

A SMART START STORY



RURAL • MARRIED
THEY WANT THREE KIDS

**METSARET AND HER HUSBAND, TECKLU,
HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR SEVEN MONTHS**

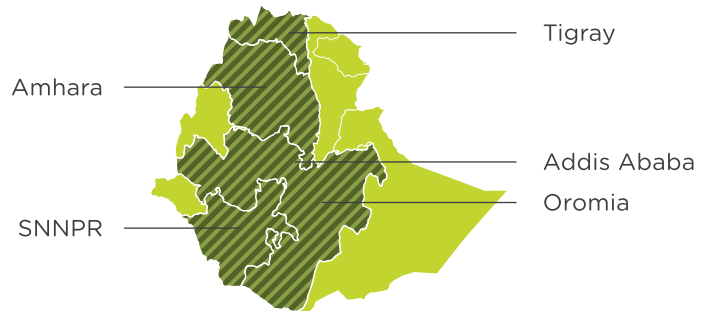
Metsaret (17) may have dreamed of finishing school, but now she and Teclu have been married for seven months and she feels pressured to have a child right away.

They work on their farm together, and Metsaret also sells coffee for additional income. The couple has plans to build a house and purchase additional farm land.

They know they want three children, but haven't discussed the timing of their first child or how they could plan for their pregnancies. While they have these economic and family goals, they have never considered how the two might be connected.

WHERE ARE WE WORKING?

 Scale & Pilot



**WE AIM TO REACH
123,102 ADOPTERS
OF CONTRACEPTIVES
AGES 15 TO 19
IN THESE REGIONS
IN 2.5 YEARS**

GETTING GIRL-CENTERED: USEFUL INSIGHTS

In addition to what we know from the evidence and developmental science, in Ethiopia our process revealed the following insights:

WHAT WE LEARNED

- **Marriage and children feel like every girl's immediate future — making contraception hard to relate to.**
- **Proving fertility immediately after marriage is crucial.**
- **Couples are shifting from having large families to hoping for a higher quality of life for fewer children.**
- **Husbands are uninformed about methods and the value of contraception, but some are eager to learn more.**

HOW WE PROGRAMMED DIFFERENTLY

Smart Start helps young couples connect contraception to their long-term financial and family goals through financial planning now.

Smart Start helps girls to become active partners in achieving the aspirations of the couple by using contraception as a tool to achieving financial success and delaying pregnancy.

Smart Start invites husbands to encourage joint decision-making about contraceptive use and family planning.



JALQABBII GAARII SMART START ETHIOPIA

GIRL-OWNED BRAND

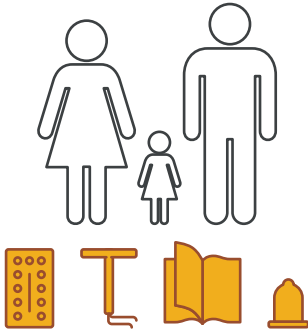
The Smart Start brand is inspired by and owned by young married girls. It empowers girls and creates new value for all the people in their lives.

Smart Start uses financial planning as an entry point to engage young married couples in planning their futures, positioning contraception as a tool to achieve their goals.

Smart Start strengthens Ethiopia's health care system by transforming existing networks.

MAKING CONTRACEPTION RELEVANT

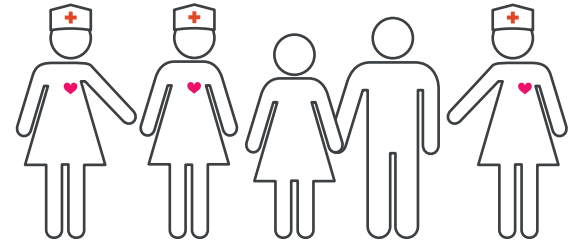
- Smart Start approaches girls at key life moments (engagement, marriage, and after their first child) to ensure contraception feels relevant to her.
- Smart Start uses familiar branding, a visual discussion guide, and approachable team members to fit into the rural context and make girls feel comfortable.



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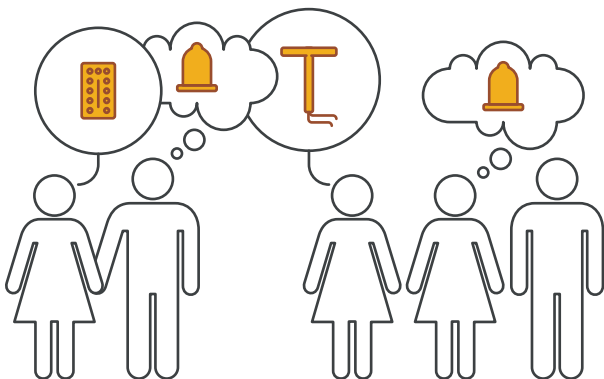
PEER MOBILIZATION & LEVERAGING EXISTING SYSTEMS

- Smart Start leverages the nation-wide Health Extension Worker (HEW) network that is best positioned to serve rural populations.
- We train HEWs and Smart Start Navigators with a safe and compelling way to host conversations and provide services.
- Smart Start also works with existing community structures, such as Women's Development Army, and new Smart Start Youth Champions to recruit girls at key life moments.



HUSBAND AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Smart Start includes the husbands in the family planning conversation, using financial planning to create new value for contraception and encourage joint decision-making.
- We give the community a cause they can all get behind— smart planning amidst limited resources and changing times.
- Kebele leaders, parents, and husbands become contraceptive allies through Smart Start.



SMART FOLLOW-UP

- Smart Start's tracking system and process ensures that we can continue to meet girls wherever they are in their journeys, follow-up on goal progress, and ensure continued use. This builds ongoing value and confidence in contraception.

