

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE G5 SAHEL COUNTRIES: INVESTMENTS IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

Yves CHARBIT

Emeritus Professor of Demography

CEPED. Université de Paris

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It is widely recognized that early marriage and early births, by contributing to a high fertility, reduce women's autonomy. The experience of Korea, a country often cited as an example for having managed to reap its demographic dividend, shows that policies focused on the status of women effectively contribute to the achievement of DD. This is why the issue of the profitability of investments is put in the perspective of empowerment of women.

This paper documents the profitability of investments aimed at reducing the frequency of marriages and early fertility and those aimed at increasing the presence of girls in secondary education. Both will contribute to the empowerment of women in G5 Sahel countries and by extension, the harnessing of the demographic dividend.

The paper is divided in six parts

- (1) To which extent is the context unfavourable to the empowerment of women?
- (2) What is the state of the art on such investments?
- (3) How will those aimed at reducing early marriages and pregnancies contribute to the empowerment of women?
- (4) How will those aimed at increasing the number of women having completed secondary education contribute to their empowerment?
- (5) How can long-term changes be modelized?
- (6) Conclusion

1.THE CONTEXT OF THE G5 SAHEL COUNTRIES

1.1 The G5 Sahel countries are in a pre-dividend situation

Demographic indicators in the G5 Sahel countries, notably fertility, population growth rates, proportion of young people, as well as economic and social (Human Development Index) are worrying. They are clearly obstacles to harvesting the first dividend and justify considering that the five countries are classified in the pre-dividend phase.

Further, similarities being far greater than differences, focusing on the regional dimension is fully legitimate.

Table 1. Basic demographic indicators for the G5 Sahel countries

	Population 2015 (thousands)	Rate of growth	TFR	<15	GDP /hab	HDI*
West Africa	352 614	2,72	5.3	44	4135	0.461
Burkina Faso	18 111	2,98	5.7	49	1680	0.423
Mali	17 468	2,95	6.0	48	2040	0.427
Mauritania	4 182	2,95	4.6	40	3760	0.520
Niger	19 897	3,84	7.3	50	970	0.353
Chad	100.1	3.29	6.4	48	1950	0.404

Sources: *UNDP, otherwise UNDESA

1.2 Security issues as an obstacle to the empowerment of women

The Sahel has become an area of political uncertainties, armed conflicts and security degradation. Women and girls experience specific forms of violence on the basis of their gender. As stated by Bience Gawanas, UN Secretary General's Special Adviser on Africa, on June 28 2018, "The increased use of rape, other forms of sexual violence and abduction from schools as tactics of systematic terror attacks on civilian populations is a demonstration that terrorism and extremism target and affect women, men, girls and boys in different ways" (as quoted by Birch-Jeffrey, 2019). The situation is particularly serious in post-disaster situations or in relief camps themselves (GGCA, IUCN & UNDP 2009). Further, transactional sex increases in crisis-affected environments and becomes a survival strategy. It is recognized that focusing on integrating gender issues, women's participation, empowerment and leadership will contribute to counter and prevent terrorism and violent extremism (see: the UN Secretary-General Plan of Action on Prevention of Violent Extremism, Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, etc.).

1.3 Empowering women in order to address the issue of climate change

About 70% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa survives with the subsistence minimum through agriculture and pastoralism. The Sahel and West Africa region is one of the poorest, least developed and most food-insecure regions. It is estimated that an average of 20 million people are food insecure each year during the lean season (FAO, 2017). They are threatened by a number of risks and challenges, both systemic and local, including high climate variability characterized by increased shocks and stresses (droughts and floods, temperature increases and changes in precipitation patterns). According to the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, in 2020 about 250 million Africans will face water scarcity, which will reduce harvests from rainfall-fuelled agriculture, up to 50% by 2020 in some countries.

The majority of the poor are women who represent 70% of the 1.2 billion people with an income under

1 dollar a day (World Bank, 2012). Women, owing to the specific social roles assigned to them by our societies and the discriminations they must face, are doubly impacted by climate change. While they account for 60 to 80% of food production in developing countries, they hold only 10 to 20% of land titles (CCAFS and OOAS, 2013; FAO, 2010). In addition, the resources and options available to women to adapt to climate change are highly limited by the inequalities affecting them: illiteracy is more frequent than among men; limited economic power owing to a lesser access to land ownership and credit, under-representation in the new technologies sector and careers in engineering, which limits their participation in the management of innovatory technologies applying to climate change (World Bank 2014). More advanced education and more secured reproductive rights would contribute to enhance the role of women.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND OF DATA BASES

In view of the vast literature on the demographic dividend, this section is focused on the existing knowledge on early marriages, early motherhood, as obstacles to the empowerment of women, and conversely secondary education as a favourable factor.

2.1. Early marriages and fertility. The “cost of no action”

Demographically, the disappearance of early marriages and fertility would mechanically reduce the number of early maternities and births. The economic costs associated with the effects of child marriage on fertility and population growth, child health and education are particularly important. Social benefits resulting from lower population growth in the absence of early marriage are estimated globally (for 106 countries) \$ 22 billion in 2015 and \$ 56.6 billion in 2030. On a global scale, for 106 countries, with a discount rate of 5%, the estimated benefits would increase from \$ 42 billion (PPP) in 2015/16 to \$ 82 billion in 2030 for under-five mortality. For child stunting, estimated earnings are projected to increase from \$ 9 billion (PPP) in 2015-16 to \$ 16 billion in 2030.

In El Salvador the “cost of no action” explores convincingly several microeconomic and macroeconomic consequences of early pregnancy, notably lesser entries on the labour market, high school drop-outs and thus lower incomes. Conversely, controlling for other factors, girls who have gone on to secondary school have longer life expectancy and are in better health; they get higher wages and their standard of living is higher; last, at the macro level they contribute more direct and indirect tax revenues. In conclusion, reducing early pregnancy is socially and economically profitable and promotes DD.

2.2. The costing study related to secondary education

This study based on household survey data from 106 developed and developing countries has measured the potential impacts and cost of education for girls as opposed to illiteracy, in six areas: (1) income and standard of living; (2) child marriage and early pregnancy; (3) fertility and population growth; (4) health, nutrition and well-being; (5) agenda and decision making; (6) social capital and institutions.

2.3. Studies based on the generation economy (NTA)

NTA aim at analysing economic flows between generations related to four economic activities: work, consumption, distribution and saving. In a context of demographic youth, the continuous increase in life expectancy over the past half-century has profoundly changed intergenerational relations, and in particular the respective roles of families as providers of solidarity and of the market as an actor who may eventually become more present in the coming years. The SWEDD Project used this methodology in the G5 Sahel countries. The results will be updated by the future project with more recent data thus evidencing trends.

2.4. Studies using the DemDiv model

These studies demonstrate that the combined power of investments in family planning, education and the economy can generate a demographic dividend, otherwise impossible to harness. In **Kenya** the results of the model are as follows.

1. Family planning is essential to pave the way for Kenya's demographic dividend. Improving access and use of Family Planning will: a) save the lives of more than 5 million children and 350,000 mothers; b) balance the age structure of Kenya, with a working-age population representing 73% of the total population by 2050.
2. Investment in education of adolescents will reduce the gender gap, generate a larger skilled workforce, meet changing labour market needs and increase income at the household level.
3. An economic policy environment that fosters employment growth and attracts investment is essential to achieving the demographic dividend. By supporting national industries, improving market efficiency and strengthening the governance of public institutions, GDP per capita will be more than 12 times higher by 2050.

2.5. Overview of National Data Bases

A crucial point is the availability of data. Box 1 shows that there are very rich national data bases which allow in-depth analyses of investments and empowerment of women.

BOX 1. Demographic and economic sources in the G5 Sahel Countries

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEYS	
Burkina Faso	MIS, 2017-18 ; MIS, 2014 ; MICS3, 2010 ; DHS 2010 ; DHS, 2003 ; DHS, 1998-99
Mali	DHS, 2018 ; MIS, 2015 ; DHS 2012-13 ; DHS, 2006
Mauritania	DHS, 2018-19; DHS, 2000-01
Niger	DHS, 2017; DHS, 2012; DHS, 2006; DHS, 1998; DHS, 1992
Tchad	DHS/MICS 2014-15 ; DHS, 2004 ; DHS, 1996-97
ECONOMIC SURVEYS	
Burkina Faso	EMC 2014, ENESI 2015
Mali	EMOP 2017, 2018, Enquête Permanente sur les Conditions de Vie des ménages EPCV 2014.
Mauritania	ENE-SI 2017, EPCV 2014
Niger	PC 2012, ECVMA 2011, EVIAM 2014-15
Chad	ECOSIT 3 2011, ECOSIT 4 2018-19 on-going
MACROECONOMIC DATA	
Burkina Faso	Tableaux des Comptes Economiques Intégrés (TCEI) ; Tableaux Ressources Emploi (TRE) ; Circuit Informatisée des dépenses ; Comptes de santé ; Enquête Multisectorielle Continue (EMC) Instrument Informatisée des Prévisions
Mali	Tableaux des Comptes Economiques Intégrés (TCEI) ; Tableaux Ressources Emploi (TRE) ;

	Cadre des dépenses à moyen terme 2011-2015 du Ministère de la Santé ; Annuaire statistiques de l'éducation et de la santé.
Mauritania	Tableaux des Comptes Economiques Intégrés (TCEI) de l'ONS ; Tableaux Ressources Emploi (TRE) de l'ONS ; Cadre des dépenses 2011-2015 du Ministère de la Santé ; Enquête Permanente sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (EPCV 2014) ; Données des annuaires statistiques de l'éducation et de la santé
Niger	Tableaux Ressources Emploi (TRE) ; Dépenses de l'exécution budgétaire 2011-2015 du Ministère de la Santé Publique; Dépenses de l'exécution budgétaire 2011-2015 des Ministères en charge de l'Education ; Données de l'Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages et de l'Agriculture (ECVMA) de l'année 2014 ; Données des annuaires statistiques de l'éducation et de la santé ; Données du Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (RGPH)
Chad	-Enquête sur la Consommation des Ménages et le Secteur Informel au Tchad (ECOSIT3, 2011); -Ressources de l'Etat allouées aux dépenses courantes d'éducation -Dépenses de consommation d'éducation en 2011; -Dépenses de consommation de santé en 2011; Tableau de l'évolution des dépenses d'éducation selon la nature (2013-2016) -Politique Nationale de la Population 2002 - 2015; -Annuaire statistique sanitaire de 2015 -Annuaire statistique scolaire 2014-2015 -Politique Nationale de Développement 2017-2021 -Vision 2030, le Tchad que nous voulons.

3. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BENEFITS OF THE REDUCTION OF EARLY MARRIAGES AND FERTILITY

Investments aimed at reducing the frequency of early marriages and early births will improve a large spectrum of indicators of RH.

Table 2 quantifies, for each indicator pertaining to young mothers, the gains made through their reduction.

Table 3 quantifies, for each indicator pertaining to infants, the gains made through the reduction of early fertility of their mothers.

Note that in both tables,

(+) indicates an increase of an indicator favourable to the empowerment of women,

(-) indicates a decrease of an obstacle to the empowerment of women.

Table 2. Benefits for mothers of reduced early marriages and fertility

Indicators	
Level of contraceptive prevalence	(+)
% of medical deliveries	(+)
% of 1st early births (<18 years)	(-)
% of maternal mortality	(-)
% having pre- and post-natal care	(+)

% domestic violence suffered	(-)
% adequate intra-couple communication	(+)

Table 3. Benefits for infants of their mothers' reduced early marriages and fertility

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Indicators	
Ratio of neonatal and infant-juvenile mortality	(-)
% of adequate weight at birth	(+)
% of children who had early breastfeeding	(+)
% of children with postnatal follow-up	(+)
% of fully immunized children	(+)
% of children suffering from stunting	(-)

4. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BENEFITS OF COMPLETED SECONDARY EDUCATION

Indicators pertaining not only to reproductive health, but also to the empowerment of women, are quoted in Tables 4 and 5 below

Some of them are the same as in Tables 2 and 3, which confirms the strategic need to combine policies aiming at reducing early marriage and at promoting secondary education.

However, two sociological constraints must not be ignored.

First, under parental and family pressure, some of the women, although they have completed their secondary education, will get married due to family pressure and will never enter the labour market. The analysis must therefore be refined according to the percentage of secondary school women actually employed in the formal sector.

Second the positive impacts described in the table will be different according to the sex of the child, if there is a cultural preference for sons.

As in above Tables 2 and 3, note that

(+) indicates an increase of an indicator favourable to the empowerment of women

(-) indicates a decrease of an obstacle to the empowerment of women

Table 4. Benefits for mothers of increased education

Indicators	
Contraceptive prevalence	(+)
% of medical deliveries	(+)
% of early marriages	(-)
% of 1st early births (<15 years)	(-)
% of maternal mortality	(-)
% having pre- and post-natal care	(+)
% domestic violence suffered	(-)
% working in formal sector	(+)
% having access to ICT	(+)
% of household health vulnerability	(-)

Table 5. Benefits for infants of mothers' increased education

Indicators	
Neonatal and infant-juvenile mortality	(-)
% adequate weight at birth	(+)
% early breastfed children	(+)
% of children who had postnatal care	(+)
% of fully immunized children	(+)
% of children enrolled in pre-school	(+)
% of children enrolled in primary school	(+)
% of children suffering from stunting	(-)
% of parental physical violence suffered	(+)
% of sex-selective parental care	(-)

5. USING DEMDIV TO MODELIZE LONG-TERM CHANGES

Projections based on the DemDiv model show how cumulative investment in health, education, family planning and the economy could produce a demographic dividend.

5.1. Socio-demographic consequences of reducing early marriage and childbearing

The above research requires the availability of sources. National surveys such as DHS and MICS provide a wealth of indicators. They are not limited to Reproductive Health, they also provide indicators on internal and international migration, activity and access to modern employment (Table 6). The broad areas, not the detailed indicators, are quoted.

**Table 6. Consequences of the reduction of marriages and early fertility
(% changes of the indicators)**

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CONSEQUENCES	2020	2030	2040	2050
Indicators in Area 1: Demography: Neonatal and Infanto-Juvenile Mortality, Indicators in Area 2: Total Fertility and Population Growth Indicators in Area 3: Health and Nutrition of the Young Woman Indicators in Area 4: Child Health and Nutrition Indicators in Area 5: Use of maternal and child health services Indicators in Area 6: Internal and International Migration Indicators in Area 7: Activity and access to modern employment				

5.2. Socio-demographic consequences of reducing early marriage and childbearing

For each country, positive effects on women's empowerment of secondary schooling compared to

primary level are summarized in Tables 7 and 8.

**Table 7. Socio-demographic consequences of secondary education
(% reduction or improvement of each indicator)**

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CONSEQUENCES	2020	2030	2040	2050
Indicators in Area 1: Control of fertility and life cycle Indicators in Area 2: Internal and International Migration Indicators in Area 3: Domestic Violence Indicators in Area 4: Autonomy and Decision Making Indicators in Area 5: Social capital, access to ICT				

5.3. Cultural social and economic consequences of secondary education

**Table 8. Cultural, social and economic consequences of secondary education
(% reduction or improvement of each indicator)**

CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES	2020	2030	2040	2050
Indicators in Area 6: Access to the modern employment sector Indicators in Area 7: Productivity Indicators in Area 8: Comfort and equipment of households Indicators in Area 9: Poverty and inequalities Indicators in Area 10: Public revenues				

5.4. Scenarios built on alternative national strategies

DEMDIV allows further analytical refinements, by introducing alternative scenarios on the magnitude and timing of investments.

- **Status quo scenario:** maintaining current levels and trends of demographic, economic and social indicators no government intervention.
- **Scenario Investments in combating marriages and early births.** Slow drop: annual reduction of 2%. Average drop: annual reduction of 5%. Fast drop: annual reduction of 10%.
- **Scenario Investments in Education.** Average years of schooling and school life expectancy over the next 40 years are doubled or increase by about 2% per year.

The choice of scenario parameters is a very complex exercise. In each country they must be specified them according to two sets of criteria:

- a) the target values of the medium and long-term development policies implemented in each country, possibly revised following the opinion of experts;
- b) the values obtained by a set of benchmark countries in the fields of education and health.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, what should be further explored is an analytical assessment at the micro level of women, of the positive consequences of investments in RH and secondary education, showing how greatly they can contribute to women' empowerment.

- Early marriages and births contribute to increase fertility and reduce women's autonomy. The DD would be achieved more quickly if educational policies were combined with freely accepted and culturally appropriate family planning programs.

- Women's secondary education will empower them and contribute to the achievement of DD through:
 1. A better control of their fertility;
 2. Better care for the health of their children;
 3. Better professional qualifications;
 4. Greater participation in the modern economic sector.

In the specific case of the G5 Sahel countries large avenue for policy-oriented research on investments exist and will enrich the existing knowledge based on other regions of the world.

As noted above and as far as I know, significant work has been done on child marriage and fertility in 106 countries (including 18 developing) using various methodologies, but not for each specific G5 Sahel countries. In El Salvador, « the cost of no action » is well documented.

Significant work on the potential benefits of enhanced secondary education has also been proven on the same 106 countries but again not for the G5 Sahel countries.

The SWEDD Project has already carried out studies based on the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) methodology for Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mauritania and Chad.

In Kenya (2014), Malawi (2016), Uganda (2014), and Zambia (2015), UNFPA studies based on the DemDiv model show how cumulative investment in health, education, family could produce a demographic dividend. But the model has not yet been fully used for G5 Sahel countries.

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