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Scaling for change: Strategic investment in the poorest girls in the poorest communities

Judith Bruce
Population Council

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Scaling for Change

Strategic Investment in the Poorest Girls in
the Poorest Communities



Judith Bruce
Senior Policy Analyst
Population Council
Clinton Global Initiative
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Prepared by Mike Vosika, with contributions
from Francesca Montini and Nicole Ippoliti



Why Girls?

Investing in girls is essential to achieving the MDGs and rebalancing the population resource equation



Which Girls?

We have the data to target regional hotspots with the poorest girls and highest ROI



When to Intervene?

AHEAD of the curve and EARLY enough to make a difference



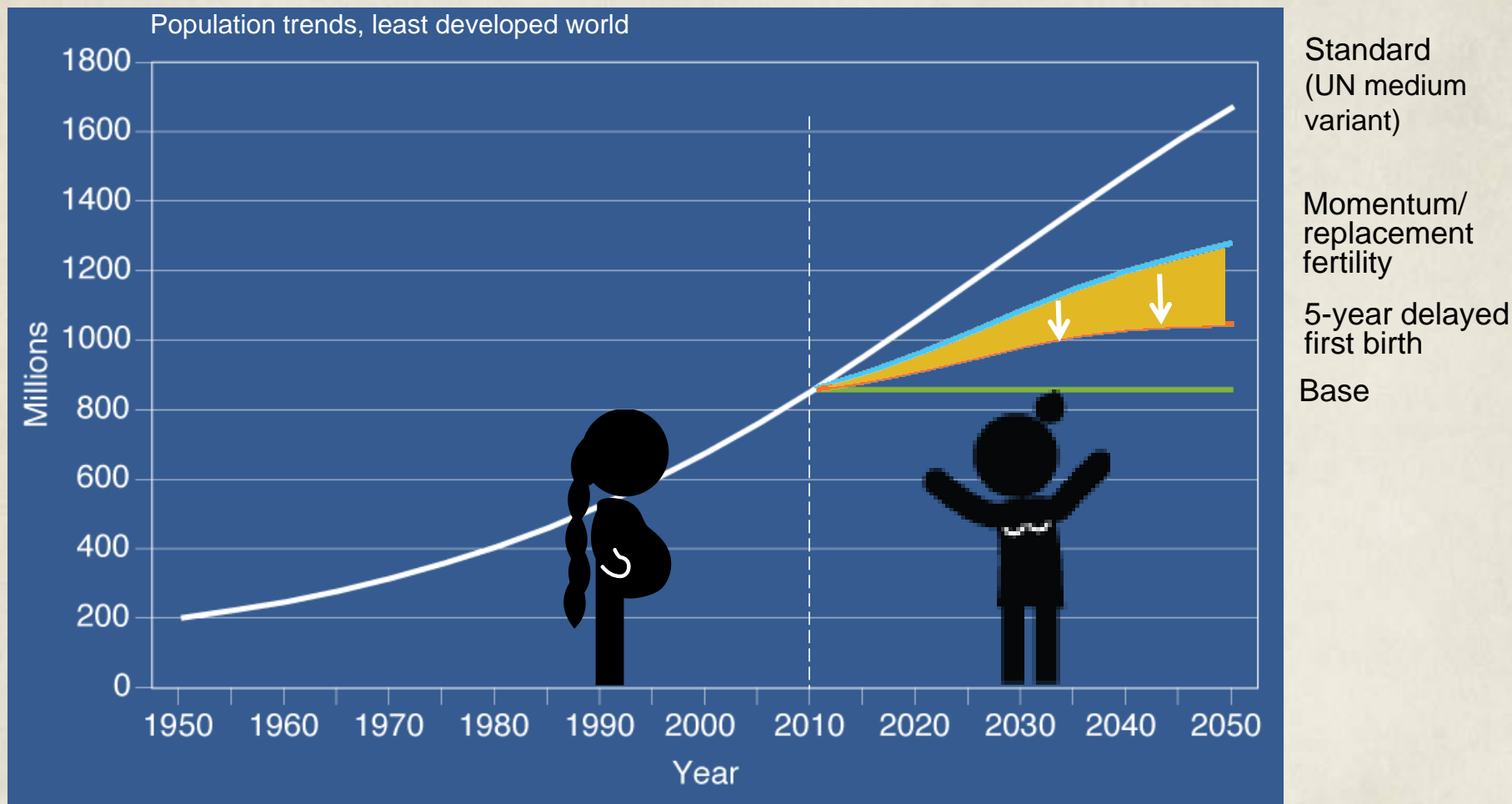
What Is Needed?

Communities to fulfill their commitments to provide core social, health, and economic assets and social programs to ensure girls' ability to claim them



Why Girls?

Investing in the poorest girls so they may hold on to their childhood and defer childbearing past adolescence is a **GOOD** in and of itself and could reduce population size by 18 percent, or 224 million, a full 39 percent of the anticipated increase



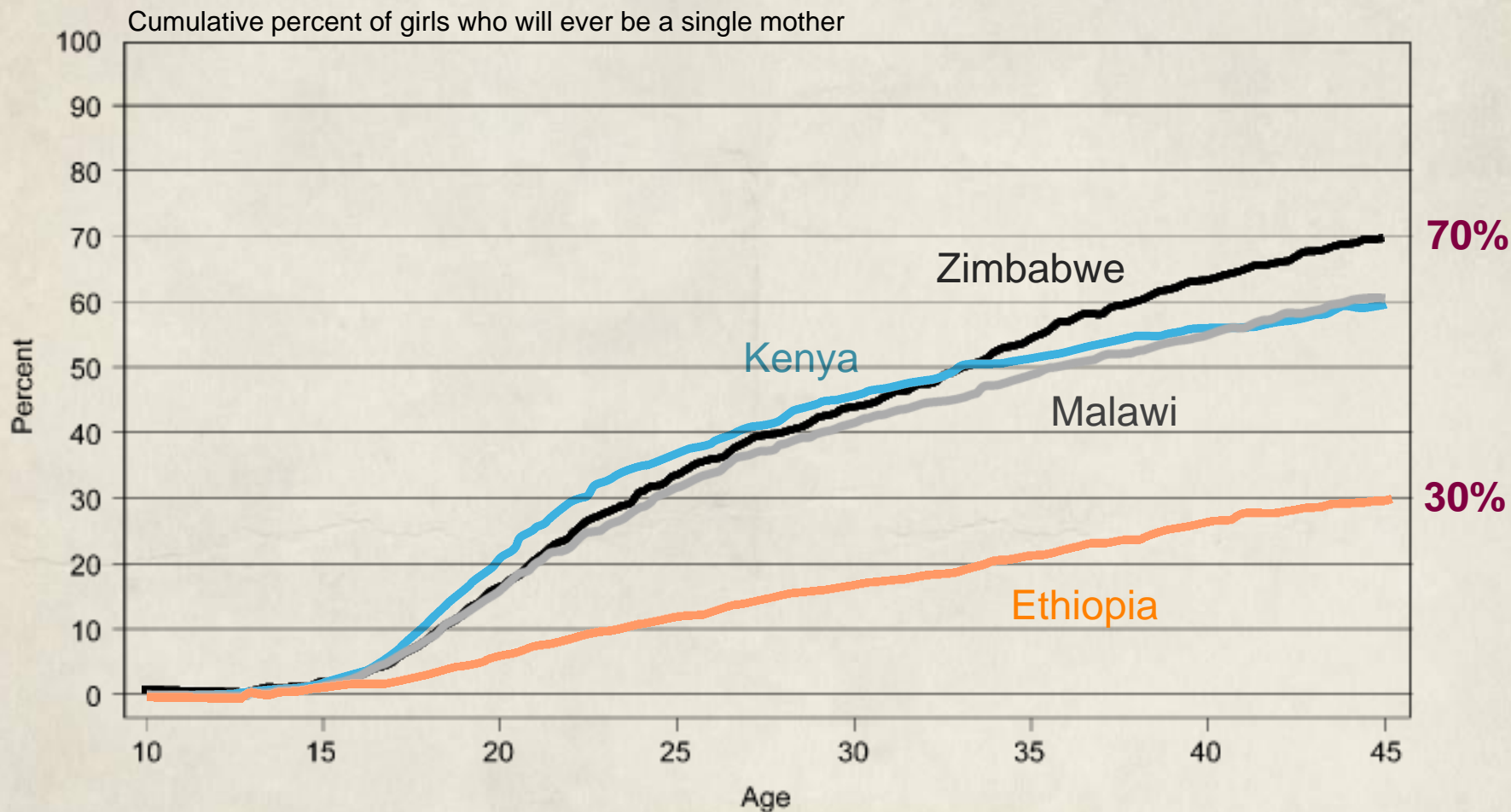
Sources: UN 2009; Bongaarts 2011 (analysis).

Also see Bruce, Judith and John Bongaarts. "The new population challenge." In Laurie Mazur (ed.), *A Pivotal Moment: Population, Justice, and the Environmental Challenge*. Washington, DC: Island Press.



Why Girls?

A high proportion of girls will become **single mothers**
Failure to invest in them is **planned poverty**



Source: Clark, Shelley and Dana Hamplova. 2011. "Single motherhood, poverty, and child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa: A life course perspective." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington, DC, 31 March.

With support from Population Council and Nike Foundation.



Why Girls? Summing Up



Larger economic pie +
More equitably distributed

Increase productive capacity
and expand economic
participation and
intergenerational investment

N



Reduce the dependency
burden by increasing age
at first birth and reducing
poverty-driven demand
for children

D



Which Girls?

We have the data to find at-risk girls who, with investment, provide our best bet for:



Increasing the space between generations



Improving health



Fostering sustainable expansion



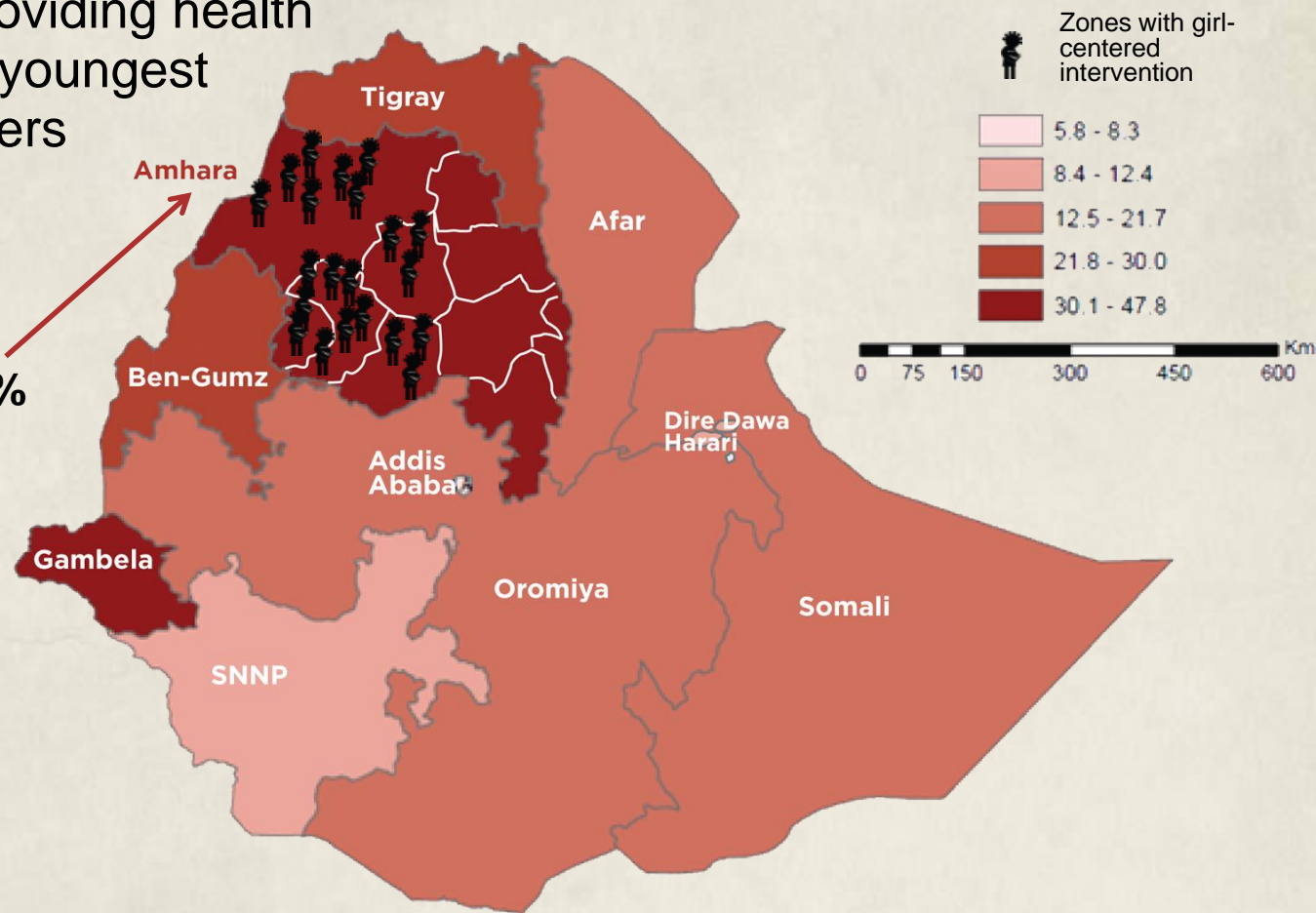
More equitable sharing of income and increased intergenerational investment



Which Girls?

In Ethiopia, **girl-centered interventions** in high-risk regions have succeeded in increasing the age of marriage, keeping girls in school, and providing health support to the youngest first-time mothers

Girls married by age 15 reach **42%**



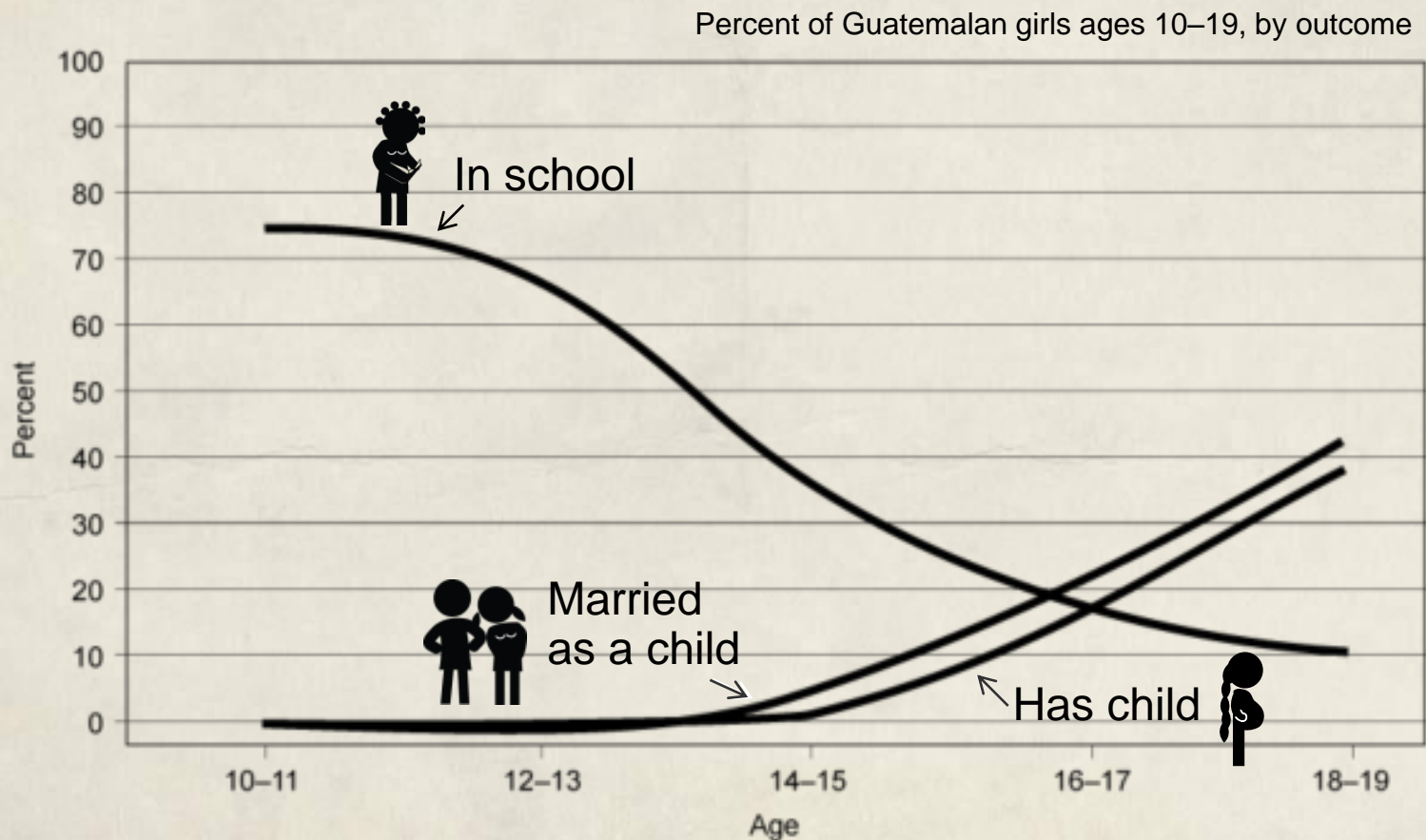
Sources: Erulkar, A. and E. Muthengi. 2009. "Evaluation of Berhane Hewan: A program to delay marriage in rural Ethiopia," *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 35(1) 6–14.

Erulkar, A. and E. Muthengi. forthcoming. "Building programs to address child marriage: The Berhane Hewan experience in Ethiopia," unpublished Population Council/UNFPA report. Addis Ababa.



When to Intervene?

EARLY enough to keep girls in school and build their health, social, and economic assets



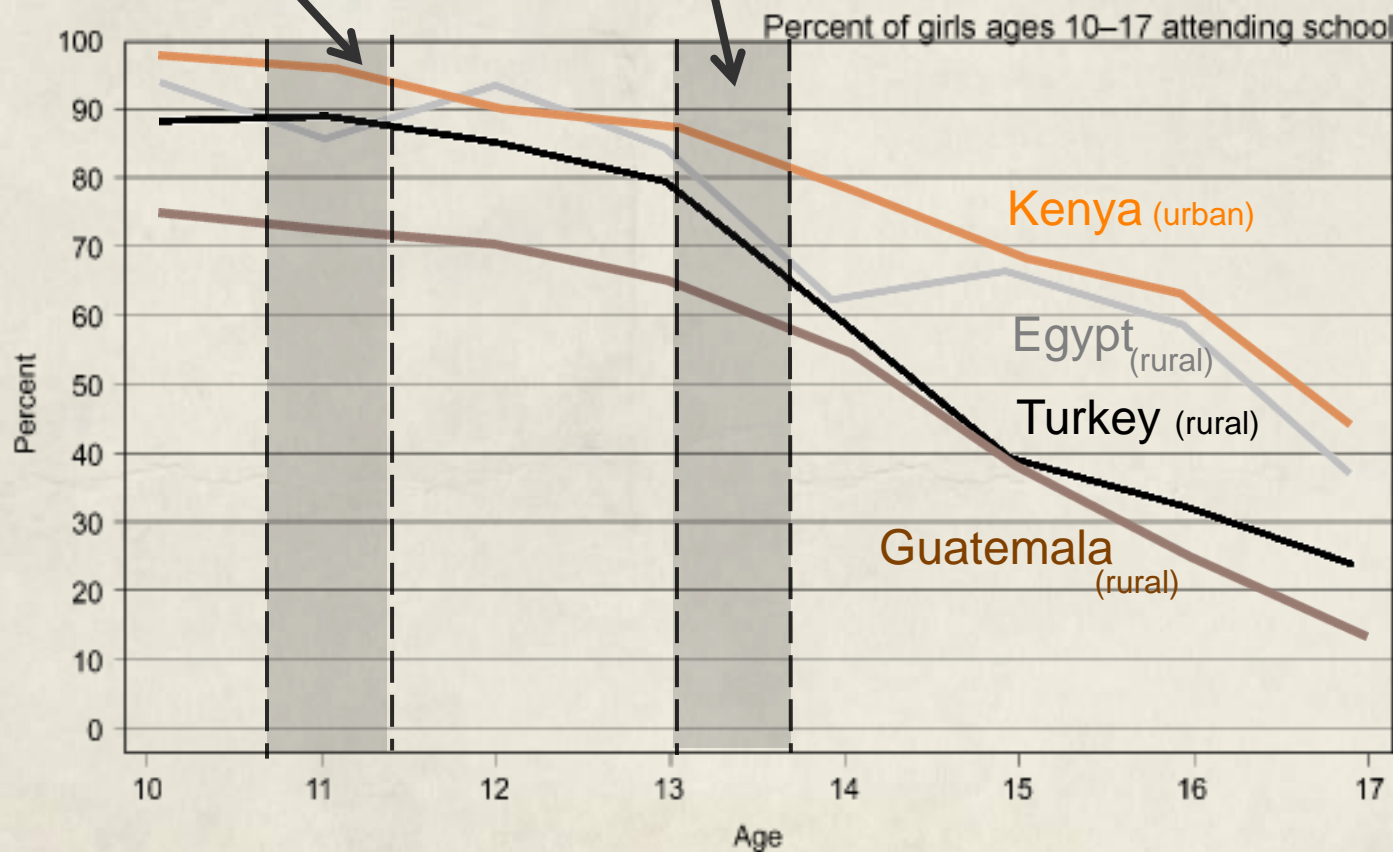


When to intervene?

We need to invest AHEAD of the curve

Girls begin dropping out of school at the onset of puberty

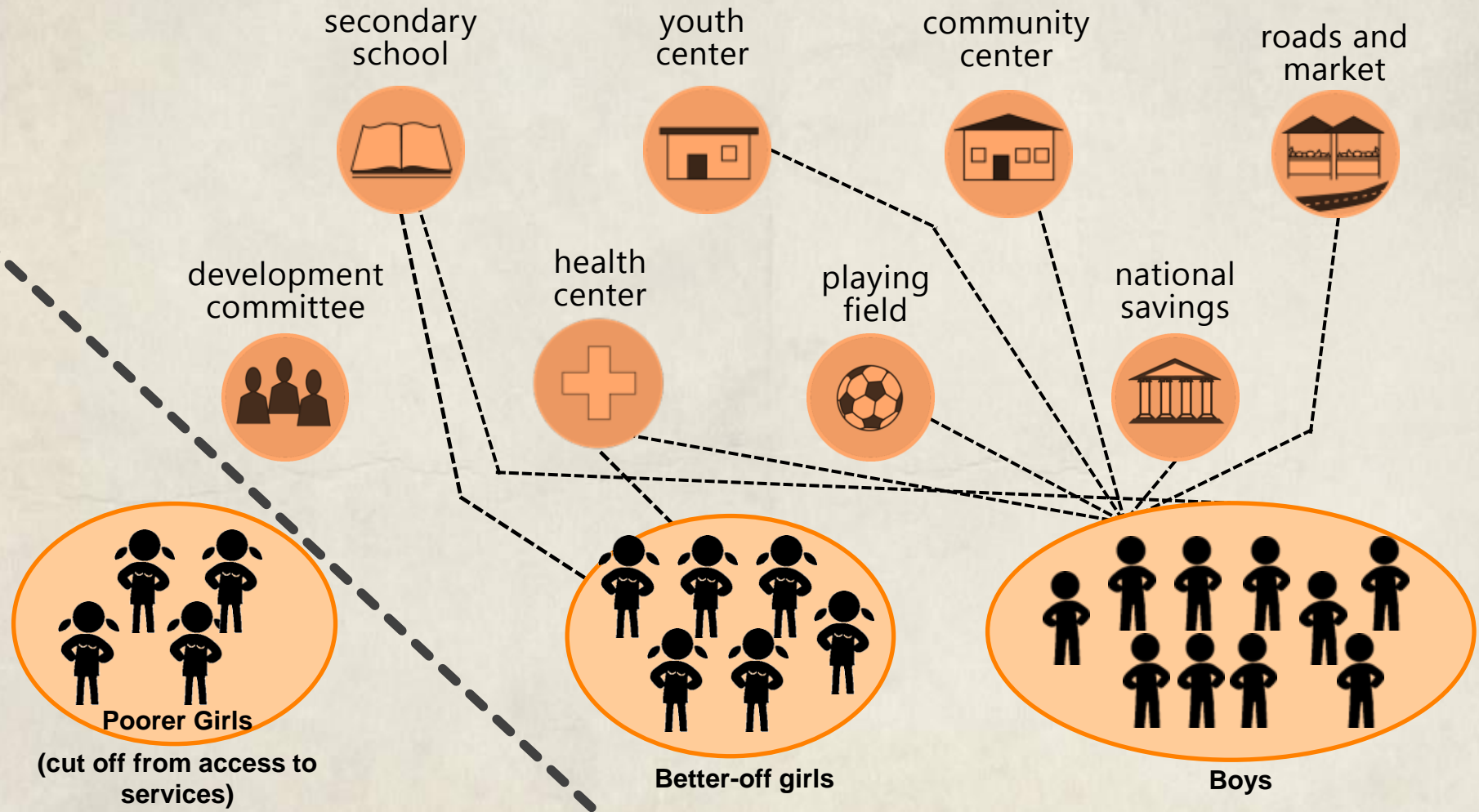
Intensify investment here Drop out accelerates here





What Is Needed?

Correct the current investment failure to reach the critical bottom 40% of girls.





What is Needed?

What Girls Need by Age 12: A Basic Toolkit



At least five friends (her team)



Community girl-only place/space/platform to meet them



A nonfamily, slightly older female mentor



Personal documentation (for citizenship rights, health, and livelihoods)



Age-graded life skills such as health information and financial literacy



Incubator savings



What is Needed? Public-private partnerships hand in hand with girls

+ To ensure basic entitlements, services, and facilities



secondary school



development committee



roads and market



youth center



playing field



community center



national savings



health center

+ To create community-based places/spaces/platforms in which girls thrive and through which they claim their rights.

