed that the women who do FGM use different tools for different girls, while quite a significant number of the participants indicated that they use the same tools for different girls. The survey result again confirmed the same finding. Out of the total respondents, 150(75%) said that the traditional FGM practitioners use different tools for different girls, while 50(25%) said that they use the same tools for different girls. This implies that FGM could be one way for HIV/AIDS transmission. (See Annex I, table 62).

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants, were also asked what the trend of FGM looks like over the last 10 years, whether it is increasing, decreasing or has no change. Majority of the focus group discussion participants and the key informants, agreed that no change has been observed over the last 10 years for FGM, while a significant number of the participants revealed that infibulations has shown some decrease mainly due to religious teachings and to some degree, due to Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) awareness creation works.

The survey findings also indicated the same result. Out of the total respondents 128(64%) said that FGM has shown no change over the last 10 years, where as 57(28.5%) said that it has shown the tendency of decrease especially for infibulations. 15(7.5%) of the respondents said that it has shown a tendency of increase especially for clitoridectomy. (See Annex I, table 63 ).

The respondents were also asked the estimated percentage of the practice of FGM in their localities. Out of the total respondents, 100(50%) said that clitoridcetomy is practiced 90-100% in their localities, where as the remaining respondents 100(50%) responded that clitoridectomy is practiced by less than 50% in their localities. As infibulations is only practiced in Mille (Afar), the Afar respondents were asked to indicate the estimated percentage of the practice of infibulations. Out of the total Mille respondents, 18(18%) said that the practice of infibulations is estimated to be 90-100%, 26(26%) said that it lies between 80-90%, 23(23%) said that it is estimated between 70-80%, 25(25%) said that it is estimated

between 60-70%, and 8(8%) said it is practiced by less than 50%.(See Annex I, table 64 and 65).

The other point of discussion for focus group discussion participants was whether or not they have so far participated in any kind of awareness creation workshops and whether or not they know the impact of FGM on women. Majority of the participants said that they have not participated in any kind of awareness creation workshops and also they indicated that they do not know the impact that FGM has on women and girls. The survey result also confirmed the same findings. Out of the total respondents, 132(66%) indicated that they do not know the impact of FGM on women, while 68(34%) said that they know the impact of FGM on women. (See Annex I, table 66)

The next point of discussion by the focus group discussion participants and the key informants was about their attitude towards FGM i.e. whether they want FGM to continue or to discontinue; their reasons for supporting or not supporting FGM. Accordingly, the opinion of men and women, female students and uneducated girls, as well as male students and uneducated boys are different on this point. Majority of the women participants responded that they want FGM to be stopped, while majority of the men responded opposite, saying that FGM should continue.

The reasons forwarded by women were: -

1. They know from their own experience that they do not enjoy sex with their husbands due to FGM, and therefore, they do not want their children to be like them,
2. They also know from their own experiences that FGM creates a problem during delivery,
3. A lots of blood that would affect health of the women would flow during FGM,
4. FGM, especially infibulations, de-infibulations and re-infibulations are highly pain full for women.

The men, on the other hand, listed their reasons why FGM has to be continued.

1. As FGM is practiced by their society from generation to generation they want it to continue

2. If girls are not circumcised they will be sexually hot and cannot be satisfied with one man,
3. If girls are not infibulated dust and other particles will enter in to their vagina and will spoil it,
4. If girls are not infibulated they will loose their virginity simply
5. If women are not re-infibulated, their vaginas will be wide and then their husbands will  
Hate and leave them.

Regarding the boys and the girl participants, the girl students are against FGM and their reason is the same with the women. But majority of the illiterate girls are in favor of FGM, while some of them are against it. The same is also true of the boys. Majority of the boy students are against FGM, while few of them responded the same as the married men. But almost all the illiterate boys and girls are in favor of FGM.

The survey result also confirmed the same findings. Out of the total men respondents, 72.2% said that they want FGM to continue, while 27.8% said that they want the practice to be stopped. Again out of the total women respondents, 69.4% said that they do not want FGM to continue, where as 30.6% said they support the practice. When it comes to the boy respondents, out of the total boy respondents, 78.6% said that they want FGM to continue, while 21.4% said that FGM has to be eliminated. Out of the total girls respondents on the other hand, 71.4% said that they do not want FGM to continue, while 28.6% said FGM has to be continued (See Annex I, table 67, 68 and 69).

The married women and men respondents were also asked whether or not they allow their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM. Accordingly, majority of the men participants agreed that they do not allow their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM. But majority of the married women participants indicated that they allow their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM. The survey result also showed the same findings. Out of the total married men respondents, 72.2 percent said that they do not allow their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM, while 27.8% said that they allow their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM. The married women respondents on the other hand responded differently. Out of the total married women respondents 69.4% said that they allow

their sons to marry girls who are not undergone FGM, while 30.6% responded negatively. (See Annex I, table 70).

Finally the boy respondents were also asked whether or not they marry girls who are not undergone FGM. Accordingly, out of the total boy respondents, 82.1% responded that they do not marry girls who are not undergone FGM, while only 17.9% said that they marry girls who are not undergone FGM. (See Annex I, table 71).

### **4.2.3. Wives and Girls Beating**

Wives and girls beating is another violence committed against women and girls in the research areas. Wives and girls beating is highly prevalent in Afar, Kereyu and Itu communities. Women and girls in the research areas are daily suffering from beatings. Men participants themselves witnessed that they beat their wives and their daughters whenever they found them violating the norms put by them. The boys and the girls have also attested that their mothers and their sisters are usually beaten by their fathers. As confirmed by the participants, female children are often beaten by their fathers, mothers, brothers and even relatives.

The community in the research areas accept wife beating as a normal way of life and they believe that husbands have the right to beat their wives. They consider wife-beating as a means of correction. If, for instance, a woman who suffered beatings, goes to her family, her parents send her back immediately by saying that he is your husband and has the right to do so. This shows that wife-beating is officially accepted by the family and by the community as a whole. But as confirmed by the women focus group discussion participants, even if the community has such an attitude, women have been highly fed up of beatings. Many women are observed blaming themselves for being a woman due to wife-beating. The women participants said that they want to commit suicide when they are beaten by their husbands. It was also revealed by the participants that there are many women who committed suicide due to wife-beating.

Family is most probably the responsible social institution for intensifying and encouraging wife-beatings, because, as a revealed by the participants, in all research sites, when the family gives its daughter to a man, the father of the daughter tells his son-in-law the following: “her blood, her bones, her tooth and her eyes are not yours. Don’t beat her on her eyes, on her tooth,

don't break her bones, beat her elsewhere and correct her as you wish, to make her good wife for you".

The survey result on wife beating also indicated that wife beating is highly prevalent in the research areas. Out of the total married men respondents, 58(80.6%) said that they beat their wives, while 10(13.9%) said that they advice them and, 4(5.5%) said that they do nothing when their wives are found guilty. The same question was asked for the married women respondents. Out of the total married women respondents, 62(86.1%) responded that their husbands beat them when they are found violating the rules of their husbands, 7(9.7%) also said that their husbands driven out them from homes, while 3(4.2%) said that they advice them. (See Annex I, table 72 and 73)

The married women and men participants were again asked their own experience in wife beating. Accordingly, out of the total married women respondents, 94.4% confirmed that they have experienced wife beatings by their husbands, while only 5.6% said that they have not experienced wife beating. Again, out of the total married men respondents, 91.7% said that they have beaten their wives, while only 8.3% said that they have not beaten their wives. (See Annex I, table 74 and 75).

The boys and the girls respondents also confirmed that wife and girl beatings are prevalent in their families. Out of the total boy respondents, 64.3% said that their mothers are more beaten in their families, 28.6% responded that their sisters are beaten, and 7.1% indicated that their brothers and they themselves are beaten in their families. Again, out of the total girls respondents, 71.4% indicated that their mothers are more beaten in their families, while 21.4% said that their sisters and they themselves are beaten more. 7.2% of the respondents also said that their brothers are more beaten in their families. The boys and the girl respondents also indicated that girls are beaten almost by all family members and other relatives. All the girls respondents, 28(100%) and all the boy respondents, 28(100%) confirmed that the girls are usually beaten by their fathers, their mothers, brothers and even by their relatives. (See Annex I, table, 76 and 77 and 78).

The married women and men respondents were also asked whether or not they believe that wife beating is important. Out of the total married men respondents, 50(69.4%) said that wife beating is important, while 22(30.6%) said they do not believe that wife beating is important. Again out of the total women respondents, 57(79.2%) said they do not believe that wife beating is important, while 15(20.8%) responded positively. (See Annex I, table 79)

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants were also asked as to which part of a woman's body is a target for beating. Majority of the women participants said that there are no specific areas, but the whole body is a target. But, quite a significant number of the women participants mentioned that their back and waist are the usual targets. The men participants said that they beat their wives just to correct them. Therefore, they selectively beat their wives on their bodies where injury is not severe. But the response of the women seems to be logical, because they said that, their husbands are highly emotional whenever they beat them, and, as a result, they cannot think about parts of the body to be beaten. Therefore, they beat them anywhere they found.

The survey result also indicated parts of the women's bodies for beating. Out of the total married women respondents, 56(77.8%) said that back and waist are the target, while 6(8.3%) said feet, 5(6.9%) said hands, 3(4.2%) said head, and 2(2.8%) said face. Again out of the total married men respondents, 52(72.2%) also confirmed that back and waist are a target for beating, while 20(27.8%) said that all parts of the body are a target for beating. Married women respondents were also asked their opinion on their body injuries due to wife beating. Out of the total married women respondents, 40(55.6%) said that body injuries were not happened to them, 17(23.6%) said scar, 5(6.9%) said hands broken, 4 (5.6%) said tooth broken, 3(4.2%) responded fracture, and 3(4.2%) replied wound. (See Annex I, table 80, 81 and 82)

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants were asked the cause for wife-beatings. They said that their husbands usually beat them because of jealousy. They said that, whenever they go out for market or to fetch water or for other purposes, their husbands suspect them if they are late, and as a result, they beat them. Others said that they are beaten without any justification, simply because their husbands have power over them. The male

participants were asked as to how many times they beat their wives. They responded that the number of beatings depends on the number of faults committed by the women. They said that, if, for instance, the wife does 20 mistakes in a day, she is beaten 20 times in a day. But, if for instance, she does not commit any mistake in a year, she will not be beaten at all.

As confirmed by the focus group discussion participants and the key informants the men in the research areas consider themselves as if they have full right to beat their wives. They consider themselves as the heads of the households and, therefore, believe that they have full right to correct their wives by beating them. The women in the research areas also accept wife beating as a normal phenomenon and they believe that their husbands have the right to beat them

The survey result also indicated the same findings. The Married women and men respondents were asked their opinion on the rights of husbands to beat their wives. Out of the total married women respondents, 54(75 %) responded that their husbands have the right to beat them, while only 18(25%) said that their husbands have no right to beat them. Again out of the total married men respondents, 66(91.7%) said that they have full right to beat their wives, while only 6(8.3%) said that they don't have that right. (See Annex I, table 83 and 84).

The married women and men focus group discussion participants and the key information were also asked the reasons for husbands to have the right to beat their wives. Majority of the participants agreed that husbands have the right to beat their wives, because wife beating is accepted in the community. Again, quite a large number of the participants said that husbands have the right to beat their wives, because women are subordinate in the community. The survey result also indicated the same thing. Out of the total married women and men respondents, 50% said that husbands have full right to beat their wives, because wife beating is accepted in the community, 41.7% of the respondents also said that, it is because women are subordinate in the community, and 8.3% responded that they do not know the reason.(See Annex I, table 85)

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants also revealed that the married women do not go to the police and the Women Affairs Bureaus to accuse their husbands when they are beaten. If they do so, they will be blamed by their communities and will be alienated from the social circles. Therefore, they do not tell their family affairs to such institutions.

Majority of the married women said that, they tell about the beatings to their families and their clans, if the beating is aggravated. But a large number of the married women participants said that they do not tell their cases to any body, because they are afraid that their husbands may beat them more. But there are some women among the Itu community who reported such cases to the *woreda* police station. But detailed information was not obtained, because the commander of the station, who has the mandate to give the information, was not around during the research period.

The survey findings also indicated that married women report their wife beating cases to the clan leaders and the families. Out of the total married women respondents, 47.2% said that they report their cases to the clan leaders, 23.6% of them said that they report to the families, 15.3% said that they report to nobody, and only 13.9% said that they report to the police.(See Annex I, table 86)

The focus group discussion participants have different opinions on the continuity of wife-beating. Women participants said that the relationship between husbands and wives should be improved and wife-beating should be eliminated. There should be discussions between husbands and wives whenever there is misunderstanding, and husbands must remain calm instead of resorting to beating their wives. The married men and the uneducated boys on the other hand, have the same attitude towards wife-beating. They said that, wife-beating should continue just for wives to fear and have respect for their husbands. They said that, if wife-beating is stopped, every member of the family becomes equal and, as a result, it will be difficult to identify who is the master of the family. When it comes to male students, majority of them opposed wife-beating and they want it to be abolished. But there were also some male students who are in favor of wife-beatings. They want beating to continue. But female students are against wives and girls beatings. They want beating to be eliminated from the community altogether.

Again in the survey result, the women and the girls respondents were also asked their opinion on their feelings if wife and girl beating is avoided. Accordingly, all women and girls respondents, 100(100%) confirmed that they will be very happy if wife and girl beating is avoided. The survey result also indicated that out of the total respondents, 136(68%) said that

they don't want wife beating to continue, while 64(32%) said that wife beating has to continue. (See Annex I, table 87 and 88).

The married women qualitative research participants were also asked the feelings of their husbands if they try to defend themselves while they are beaten. They indicated that if they try to defend themselves, their husbands will consider as if they were beaten, and as a result they divorce them or they beat them more. And very few participants also revealed that their husbands feel nothing. The survey result also indicated the same findings. Out of the total married women respondents 58.3% said that if they try to defend themselves their husbands consider as if they were beaten, 18.1% said that their husbands will divorce them, 16.7% said that their husbands will beat them more, and 6.9% said that their husbands feel nothing. (See Annex I, table 89)

The focus group discussion participants and the key informants were also asked their opinion whether the women have the right to divorce their husbands when the beatings are aggravated and what properties they take with them during the divorce. All the participants agreed that woman have no right to divorce their husband and they take nothing with them during the divorce. The survey result also indicated that women have no right to divorce their husbands even if they suffer from usual beatings. Out of the total respondents, 158(79%) said that women have no right to divorce their husbands, while 42(21%) said that they have that right (See Annex I, table 90).

The qualitative research participants were also asked their opinion on equality of men and women. Majority of the women and the girls participants agreed that in principle they accept the idea that women and men are equal. But they said it is not visible in practice. According to their opinion, men are superior to women in their communities. Again majority of the men and the boy participants on the other hand, indicated that men and women can never be equal and they said that, God himself created them unequal. The survey result also indicated the same thing. Out of the total men and boys respondents, 76% said that they do not accept equality of women and men, while 24% said that they accept the idea. Again, out of the total women and girl respondents, 85% said that they accept the idea in principle, while 15% said they do not accept the idea. (See Annex I, table 91).

The focus group discussion participants were finally asked their opinion whether they have got some kind of education on women's rights and their awareness about violence against women and girls. Majority of the participants agreed that they have not got education on women's rights. And again majority of them confirmed that they have not ever heard about violence against women and girls.

The survey result also indicated the same findings. Out of the total respondents, 85.5% said that they have not got any kind of awareness creation workshops on the rights of women and girls, while only 14.5% said that they have got some kind of education on the rights of women and girls. Again, out of the total respondents, 75% said that they have not heard about violence against women and girls, while 25% of them said that they have heard about violence against women and girls (See Annex I, table 92 and 93).

#### **4.2.4. Cases of Victim Women and Girls**

### **Case 1**

*My name is Asia keleda. I live in Afar Region, Mille woreda, Geraruna Dile kebele. I am now 21 years old. I had a boyfriend whom I wanted to marry. I asked my parents to allow me marry my friend. But my parents refused my appeal and decided to marry me to one of my uncle's sons. I refused the marriage and I went with my boyfriend to his home. But, my family and my clan came to the place where we were and took me away from my lover. And they warned my lover that they will kill him if he doesn't stop loving me. Then they gave me away to my uncle's son. He took me to the forest to take away my virginity. In the forest he tied both my hands to my back and my legs to a tree and tried for two months to disvirgin me. But he couldn't. After some times he told me that he wants to cut my vagina by a knife. And as a result I was afraid and I told the case to my family, and his clan. When they asked him about it he told them that I was lying. After three days, while I was looking after the cattle in the forest, he tied my hands and my legs to a tree and then cut my vagina with a razor blade. After he cut my vagina, he left me there and told people to bring me home. Then my family took me to the clinic and I was treated at the clinic for one month. After I got medical treatment, I asked him to divorce me. I had a plan to go to the police for the crime he committed on me. But, my clan warned me that since he is my husband, there was no need for me to go to the police to accuse him.*

*My husband didn't help me and even didn't visit me while I was in the clinic. Later on, I made him agree to divorce me through his clan. Then, I had the opportunity to marry my first lover, and now I am very happy for marrying my lover. I forgot the pain and the hardships my former husband did on me, because I could marry the man whom I love very much. But, I feel bad about the clans. They are obstacles to the women's right, because either they don't allow women to go to the law enforcement bodies or they themselves can't defend the rights of women. When I told them what he did to me, they said that since he is my husband he has the right to do what ever he wants. Finally, what I want to say is that in Afar the traditions are for men and completely against women. We need these to be changed urgently with the help of Allah. We need governmental and non governmental organizations to help us in changing this condition.*

### **Case 2**

*My name is Fatuma Ibrahim. I live in Afar region, Mille woreda, in Kudena Kail Kebele. I was married at the age of 14 to my Absuma. I was not asked my consent in my marriage. I was in the forest looking after the cattle while my marriage ceremony was carried out. I had no information about my marriage. At sunset when I came back from field the man to whom I was married told me that I am his wife. Then I was angry and I told him that I was nothing to him. He again told me that I was his wife and he took me to the forest with the help of his friends. There he tied my hands to my back and my legs to a tree and continuously tried hard to take away my virginity. He tried the whole night but he couldn't succeed. He also tried the next day, but again he failed. In the meantime, he wanted some water to drink and he left to bring it.. As he tied both my hands and my legs to a tree he didn't suspect me of escaping. With help of God, I got*

*the opportunity to escape. I walked 60 km on foot without any cloth on, while my hands were tied. When I arrived at Mille town, I directly went to the police station. There I sat under the flag and cried loudly. I told the police men what had happened to me and I begged them to help me in defending my right. And as a result my husband couldn't take me out of the police hands. Then I married in Mille town to a man whom I loved. My family was not happy about my marriage, but since I was in the town they couldn't influence me.*

*Now, I am living a good life, but what always doesn't give me mental rest is about my daughters. I have now two daughters, who are students. Their fate is unknown. Since we are living in Afar region, my children will not be free from this kind of practice. They might be forced by their clan members to marry their uncles' sons in rural areas. As long as I am alive, this will not happen to them. But, if I die, my daughters will face the same problems I encountered in my marriage. I can tell you the problems of Afar girls and women for many days. In Afar, being a girl or a woman is miserable. Today, all Afar women are found in fear and suspicion as to what will happen to them daily. Our children are also in a dilemma as to what will happen to them. A dead person can't see things happening after his death. We want to see something while we are alive. We don't want material aid from the government and the NGO's, but we need urgent change in the rights of woman and girls. I am confident your research could contribute to changing our lives; otherwise we wouldn't give any response to anyone who asks us about our lives. When I hear the radio and watch television about the laws and the rights of women, I get satisfaction, but when I see the practical problems that our women and girls are facing in our community, I become very sad. Therefore, I beg the Ethiopian community and the world community as a whole to give their attention to Afar women and girls. We are always praying to Allah to help us.*

### **Case 3**

*My name is Hariri Hamado. I live in Afar region, Mille woreda, Gegena Burtele kebele. I was forced to marry my uncle's son at the age of 14. But, unfortunately, my husband died without having any child from me at my young age. As in Afar culture, a woman has to be inherited by one of her dead husband's brothers, one of my dead husband's brothers inherited me. The marriage was arranged by both of our families and I was not asked my consent. The man who inherited me had another wife before me. After a year, the man who inherited me divorced me without any reason. When he divorced me, I was pregnant and I have now one child from him. He divorced me without giving me a single coin. After the brother of my dead husband divorced me, I stayed for six years without a husband. But after six years, the clan of my husband again forced me to marry one of the clan members of my dead husband, and I lived with him for four years. But, he was usually beating me and I have now a big scar on my head. Finally, I couldn't tolerate his usual beatings. We couldn't lead a peaceful life and, as a result, he divorced me. Then after seven months, I married a man whom I loved by my own initiative. But the clan of my dead husband couldn't give me peace. They prepared the fourth husband to inherit me. But I refused and I married on my own. Because of this, they took my children and my property. Now they are going*

*to kill my husband and me. I sued them on Mille woreda Sherea court. But as Mille woreda Sherea court was on their side, it couldn't give me justice. As a result I asked an affidavit for zonal Sheria court at Dubti. Now I am engaged in the legal process to defend my right. But, I am afraid that they may kill my husband and me. Even if our home is found in the rural area, I am here in Mille town for ten months with my husband, because of fear. We, Afar women, are found in a hell, we hate ourselves for being a woman. In Afar, men enjoy and women suffer a lot. There is no enjoyment for us. We need your help to change our life. We beg all man kind to change our condition and to hear our voices.*

#### **Case 4**

*My name is Hasena Mohammed. I am 21 years old. I live in Afar Region, Mille woreda, in Leasena Gesiye kebele. I was forced to marry at the age of 16 to my uncle's son. Since my wedding ceremony was carried out in my absence, I had no information about my marriage and I didn't even know the man who married me. At night, when I came home from the grazing area, my parents tied me up and told me that someone is going to take me. Then my supposed husband with the help of his friends took me to the forest. In the forest, he tied both my hands to my back and tried to take away my virginity, for one month. Since the process was highly painful I was resisting, and as a result he used to beat me a lot. I stayed in the forest for one month suffering daily from the pain and the beatings. Finally, he couldn't take my virginity and he disappeared from the area for not to be blamed for his inability to disvirgin me. I sat with his necka (wedding ring) for seven years. My father had no children except me and I was using his property for a living. After seven years I heard that my husband was dead. When his death was heard, his clan told me that I have to be inherited by one of my dead husband's relatives. I refused and I married a man whom I wanted. But they killed him. I didn't even live with him for one year. My clan and the clan of my dead husband participated in the killing. My husband and me used to leave in rural area, but we came to Mille town to escape from our clans. But we couldn't succeed my husband couldn't and they killed him. Now, I have one child for my dead husband. I am supported by a brother of my dead husband who lives in Mille town. I don't know about my future. I am suffering a lot.*

#### **Case 5**

*My name is Amina Ali. I live in Afar region, Mille woreda. I delivered the baby I carry now in my hand three months ago. I did FGM on her at the age of one week. I did infibulations on my baby because in our community every one does. I did it simply because it is our culture. In fact I don't know what impact FGM has on girls. In our community every one practices infibulations on his/her child. If we don't do this our community isolates us and no body marries our daughter. The responsibility of doing FGM on girls completely rests on women while the responsibility for circumcising boys rests on fathers. I don't want to leave this awful thing on my daughter. I don't think our community will stop FGM, because our culture gives value to FGM.*

#### **Case 6**

*My name is Kula Kaloyita. I am 29 years old. I live in Afar region, Mille Woreda. I was forced to marry at the age of 16 to my uncle's son. The marriage was arranged by my family and I was not asked my consent. When the necka was tied I was not around. When I heard that they are going to give me away, I hid myself in the forest. Then my parents cheated me by telling me that it is not me whose necka ( wedding ring ) was tied and they begged me to return. I believed them and returned. When I reached home, I saw someone waiting for me. Then he took me to the forest with his friends. When we reached in the forest, he tied up my hands and tried to take away my virginity. Since the process was highly painful, I resisted him. But he used to beat me up so many times. His brothers and mine participated in taking me to the forest. There was continuous struggle between me and my husband in the process of taking away my virginity. I stayed in the forest with him for four months. But he couldn't take my virginity. Then I returned to my parents' home and lived with them for seven months. After my husband got some traditional medicine, which gives him power, my parents took me again to his home. But I couldn't stay with him. As a result, I went to my parents 10 times and they sent me back all the time. But finally they stopped sending me to my husband. Then he decided not to divorce me just to avoid my chance of marrying another man. I am now 13 years with his necka. Unless he divorced me no one would marry me. Since he knows this reality, he puts social sanction on me. Now I have submitted my application to the Sherea court in Mille woreda. While I was with him he used to beat me daily. I have many scars on my body due to his beatings. My brother took me to Dessie hospital and the doctor found that one of my backbones was broken and he gave me medical treatment. That was the end of my relations with him.*

*Finally, what I want to say is that, girls in Afar are forced by their families to marry. Some times I hate myself for being a girl and I blame God for creating me as a woman. In the Afar community, being a woman is trash; she is inferior and a servant of her husband. Our culture is completely against girls and women. Our culture is a prison for women. We are forced to abide by the custom of our community. I want our culture to be changed, Girls and women should be free to select their own mate.*

#### **Case 7**

*My name is Asawka Hayis. I am 32 years old and I live in Afar region, Mille town, kebele 01. I am now working as an expert at Mille woreda women's affairs office. No research has been conducted so far on the rights of women and girls in Mille woreda. Therefore, I thank you for conducting this research on our women and girls. As an expert of women affairs office I know the problems of women and girls in Afar very well. Women and girls in Afar daily suffer from various discriminatory practices. There are various customary marriages in Afar region that are against the rights of woman. These customary marriages include; Absuma, wife inheritance, sister's substitution and abduction. In these types of marriages women and girls are not asked their consent and if the women and girls refuse these marriages they are physically, socially and psychologically forced by their families and their clans to marry.*

*Since all Afar girls and women are forced to marry without their interest, their marriage is not peaceful. Especially in absuma marriage, the girls are taken to the forest where nobody can reach for them when they cry as a result of painful sexual intercourse. Until the girl is disvirgined she stays in the forest for a long time daily suffering the pain. Some men even use knives to cut the girl's vagina when they couldn't take their virginity. There are girls who committed suicide due to this act.*

*As women in these types of marriages have no love for their husbands they don't live with their husbands. And as a result, many married women left their husbands. But, the men who married them as their absuma's do not want to divorce them simply to deny them their right to marry the men they love. In Afar, unless the woman is divorced nobody approaches her for the fear of her husband's clan. Therefore, many young women or girls couldn't either live with their husbands or marry the men they wanted. When the women go to the court, their cases take a long time to settle, because the law enforcement bodies as a community members also hold the same attitude towards women.*

*Female Genital Mutilation is another practice from which girls and women suffer daily. Girls and women undergo FGM starting from their birth until they stop delivery. A female baby is a victim of FGM at the age of one to seven days and she is also de-infibulated during delivery. Again she is re-infibulated immediately after delivery just to please her husband or to make the vagina narrower. A woman undergoes de-infibulations and re-infibulations until she stops delivery.*

*Woman in Afar are also daily beaten by their husbands in the name of correction. The men in Afar consider themselves as if they have the right to beat their wives. Generally, in Afar there is no woman who is not beaten by her husband. There are many women who committed suicide and who injured to their bodies due to beatings.*

*When I come back to my own case, I am married and I have four children. I was forced to marry my uncle's son at the age of 14. my parents didn't ask for my consent in my marriage. Since my parents were living in rural areas my marriage took place in rural areas. As it is done for Afar girls, my honeymoon took place in the forest. The struggle and the pain during the honeymoon was horrible. My husband, married two other wives on me. And as a result, I left the rural area and started to live in Mille town. In Mille I got the chance to be employed in the Women Affairs Office as an expert. When my husband knew that I got my own income, he left his other wives and started to live with me. Now he respects me, because I am not dependent on him.*

*Since I am a victim of FGM, I know its impact from my own experience. Now I have four children. When I gave birth for the first son I was cut or de-infibulated by a knife called "Makita". Immediately after I gave my first son, the traditional birth attendant tied up two of my legs together so that the wound could heal and my vagina becomes narrower for my husband. After re-infibulations the wound took me three moths to heal. I used to put some traditional medicines on my*

wound to heal it fast. Therefore, to give four children I was de-infibulated four times and again re-infibulated four times, totally eight times. Urine was a problem during the de-infibulations and re-infibulations, because it irritates the wound. I used to urinate where I was sleeping. As there is no toilet in rural areas of Afar, they used to take me out there by supporting me from both sides. It was very difficult to sit and urinate. I used to sit and urinate bending towards one side.

Generally the life of Afar women is miserable. They are not considered as human beings. In Afar, women do more works than men. Afar women do all the works that men do. But there are some types of work that women do not do. In Afar, women do not bury dead bodies; they do not also pray on dead bodies; they don't wash men's dead bodies, they don't go to war. With the exception of these, women participate in all activities and they work more than men. But, the women have no property rights either while they are living with their husbands or when they are divorced. When women are divorced, they go out without any property. Therefore, Afar women need urgent solutions for their problems. If their problems are not addressed urgently many Afar women will commit suicide and they will also be exposed to various social evils.

#### **Case 8**

My name is Fatuma Abdo. I am 18 years old. I live in Afar region, Mille woreda, and Mille town. I was married in 1997 to the son of my uncle. I was not asked my consent in my marriage. When I was forced to marry, I was 9<sup>th</sup> grade student, and I had also a training in typing and computer. I had no information about my marriage when they tied me necka. While I was attending my class, my uncle came to my class and told me that my aunt is sick and I should go with him. Then I took permission from my school and went to Mile with my uncle.

When we reached Mille, he didn't take me to my aunt's home. But he sent me to the rural area with the man who married me later on. Then my uncle's son took me to the forest and tied up my two hands to my back and my two legs to a tree and took my virginity after seven days struggle. After he took my virginity we stayed in the forest for four months. In Afar, if the girl is a student she is highly suspected of escaping. Therefore they force her to stay in the forest until she gets pregnant. The same happened to me. They were carefully watching for me and, after four months, I became pregnant. When my uncle, who first sent me to the rural area, knew that I was pregnant, he took me to his home in Mille town. Then I gave birth to a son. When my parents and my uncle knew that I am pregnant, they decided to bring me to my uncle's home in Mille town by assuming that I was pregnant and had no where to go. My husband didn't visit me and he didn't also support me a single coin, both before and after my delivery. I brought up my child by supporting myself with what I got from my own mother. Now I have no work and I give free service. Even if I want to continue my education I have no one to support me. I went to the Sherea court to get divorce, but still I couldn't get justice. My husband does not want to divorce me, because he wants to pressurize me to live with him. I accused him at the women's Affairs Office and the Sheria, Court but I couldn't get any solution. Since my husband lives in rural

area, the Sherea Court and the Women Affairs Office couldn't summon him. He intentionally disappears to delay the case. Implementation of the laws in Afar is weak and, as a result, I couldn't get justice. I tried to commit suicide many times because I have no hope to live for. Life has become dark for me.

### **Case 9**

My name is Medena Adem. I am 19 years old. I live in Afar region, Mille woreda, Mille town. I was forced to marry my absuma in 1998 E.C. My parents did not ask for my consent to the marriage. I was 7<sup>th</sup> grade student when my parents forced me marry my uncle's son who live in rural area. When the necka was tied, I refused to marry him. After the necka was tied he took me to the forest forcefully. In the forest he tied my hands to my back and both my legs separately to a tree and then tried to make sexual intercourse with me. He took my virginity after two days painful struggle. During the intercourse, when I resisted, he used to beat me. After he took my virginity, I managed to escape and he couldn't find me. But my parents' were ready to send me back. I told the case to my brother who was a police man and came to visit my parents. He warned them that, forcing girls in marriage without their consent is illegal. Then my parents stopped sending me back and my husband also did not force me to be his wife.

However, I accused him at the sherea Court to divorce me. The court ordered him to divorce me. Again he asked an affidavit for the Asaita Sherea court. Asaita Sherea Court passed the same kind of sentence on him. Finally, he asked me to give him money for divorce. Then I gave him 3,630 birr to get me divorce. The man who wanted to marry me gave me this money. The man I married now was my lover before I was forced to marry my uncle's son. I am very happy to get the opportunity to marry him.

### **Case 10**

My name is Robe Ijo. I live in Fentalle woreda, waldaya kebele. I was promised for marriage at my early child hood and now I am 16. years old.

The man who supposed to be my husband sent elders to my parents' to marry me while I was attending my education. I refused the marriage and told my parents not take the bride price the man brought to them. But, they couldn't listen to me and they decided to give me away. I sued my parents' and the man who decided to marry me on the Fentalle women Affairs office. And as a result the women Affairs office called my parents at its office and told them that forcing girls in marriage without their consent is a crime that is punishable the law.

And as a result, my parents' stopped forcing me and I continued my education. But my clan members forcefully took me to the man who supposed to be my husband. I lived with him for three months. Since I had no intention to live with him and I was also eager to continue my education, I was usually thinking how to escape. Since they suspected me for escaping, they were strictly watching for me.

*It is believed by the community that once a girl is pregnant she has no where to go. But, Allah helped me in this regard, because, I was not pregnant.*

*The man who forcefully married me gave two heads of cattle for my parents' in the form of bride price . But, he bought nothing for me. I lived with him for three months wearing my own plastic shoes and dress which I put on while I was attending my class. Finally, I managed to escape and now I am pursuing my education. My parents gave back the dowry immediately after my escape. But still I am not free from the influence of my clan members, because they may again forcefully take me to my husband. But even if they try again to take me to the man, I will never live with him. I prefer suicide rather than stopping my education and involve my self in to the marriage out of my interest.*

### **Case 11**

*My name is Fatuma Abdella, and I am now 50 years old. I live in Fentalle woreda , Gara Dima Kebele. Since I was promised for marriage at my infancy, I don't know the time I was promised for marriage.*

*I lived with my husband for 20 years and we have three children together. We have good farming land and few heads of cattle. When my husband married me he had no property. But after he married me I worked hard with him to obtain this property. In the mean time, he married another wife on my own farm land and house without my knowledge. He driven me out with my three children and started to live with his new wife in my own home.*

*When my husband evicted me from my own property and home with my three children, he gave me nothing. My children built me a hut at my parents' village. I am earning my life by selling fire wood and grass at market places. I am supporting my three children with the meager income I earn from the sale of fire wood and grass. My children are 10<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.*

*In the mean time, I heard that my husband was going to sell my house and the farm. When I heard this news, I told the clan to stop him from doing this. When he knew that it was me who told the clan to stop him from selling, he directly came to my hut and beaten me on my mouth. He had broken five of my front tooth. As you can see me now five of my front tooth are absent.*

*I sued him at Fentalle Police Station for breaking my tooth. The police station sent me to the Health Centre at Fentalle to produce medical evidence. But, the Health Centre asked me to pay 30 Birr to give me medical evidence. Thirty Birr is too much for me to pay. And as a result, I am cursing myself to be a woman. I do not believe that our problems could get solution. We usually hear people talking about the rights of women. But, practically we do not see any improvement in the lives of women in our community. We pray for Allah to help us.*

### **Case 12**

*My name is Zahara Ahmed. I am 28 years old and I live in Afar Region, Mille woreda, Mille town. I was forced to marry at the age of 16 to my absuma by my parents. I was not asked my consent for marriage. Since my husband lives in Mille town, he didn't take me to the forest for a honeymoon. My husband couldn't take my virginity, but I became pregnant without being disvirgined. After I gave birth a fistula problem happened to me and my baby died immediately after birth. Since I had no love for my husband, I left him after my pregnancy. Now I release my urine and stool together. I can't sit and stand. I sit at one side and feel pain when I try to sit properly. I have no one to help me and my father is also economically weak to support me medically. I don't think I will have hope in the future. I am just waiting for my death to come and take me away. What finally I want to say is FGM has to be stopped. If "Allah" gives me the chance to have a girl baby, I will not do FGM on her.*

***After her treatment at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital***

*She said; now I have become human being. I consider myself as if I was born again. I am now normal and healthy. You did me what my father didn't do for me. May Allah reward you for what you did for me. Now I have a good hope. My future is bright; I can have children in the future. Thank you very much for your support.*

\* The researcher supported the victim to get treatment at Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital from his own pocket including the transportation and other expenses

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.1. Summary**

The few available literatures and research on Ethiopian women and girls confirmed that Ethiopian women and girls are daily suffering from various violence acts committed against them. These literatures and research works reveal that violence against women and girls prevail every where and hence this crime seems to be tolerated by the society at large. The research findings of this study also indicated that, violence against women and girls is more rampant in the pastoralist communities of the research sites. In these communities, where cultural traditions are very strong, violence against women and girls is considered as a normal way of life. The communities, in general, including women and girls in the research areas accept and go through it, without even knowing that it is violence against women and girls. As a result, the lives of Mille and Fentalle women and girls are highly constrained by these crimes.

Marriage is a universal institution found in every society. This institution facilitates the union of two opposite sexes to live together as husband and wife forming a family. The purpose of marriage or family is to support each other and to enjoy life. But, when it comes to the women and the girls in the research areas, the purpose of marriage contradicts this general principle. In these communities, marriage is an institution where women and girls are suffering from it. In all four customary marriages such as wife inheritance, sororate, cross-cousin marriage and early childhood marital promise, the consent of women and girls is not asked. Women and girls are forced to marry by their families, their clans, and the clans of their husbands. Girls and women have no right to decide on their marriages. It is their families or their clans who either say yes or no to the men's request to marry their daughters. Especially, in *absuma* marriage, many girls even do not know whom they are going to marry until their wedding days.

In wife inheritance marriage, for instance, a woman has to be inherited by one of her dead husband's brothers. This is a norm put by the communities under normal circumstances. In this type of marriage consent of the women is not asked and they have no right to refuse the marriage. If they refuse, they have to give up their intention of marrying another husband. But, if they decided to marry another husbands from outside the family, they have to leave their own children and their properties for the families of the dead husband. In general the women whose husbands died cannot marry the men whom they love. Snatching their children and their property is a direct social and economic sanction against women. It is the means by which they force women to accept their inheritance. Even after inheritance, if the woman divorces the man who inherited her due to wife beating and other reasons, the community forces her again to be inherited by another brother of the dead man. This is purely violence against woman, because it is done against the willingness of the woman. Her consent is not asked and she is forced to do so without her interest.

When it comes to cross-cousin marriage, the life of girls in the research areas is horrible. Especially, all Afar girls are expected to marry the sons of their uncles and they do not have another option. As this type of marriage is prescribed by the communities in Afar, every Afar girl knows that one of her uncle's sons will be her future husband. But she does not know who is exactly her future husband is. In this type of marriage, the consent of the girl is not asked

and even the girls do not have information about their wedding days. It is their families and their clans who decide on their marriages. As indicated in the research findings, girls are physically, psychologically and socially forced and pressurized to marry by their families and their clans. If they are found to refuse the marriage, they are beaten, tied up, and given away. Girls are forced to withdrawn from schools to marry and even girls in towns are forced to marry their *absumas* in rural areas.

The other violence committed on girls in this type of marriage is related to the process of taking away virginity of the girls. As indicated in the research findings, girls are forcefully taken to the forests where they are tied up their hands to avoid their resistance against their husbands during the forceful sexual intercourse. The process of taking virginity of the girls is highly painful and it will also take many days and even months. As the process of taking the girl's virginity is painful, girls are highly resistant and, as a result, they are usually beaten by their husbands. The case studies in this research indicated that some girls are forced to stay in the forest until they are pregnant. Honeymoon for many of us implies the time for enjoyment for both partners. But, honeymoon for the girls in Mille woreda is the place and the time where and when they suffer a lot. Honeymoon might be source of enjoyment for the boys or the men whereas it is horror and terrible for the girls in the research areas. The woman in the case study who has escaped during her honeymoon and walked 60 km on foot without any cloth on, can be a good evidence of this reality. This is absolutely a serious violence against girls and is intolerable.

Early childhood marital promise is yet another type of customary marriage where violence against girls is committed. As the research finding shows, this type of marriage is practiced in Kerreyu community. In this type of marriage, girls are promised at an infant age and even while they are in the wombs of their mothers. As the promise is made at early childhood, the question of consent cannot be raised. Kerreyu girls are expected to obey the rules of their families and must marry the men for whom the promise was made by their families. Girls have no right to refuse the marriages and if they are found to refuse the marriage they are physically, psychologically and socially pressurized and forced to marry by their families and their clans. As revealed by the research participants, they are beaten, tied up and even driven out from homes for violating the norms of their community. Though they are beaten and tied

up they do not allow them to leave the marriages. Their families and their clans do not leave them until they marry the men for whom the promises were made.

In this type of marriage, the promise is made regardless of the ages of the men to whom the promise was made. And as a result, sexual incompatibility happens some times. There are also some natural impotencies. In the case of impotency mentioned above, the clan selects someone from the clan members to sleep with the girl whose husband is impotent or sexually weak. In this process of sexual intercourse, if the girl is pregnant and gives birth, her children are named after her formal husband. The proxy clan member only plays the role of sexual intercourse. In this process of selecting someone to sleep with the girl whose husband is impotent or weak, the girl's consent is not asked. The consent is simply made between the two families or the clans of the spouses. As this is the norm of the community, the girl cannot refuse but accept the process. This is purely violence against girls, because it avoids the rights of girls to enjoy their marital life. It avoids the rights of girls to decide on their marriage and their sexual life.

Sororate marriage is also another type of customary marriage where violence against girls is committed. This type of marriage is prevalent among the Afar, Kerreyu and Itu communities. In this type of marriage, if someone's wife dies, a sister of the dead wife is given away to the husband as a substitute. In this kind of marriage, the girls are not asked to give their consents and the marriage is simply decided by the parents and the clans of the dead woman and the widower. Ages of the men and the causes for the death of the previous wife are not considered, even if the causes is HIV/AIDS. As indicated by the research participants, girls cannot refuse this marriage and if they refuse, they are tied up, beaten and given away forcefully. This is also violence against girls, because girls are devoid their rights to select their partners on their good will and their own interest.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

As can be concluded from what has been so far said, all customary marriages in the research areas are against the interests and the willingness of the women and the girls. Their rights to choose or select their partners are violated by their families and their clans. Majority of the women respondents in all type of the research instruments attested that they don't want these

customary marriages to continue. Women and girls in the research areas in general are physically, Psychologically, Socially, and culturally forced to marry against their interests and their wills. Therefore, as far as women and girls are forced to marry in these customary marriages, the differences between abduction marriage and these customary marriages are only the perpetrators of the acts. In abduction marriage, the perpetrator is the abductor; where as the perpetrators in these customary marriages are the parents and the clans. Therefore, forcing women and girls to marry against their interest is purely violence against women and girls.

FGM is another major violence committed against girls. Female Genital Mutilation is broadly applied to a range of practices involving the removal of all or a part of the clitoris and other external genitalia. The main purpose of FGM is to control female's sexuality and to persist the virginity of young girls. It is one of the means to oppress, to make them submissive and docile. It is depriving their rights to enjoy their sexual life. Removing their clitoris means ignoring their rights to get sexual gratification. Especially women in Mille (Afar) experience FGM through out their lives unless they stop delivery. A female child experiences infibulation at her age of one to seven days. Again she is de-infibulated after marriage and during delivery; again she is also re-infibulated immediately after delivery just to make the reproductive organ narrower for her husband.

Wives and girls beating is another type of violence committed against women. Women and girls in the research areas are usually beaten by their husbands and their parents and even by their relatives. The main purpose of wife and girls beating is also to make them submissive, docile for their husbands. It is the means by which men direct women to be their good wives, their good servant. The research findings of this study also confirmed that girls are more beaten than the boys in the families of the research areas. The finding shows that girls are beaten by their fathers, mothers, brothers and even relatives.

As indicated above, women and girls in the research areas are daily suffering from various violence acts against them. But on the other hand, Ethiopia has beautiful laws that could potentially defend the rights of women and girls. The country had ratified the international conventions on the rights of women in 1981, which protects women and girls against all forms of discriminations. The country had also incorporated the convention in its 1995 constitution

which clearly states that women have equal rights with men. Article 35 of the constitution declared that women should enjoy the rights and protections provided by the constitution.

The country has also taken various measures to improve the condition in which Ethiopian women are found. Formulation of a women's policy, establishment of women's Affairs Ministry and Bureaus at National and Regional levels, formulation of family law, amendment of the penal codes and other legal provisions are some of the efforts that have been made by the government of Ethiopia. But, when these efforts are brought to the ground, they face various implementation problems that are mainly related to the negative attitude of the society towards women and girls.

As indicated in the theoretical frame work of this research, Liberal feminist theory which concentrates on the legislation aspects of women has failed to emancipate women from oppression in our country. What is more important is to bring attitudinal change in the society. Changing the existing patriarchal attitudes of the society and the prevailing unequal power relations between women and men through organized and conscious struggle of women themselves is important.

Again, as family is a primary agent for socialization, children learn every thing in their families including violence against women and girls. They see their fathers committing various discriminations against women and girls and they learn that male superiority and female inferiority is a normal phenomenon which they apply in their own families when they grow up. In this research fore instance, all the illiterate boys and girls research participants attested that they want all customary marriages in which the consent of women and girls is not asked. They also confirmed that they want FGM and wife battery to continue in the future. The boys participants also revealed that they do not want to marry girls who are not undergone FGM, because they want to preserve their culture which they learnt through their socialization. Therefore, changing the socialization process of children is also very important to change the unequal power relations between women and men.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

It is assumed by the researcher that, unless the condition of Afar, kerreyu and Itu women and girls is changed, many women and girls in these areas will be exposed to various social evils. Governmental and Non-governmental organizations should give enough attention for pastoral

women and girls. They should hear the voices of the voiceless women and girls in the research areas. Based on the above conclusion and the research findings, therefore the following are recommended for Governmental and Non-governmental organizations and other concerned bodies for immediate and long-term intervention.

1. Family as a basic unit of the society shapes the behavior of human beings through socialization. Each new born baby learns that male superiority and female inferiority is a normal phenomenon, taken for granted which he will apply in the same manner in his own family when he grows up. In general, subordination of women and girls starts develops and perpetuated in the family. Therefore, changing the negative attitude of the families is important. For this to happen, gender equality committees in which NGO's, mass organizations, religious and community leaders, grass root level administrations (woreda and kebele), teachers, students and DA workers are members, should be organized at woreda and kebele levels. The Committee should have its working schedules and plans. It should also be supported by Governmental and Non-governmental organizations. Regular follow up should also be made by NGO's and Governmental organizations like women Affairs offices. The purpose of this committee is to create awareness on gender equality in the families and the communities.
2. Religious and community leaders are highly accepted in the research sites. As indicated by the research participants infibulations has shown little change due to teachings from the religious leaders. As majority of the communities in the research areas are Islam religion followers, Islam religion leaders who participated in this research confirmed that the religion doesn't recommend FGM. But, as majority of the people in the research areas are ignorant about the religion, they consider the religion as if it prescribes FGM. To change the attitude of the communities in the research areas, using religious and clan leaders is a good and successful strategy. Therefore, one religious leader and one community (Clan) leader should be selected from each kebeles and training should be given on FGM and other violence against women and girls to educate their communities. Their working schedules and plans should be prepared and regular follow-up should be made. Enough support should also be given from Governmental and Non Governmental Organizations.

3. As educational institutions also play a significant role in the socialization of children next to family, Governmental and Non Governmental Organizations should also focus their attention on educational institutions to bring about the desired attitudinal changes towards women and girls. As students and teachers are the manifestations of their communities, primarily changing their attitudes towards women and girls is important. Secondly, students and teachers can also play a paramount role in changing the negative attitude of the communities towards women and girls. Therefore, various gender equality clubs and mini-medias should be organized in all educational institutions found at the research areas. Enough training on the rights of women and girls should be given and their working schedules and plans should also be prepared. Regular follow up should also be made.
4. As indicated in the research findings many girls are highly suffering from the pain during the process of taking their virginity. As all girls in the research areas are already infibulated they will all face the same problems during their marriages. Until the desired attitudinal change comes it is important to design a mechanism to reduce the pain of those girls who are already infibulated. This mechanism could be providing a medical institution that gives operation services for the girls before their wedding days. In other words, a clinic that will give operation services for the girls during their weddings should be established at the research areas just to reduce their pain and sufferings. But, priority should be given for awareness creation works, because unless the community accepts this service, it is simply a futile exercise.
5. Violence against women is a severe problem in our country. Women and girls are daily suffering from it simply because of the sex they are born with. Therefore, to address the problem effectively, anti violence policy has to be formulated. For this to happen advocacy works on this issue have to be made.
6. The role of Ethiopian women lawyers Association in defending the right of women is paramount. But as this Association has no structure at woreda levels its service is almost non existent. Especially in pastoralist communities where women and girls are afraid to come and tell their cases to the law enforcement bodies the existence of such Association is important. Therefore, the Association has to open its branches in some woredas of the pastoralist communities.

7. Ethiopia has no gender policy and the country has only national policy on women. As a result, the focus of the implementing institutions is on women while marginalizing the powerful men who control the whole sphere of life. And this led men not to internalize the problems that Ethiopian women are facing. Gender equality comes if both men and women work together for its implementation. Therefore the Ministry of Women Affairs should critically think about having gender policy.
8. As indicated in the main body of this research, Ethiopia has beautiful laws and policies on the rights of women. But this laws and policies face various implementation related problems. Therefore, the country should critically evaluate the effectiveness of its laws and policies on women and remove the barriers for implementing them.
9. As indicated in the main body of this research, legislation measures alone can not emancipate women and girls from their oppression. In addition to removing the barriers for the implementation of the existing laws and policies of the country regarding the rights of women and girls, it is important to design a mechanism for bringing radical changes in to the society. Therefore, women groups, feminists, governmental and non-governmental organizations and other concerned bodies should focus their attention on organizing women and girls and on raising their consciousness to enable them struggle against their oppression.

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## Annex – I

### Survey Findings

#### 1.2. Customary Marriages

**Table 6: Opinion of the respondents towards the types of customary marriages practiced in their communities**

No	Question	Response	Frequency	%
1	The types of marriages practiced in your locality	Wife inheritance	200	100
		Substitution of sisters for the dead wives	200	100
		Marriage to the sons of the mothers' brothers or the daughters of the fathers' sisters (absuma)	200	100
		Early childhood marital promise	100	50
		Abduction	200	100
	Total		200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 7: Distribution of the respondents by their types of marriage**

No	Question	Response	Frequency	%
2	Forms of marriage applied for you	Wife inheritance	32	22.2
		Sisters substitution	16	11.1
		Marriage to the sons of the mothers' brothers or daughters of the sisters	50	34.7

	Early childhood marital promise	34	23.6
	Abduction	12	8.4
	Total	144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 8: Opinion of the married women and men respondents about decision on their marriages**

No	Question	Your family and your clan		Yourself		You and your partner		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
3	Decision on your marriage	132	91.7	12	8.3	--		144	100
	Total	132	91.7	12	8.3	--		144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 9: Opinion of the married men on the consent of their partners in their marriages**

No	Questions	Yes		No		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
4	Was your wife asked her consent in marrying you?	6	8.3	66	91.7	72	100
5	Had your wife had the right to refuse the marriage?	10	13.9	62	86.1	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 10: Opinion of married women on their consent in their marriages**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
6	Did your family and your clan asks for your consent in your marriage?	5	6.9	67	93.1	72	100
7	Did you have the right to refuse the marriage?	4	5.6	68	94.4	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

### 1.2.1. Cross-Cousin Marriage

**Table 11: Opinion of the respondents about the decision of absuma marriage**

No	Question	Your family and the family of your husband		Your clan and the clan of your husband		You and your husband		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
11	Who decide on absuma marriage	190	95	10	5	--		200	100
	Total	190	95	10	5	--		200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 12: Opinion of the wives who married by absuma marriage towards their consent**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
12	If you are married by absuma marriage was your consent asked?	2	8	23	92	25	100
	Total	2	8	23	92	25	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 13: Opinion of the husbands who married by absuma about the consent of their wives**

No	Questions	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
13	If you are married by absuma was your wife asked her consent in marrying you?	1	4	24	96	25	100
	Total	1	4	24	96	25	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 14: Opinion of the married women and men who married by absuma about the reasons why girls are not asked their consent**

No	Question	In our culture girls are not asked their consent		Girls lack ability to select their partners		Girls are subordinate		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
14	What do you think are the reasons for not asking the girl's consent?	30	60	13	26	7	14	50	100
Total		30	60	13	26	7	14	50	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 15: Opinion of the wives who married by absuma marriage about what will happen to them if they refuse the marriage**

No	Question	I would be beaten and forced to marry		I can't refuse the marriage		Nothing will happen to me		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
15	What will happen to you if you refuse to marry your uncle's son?	18	72	7	28	-		25	100
Total		18	72	7	28			25	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 16: Opinion of the respondents towards the benefits of absuma marriage**

No	Question	To strengthen their relations and to avoid dowry	Disabled and ugly girls will get husband	To maintain the existing culture	Total
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		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
16	What do you think are the benefits of absuma marriage?	154	77	26	13	20	10	200	100
Total		154	77	26	13	20	10	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 17: Opinion of the married men respondents about the continuity of absuma marriage in the future**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
17	Do you want absuma marriage to continue in the future?	66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100
Total		66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 18: Opinion of the married women respondents about the continuity of absuma marriage in the future**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
18	Do you want absuma marriage to continue in the future?	15	20.8	57	79.2	72	100
Total		15	20.8	57	79.2	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 19: Opinion of the girls respondents towards the absuma marriage**

No	Question	It has to continue		It has to be avoided		Consent of the girls has to be asked		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
19	If you are not married, what is your opinion towards the	8	28.6	15	53.6	5	17.8	28	100

	absuma marriage?								
Total		8	28.6	15	53.6	5	17.8	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 20: Opinion of the boys respondents towards the absuma marriage**

No	Question	It has to be avoided		Since it is our culture it has to continue		Consent of girls has to be asked		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
20	If you are not married what is your opinion towards abusma marriage?	2	7.1	20	71.4	6	21.5	28	100
Total		2	7.1	20	71.4	6	21.5	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 21: Opinion of the Afar respondents towards honeymoon in absuma marriage**

No	Question	To the forest or the trees		To the houses or the huts		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
21	Where do girls taken during their honeymoon?	100	100	--	--	100	100
Total		100	100	--	--	100	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 22: Opinion of the Afar men and boy respondents towards the reason for taking girls to the forest or the trees for their honeymoons**

No	Question	The huts of the pastoralists are not convenient for honeymoon		To establish good relationships between the partners and to have privacy		To avoid their cries and their resistance during the honeymoon		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
22	What do you think are the reasons for men to take girls to the forest or the	17	34	28	56	5	10	50	100

trees for honeymoon?									
Total	17	34	28	56	5	10	50	100	

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 23: Opinion of the Afar women and girls respondents towards the reason for taking girls to the forest or the trees for their honeymoon**

No	Question	The huts of the pastoralists are not convenient for honeymoon		To establish good relationships and to have privacy		To avoid their cries and resistance during forceful sexual intercourse		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
23	What do you think are the reasons for men to take girls to the forest or the trees for honeymoon?	20	40	--	--	30	60	50	100
Total		20	40	--		30	60	50	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 24: Opinion of the respondents towards parental marital arrangement and the consent of girls and women in their marriage**

No	Question	Sex	Yes		No		Total	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
24	Do you support the idea that marriage of girls and women has to be decided by their parents, and consent of the girls and the women should not be asked?	Men	72	72	28	28	100	100
		Women	34	34	66	66	100	100
Total			106	53	94	47	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

### 1.2.2. Early childhood marital promise

**Table 25: Opinion of the married women about their ages at which they were promised for marriage**

No	Question	While in the womb	<1	2-6	7-11	12-16	17	Total
25	What was your age when you were promised for marriage	3	2	7	2	2	1	17

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 26: Opinion of the married men about their ages when the promise was made**

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 27: Opinion of the respondents about the early marital promise if the husband happened to be impotent**

No	Question	Responses	Number	%
27	In early marital promise, if the husband happened to be impotent, what will happen to the girl?	She can divorce	7	20.6
		She will have sexual intercourse with one of the clan members	22	64.7
		She remains virgin	5	14.7
Total			34	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 28: Opinion of the respondents about the legal father of the child in pregnancy from the clan member**

No	Question	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+	Total
26	What was your age when the promise was given for you in early marital promise?	2	7	2	4	2	17
	Total	2	7	2	4	2	17
No	Question	Response				Number	%

28	In the case of impotency, if the girl is pregnant from the clan member, who would the legal father, be?	Her official husband	34	100
		The clan member who impregnate her	-	-
		The community	-	-
Total			34	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 29: Opinion of the Fentallerespondents on the consent of girls**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
29	Do girls asked their consent in early childhood marrital promise?	15	15	85	85	100	100
	Total	15	15	85	85	100	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 30: Opinion of the Fentalle respondents on the things that would happen to the girls if they refuse the marriage**

No	Question	They are beaten, tied up and given away		I do not know what would happen to them		Nothing will happen to them		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
30	What would happen to the girls if they refuse the marriage?	80	80	-	-	20	20	100	100

	<b>Total</b>	80	80	-	-	20	20	100	100
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Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 31: Opinion of the women and the girls towards early childhood marital promise**

No	Question	It has to be avoided		It has to continue		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
31	What is your opinion towards early childhood marital promise	30	60	20	40	50	100
	Total	30	60	20	40	50	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 32: Opinion of the men and the boys towards early childhood marital promise**

No	Question	It has to be avoided		It has to continue		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
32	What is your opinion towards early childhood marital promise	15	30	35	70	50	100
	Total	15	30	35	70	50	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

### 1.2.3. Wife inheritance

**Table 33: Opinion of the married men about wife inheritance**

No	Question	Your brother		One member of your clan		A person whom your wife wants		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
33	In case of if you die who do you think your wife should marry?	60	83.3	10	13.9	2	2.8	72	100

Total	60	83.3	10	13.9	2	2.8	72	100
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Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 34: Opinion of the married women about wife inheritance**

No	Question	His brother		One member of his clan		A person whom you want		Total number	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
34	In case if your husband dies whom do you think you marry?	62	86.1	10	13.9	--	--	72	100
Total		62	86.1	10	13.9	--	--	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 35: Opinion of the inherited women towards their consent in heritage**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
35	Was your consent asked when you were inherited?	2	12.5	14	87.5	16	100
Total		2	12.5	14	87.5	16	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 36: Opinion of the men who married by inheritance towards the consent of their wives**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
36	Was the consent of your wife asked when you inherited her?	3	18.7	13	81.3	16	100
Total		3	18.7	13	81.3	16	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 37: Opinion of the inherited women and the husbands towards the problems that would happen to widow if she refuses the inheritance**

No	Question	Her property and her children will be taken away		she can stay without marrying another man		She will be forced to marry		Nothing will happen to her		total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
37	What will happen to a woman if she refuses the inheritance?	20	62.5	8	25	3	9.4	1	3.1	32	100
Total		20	62.5	8	25	3	9.4	1	3.1	32	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 38: Opinion of the respondents toward the benefits of wife inheritance**

No	Question	For safety of the children	%	For the security of the property		Strengthen relationships among the clans		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
38	What do you think are the benefits of wife inheritance	200	100	200	100	200	100	200	100
Total		200	100	200	100	200	100	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 39: Opinion of the respondents towards the reasons why women and girls have no right in deciding on their marriage**

	Question	Reason		Reason		Reason		Reason		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
39	What do you think are the reasons for girls and women not to have the right in their marriage?	Women and girls are subordinate in the community		Women and girls are dependent on their families and their husbands		Naturally women and girls have no right		Women and girls have no ability in selecting their mates		Total	
		104	52	51	25.5	15	7.5	30	15	200	100
	Total	104	52	51	25.5	15	7.5	30	15	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 40: Opinion of the boys respondents on wife inheritance**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
40	Do you support wife inheritance	22	78.6	6	21.4	28	100
Total		22	78.6	6	21.4	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 41: Opinion of the girls respondents on wife inheritance**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
41	Do you support wife inheritance?	8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100
Total		8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 42: Opinion of the married men respondents on the continuity of wife inheritance**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
42	Do you want wife inheritance to continue in the future?	57	79.2	15	20.8	72	100
Total		57	79.2	15	20.8	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 43: Opinion of the married women respondents on the continuity of wife inheritance**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
43	Do you want wife inheritance to continue in the future?	25	34.7	47	65.3	72	100
Total		25	34.7	47	65.3	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

#### 1.2.4. Sisters substitution for the dead wives

**Table 44: Opinion of the married women towards marriage by sisters substitution**

No	Question	Your sister		One girl from your clan		Any girl		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
44	In case if you die who do you think your husband can marry?	57	79.2	10	13.9	5	6.9	72	100
Total		57	79.2	10	13.9	5	6.9	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 45: Opinion of the married men on the marriage by substitution**

No	Question	The sister of your wife		One girl from your wife's clan		Any girl		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
45	In case if your wife dies who do you think you marry?	62	86.1	8	11.1	2	2.8	72	100
Total		62	86.1	8	11.1	2	2.8	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 46: Opinion of the married women and men respondents about the decision of the marriage in girls substitution.**

No	Question	Families of the partners		Clans of the partners		The partners		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
46	Who do you think will decide on marriage by substitution?	120	83.3	24	16.7	--	--	144	100
Total		120	83.3	24	16.7	--		144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 47: Opinion of the married women and men respondents about the consent of the girls in marriage by substitution**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	number	%
47	Is the consent of girls asked in marriage by substitution?	15	10.4	129	89.6	144	100
Total		15	10.4	129	89.6	144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 48: Opinion of the married men and women respondent about the rights of the girls to refuse the marriage.**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total number	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
48	Do the substituted girls have the right to refuse the marriage?	14	9.7	130	90.3	144	100
Total		14	9.7	130	90.3	144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 49: Opinion of the respondents about the reason why girls can't decide on their marriage in substitution**

No	Question	Girls are subordinate in the community		Naturally girls have no rights		Girls are dependent on their families		Girls lack ability to select their mates		Total	
		Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%
49	What do you think are the reasons for the girls not to have the right to decide on their marriage?	104	52	15	7.5	51	25.5	30	15	200	100
Total		104	52	15	7.5	51	25.5	30	15	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 50: Opinion of the respondents about the problems that the substituted girl faces if she refuses the marriage**

No	Question	She will be alienated		She will be fired from home		No body marries her		She is forced to marry		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
50	What would happen to the girl if she refuses marriage by substitution	72	36	36	18	61	30.5	31	15.5	200	100
Total		72	36	36	18	61	30.5	31	15.5	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 51: Opinion of the respondents about the benefits of marriage by substitution**

No	Question	To protect the children from the hardships of step mother		To protect the property not to be inherited by an outsider women		To strengthen relationships		To preserve the culture		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
51	What do you think the benefits of marriage by substitution ?	150	75	20	10	25	12.5	5	2.5	200	100
Total		150	75	20	10	25	12.5	5	2.5	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 52: Opinion of the married women and men and all respondents towards HIV/AIDS test before marriage**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
52	Did you do HIV/AIDS test before your marriage?	-	-	144	100	144	100
53	Do other men and women, girls and boys do the test before marriage in your locality?	-	-	200	100	200	100

Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 53: Opinion of the married women respondents on the continuity of the marriage by substitution**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
54	Do you want marriage by substitution to continue in the future?	20	27.8	52	72.2	72	100
Total		20	27.8	52	72.2	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 54: Opinion of the married men respondents on the continuity of marriage by substitution**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
55	Do you want marriage by substitution to continue in the future?	54	75	18	25	72	100
Total		54	75	18	25	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 55: Opinion of the boy and the girl respondents on the continuity of marriage by substitution**

No	Question	Sex	Yes		No		Total	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
56	Do you want marriage by substitution to continue?	Boys	16	57.1	12	42.9	28	100
		Girls	11	39.3	17	60.7	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

### 1.2.5. Female Genital Mutilation

**Table 56: Opinion of the respondents towards the practice of FGM in their communities**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
57	Is female genital mutilation practiced in your community?	150	75	50	25	200	100
	Total	150	75	50	25	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 57: Opinion of the Respondents about the Age at which FGM is practiced**

No	Question	1-7 days		7-8 years		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
58	What is the age at which FGM is practiced on female children?	100	50	100	50	200	100
	Total	100	50	100	50	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 58: Opinion of the respondents about the responsibility for the practicing FGM**

No	Question	Men		Women		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
59	Which part of the community is more responsible for the practice of FGM?	--	--	200	100	200	100
	Total	--	--	200	100	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 59: Opinion of the respondents about FGM**

No	Questions	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
60	Do you support the practice of FGM in your locality?	130	65	70	35	200	100
	Total	130	65	70	35	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 60: Opinion of the respondents why they support the practice of FGM**

No	Question	Responses	Number	%
61	What are your reasons for supporting FGM?	If girls are not circumcised their sexual desire is high and as a result they will not be loyal to their husbands and it is also shame to go with clitoris without being out	52	40
		If girls are not infibulated they will easily loose their virginity and at the same time dusts will enter into their organs.	30	23.1
		If women are not re-infibulated their vaginas will be wide and their husbands will hate them	19	14.6
		No body will marry girls who are not mutilated and infibulated.	16	12.3
		Sleeping with a girl whose clitoris is not cut is shame and awful.	13	10
	Total		130	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 61: Opinion of the respondents on whether or not the Islam religion prescribes FGM**

No	Questions	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
62	Does the Islam religion prescribe FGM?	60	30	140	70	200	100
	Total	60	30	140	70	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 62: Opinion of the respondents about the women who do FGM**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
63	Do women who perform FGM use different tools for different girls	150	75	50	25	200	100
	Total	150	75	50	25	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 63: Opinion of the respondents about the changes in FGM in the last 10 years**

N o	Question	Increased		Decreased		No change		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
64	What does the extent of FGM looks like in the last 10 years?	15	7.5	57	28.5	128	64	200	100
	Total	15	7.5	57	28.5	128	64	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 64: Estimated percentage of the practice of clitoridectomy in the community**

No	Question	90-100		80-90		70-80		60-70		<50		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
65	What does the practice of clitoridectomy (sunna) in your locality look like in percentage?	100	50	--	-	--	-	--	-	100	50	200	100
	Total	100	50	--	-	---	-	--	-	100	50	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 65 Estimated Percentage of the practice of infibulations in the Afar community**

No	Question	90-100		80-90		70-80		60-70		50<		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%
66	What does the practice of infibulations look like in your community?	18	18	26	26	23	23	25	25	8	8	100	100
	Total	18	18	26	26	23	23	25	25	8	8	100	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 66: Opinion of the respondents on their awareness about the impact of FGM**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
67	Do you know the impact of FGM on women?	68	34	132	66	200	100
	Total	68	34	132	66	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 67: Opinion of the married women and men respondents about the continuity of FGM in their locality?**

No	Question		Yes		No		Total	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
68	Do you want the practice of FGM to continue in the future?	Men	52	72.2	20	27.8	72	100
		Women	22	30.6	50	69.4	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 68: Opinion of the boys respondents about the continuity of FGM in their locality?**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
69	Do you want the practice of FGM to continue in the future?	22	78.6	6	21.4	28	100
Total		22	78.6	6	21.4	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 69: Opinion of the girls respondents about the continuity of FGM**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
70	Do you want FGM to continue in the future?	8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100
Total		8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 70: Opinion of the married women and men respondents whether they allow their sons to marry the girls who are not undergone FGM**

No	Question	Sex	Yes		No		Total	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
71	Do you allow your son to marry a girl who is not circumcised and infibulated?	Men	20	27.8	52	72.2	72	100
		Women	50	69.4	22	30.6	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 71: Opinion of boys towards their marriage to the girls who are not undergone FGM**

No	Question	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
72	Do you marry a girl who is not undergone FGM?	5	17.9	23	82.1	28	100
Total		5	17.9	23	82.1	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

### 1.2.6. Wife beating

**Table 72: Opinion of the married men towards their action when their wives are found guilty**

No	Question	I beat her		I advice her		I do nothing		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
73	What would you do if your wife is found guilty?	58	80.6	10	13.9	4	5.5	72	100
Total		58	80.6	10	13.9	4	5.5	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 73: Opinion of the married women on the action of their husbands when they do wrong**

No	Question	He beats me		He advises me		He fires me from home		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
74	What does your husband do when you are found guilty?	62	86.1	3	4.2	7	9.7	72	100
Total		62	86.1	3	4.2	7	9.7	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 74: Opinion of the married women towards their own experience in wife beating**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
75	Have you ever beaten by your husband?	68	94.4	4	5.6	72	100
Total		68	94.4	4	5.6	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 75: Opinion of the married men towards their experience in beating their wives**

No	Question	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
76	Have you ever beaten your wife?	66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100
Total		66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 76: Opinion of the boys respondents about the prevalence of beating in their homes**

No	Question	Your mother		Your sister		You and your brother		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
77	Who is more beaten in your family?	18	64.3	8	28.6	2	7.1	28	100
Total		18	64.3	8	28.6	2	7.1	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 77: Opinion of the girls respondents towards the prevalence of beating in their families**

No	Question	Your mother		You and your sister		Your brothers		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
78	Who is more beaten in your family?	20	71.4	6	21.4	2	7.2	28	100
Total		20	71.4	6	21.4	2	7.2	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 78: Opinion of the girls and boys about the perpetrators of beating**

No	Question	Father		Your mother		Your brother		Your relatives		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	No.	%
79	Who beat you and your sisters?(girls)	28	100	28	100	28	100	28	100	28	100
80	Who beat your sisters (boys)?	28	100	28	100	28	100	28	100	28	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the Pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 79: Opinion of the married women and men towards the importance of wife beating**

No	Question	Sex	Yes		No		Total	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
81	Do you believe that wife beating is important?	Men	50	69.4	22	30.6	72	100
		Women	15	20.8	57	79.2	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 80: Opinion of the married women respondents on parts of their bodies that are a target for beating**

No	Question	Back and waist		Head		Feet		Hands		Face		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
82	If your husband beats you which part of your body is a target for beating?	56	77.8	3	4.2	6	8.3	5	6.9	2	2.8	72	100
Total		56	77.8	3	4.2	6	8.3	5	6.9	2	2.8	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 81: Opinion of the married men respondents on parts of the bodies that are a target for wife beating**

No	Question	Back and waist		All parts		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
83	If you beat your wife which part of her body is a target for your beating?	52	72.2	20	27.8	72	100
Total		52	72.2	20	27.8	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 82: Opinion of the married women respondents on their body injuries due to wife beating**

No	Question	Tooth broken		Hand broken		Fracture		Scar		Wound		No injury		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
84	Do you have any body injury as a result of beating?	4	5.6	5	6.9	3	4.2	17	23.6	3	4.2	40	55.6	72	100
Total		4	5.6	5	6.9	3	4.2	17	23.6	3	4.2	40	55.6	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 83: Opinion of the married women respondents towards the rights of their husbands to beat them**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
85	Do you believe that your husband has the right to beat you?	54	75	18	25	72	100
Total		54	75	18	25	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 84: Opinion of the married men towards their rights to beat their wives**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
86	Do you believe that you have the right to beat your wife?	66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100
Total		66	91.7	6	8.3	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 85: Opinion of the married women and men respondents towards the reasons for husbands to have the rights for beating their wives**

No	Question	Women are subordinate		Wife beating is accepted in the community		I don't know the reason		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
87	What do you think are the reasons for the husbands to have the right to beat their wives?	60	41.7	72	50	12	8.3	144	100
Total		60	41.7	72	50	12	8.3	144	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 86: Opinion of the married women as to where they report wife beating**

No	Question	To the police		To the family		To the clan leaders		No body		Women affairs		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	No.		%
88	Who do you report the usual beating of your husband?	10	13.9	17	23.6	34	47.2	11	15.3	--	--	72	100
Total		10	13.9	17	23.6	34	47.2	11	15.3	--	--	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 87: Opinion of the women and the Girls respondents on the continuity of wife beating**

No	Question	Very happy		Sad		Nothing		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
90	What do you feel if wife and girl beating is avoided?	100	100	--	--	--	--	100	100
Total		100	100	--	--	--	--	100	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 88: Opinion of the respondents on the continuity of wife beating**

No	Question	Yes	%	No	%	Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
94	Do you want wife beating to continue?	64	32	136	68	200	100
Total		64	32	136	68	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 89: Opinion of the married women towards self-defense when their husbands beat them**

No	Questions	He considers as if I beat him		He beats me more		He divorces me		He feels nothing		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
89	What does your husband feel if you try to catch the cane by which he beats you?	42	58.3	12	16.7	13	18.1	5	6.9	72	100
Total		42	58.3	12	16.7	13	18.1	5	6.9	72	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 90: Opinion of the respondents about the rights of women to divorce their husbands**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
92	Do women have the right to divorce if they face problems in their marriage?	42	21	158	79	200	100
Total		42	21	158	79	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 91: Opinion of the respondents about equality of men and women**

No	Question	Yes			No		Total	
		Sex	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
91	Do you accept the idea that that women and men are equal?	Men	24	24	76	76	100	100
		women	85	85	15	15	100	100
Total			109	54.5	91	45.5	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 92: Opinion of the respondents on their exposure to workshops on women's rights**

No	Question	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
93	Have you ever got education on women's rights?	29	14.5	171	85.5	200	100
Total		29	14.5	171	85.5	200	100

Source: Survey on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

**Table 93: opinions of the respondents about their awareness about violence against women**

No	Question	Yes	%	No	%	Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
95	Have you ever heard about violence against women and girls?	50	25	150	75	200	100
Total		50	25	150	75	200	100

Source: Research on Violence against women and girls in the pastoralist communities, 2007

# Annex II



Figure 1. Training of the numerators and the facilitators



Figure 2. Some of the Community advisory group members



**Figure 3. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 4. Focus group discussion with woman and girls**



**Figure 5. Men Focus group discussion participants**



**Figure 6. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 7. Focus group discussion with men and boys**



**Figure 8. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 9. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 10. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 11. Focus group discussion with men and boys**



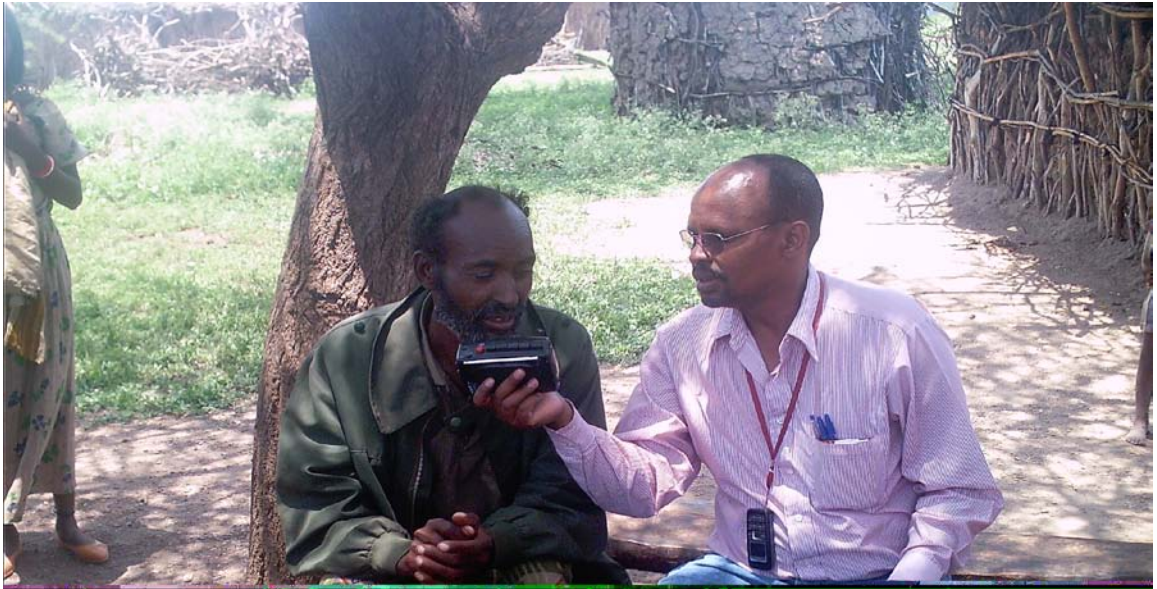
**Figure 12. Focus group discussion with men and boys**



**Figure 13. Focus group discussion with women and girls**



**Figure 14. In-depth interview with a girl**



**Figure 15. In-depth interview with a man**



**Figure 16. In-depth interview with a student**



Figure 17. In-depth interview with a girl



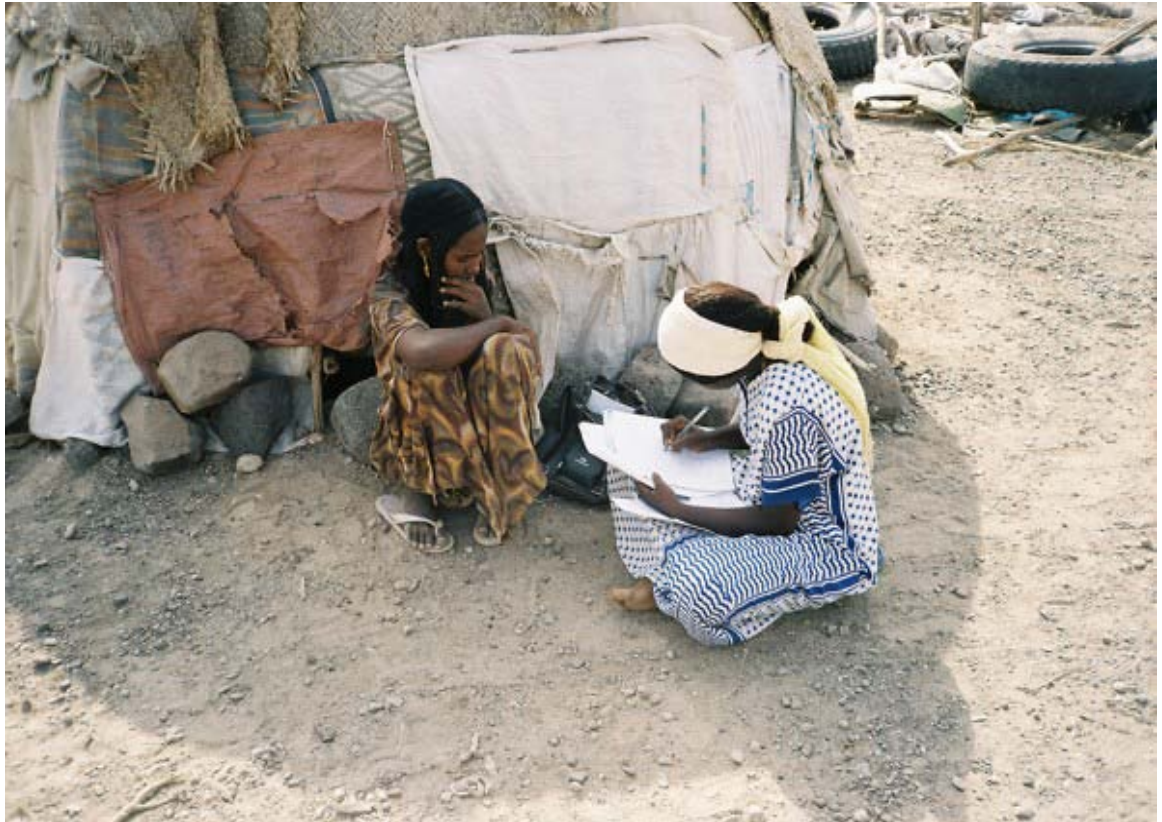
Figure 18. In-depth interview with a woman



**Figure 19. In-depth interview with a woman**



**Figure 20. In-depth interview with a woman**



**Figure 21. An enumerator filling a questionnaire**



**Figure 22. An enumerator filling a questionnaire**



**Figure 23. A six-month baby who is a victim of FGM (infibulation)**



**Figure 24. A woman whose husband was killed because of her marriage with someone outside the clan**



**Figure 25. A knife used for infibulation**



**Figure 26. A woman who was reinfibulated after delivery**



**Figure 27. A woman (left) who paid money to her husband to divorce her**



**Figure 28. A girl who was forced to withdraw from school to marry to her cousin**



**Figure 29. A woman who is a victim of fistula before her treatment at the Fistula Hospital**



**Figure 30. A woman who was a victim of fistula after being treated at the Fistula Hospital**



**Figure 31. A woman who was a victim of fistula after being treated at the Fistula Hospital**



**Figure 32. Meeting with the numerators after the pre-test**



**Figure 33. Pastoralist women building a hut**