



Dotto - a member of the CAMFED Association of women leaders educated with CAMFED support and trained Learner Guide — leads a My Better World life skills and self-development session with secondary students in Morogoro, Tanzania. Credit: CAMFED/Eliza Powell

Understanding the role of CAMFED's peer mentors in shifting gender social norms in four districts in Tanzania

Research report



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Summary

This report highlights outcomes from our research study that aimed to identify if and how CAMFED's peer mentors, known as Learner Guides, contributed towards shifts in gender social norms in the communities in which it works in Tanzania. The study addressed three questions:

- What gender social norms were hindering gender equality in the communities in Tanzania in which CAMFED works?
- Who in the community did Learner Guides engage with to support the shift in gender social norms which were holding back opportunities for girls and young women?
- To what extent did Learner Guides help shift gender social norms?

The research area covered a range of districts and wards in Tanzania. These indicated the differences in perspectives between districts including matrilineal and patrilineal arrangements, livelihood activities, and cultural practices. The study identified six key clusters of gender social norms that potentially adversely affect girls and young women: education, early pregnancy, early marriage, gender-based violence, paid/unpaid work and decision-making and leadership. It then sought to uncover whether these norms were being shifted because of the interventions by the Learner Guides.

Overall, the analysis showed that the Learner Guides contributed most significantly to changes in gender social norms related to education and gender-based violence, while also contributing somewhat to paid work and decision-making and leadership. These shifts were achieved primarily through the Learner Guides' ability to engage at grassroots level and by providing students and communities with education and awareness. For example, by advocating for the value of education, especially for girls, and the value of girls and women more generally, the Learner Guides acted as role models in the community. However, our analysis also indicated that Learner Guides appeared to have less engagement with religious and village leaders, many of whom did not attribute change directly to the Learner Guides.

Some community members also raised concerns about boys facing disadvantages in areas such as completing education, caused by gender social norms which place pressure on boys to earn an income. There were also norms linked to the perceived shame for boys and men to report acts of gender-based violence against them.

Overall, learner Guides did not shift gender social norms in isolation but were part of a broader set of factors which facilitated and catalysed shifts in gender social norms. In education and gender-based violence, government policies played an important role in supporting changes, and in relation to work and decision-making and leadership, globalisation and role models contributed to shifts in gender social norms.

1. Introduction

Purpose and objectives

Gender inequalities can be exacerbated by a wide array of gender social norms, or beliefs of what is deemed acceptable and appropriate for males and females. The purpose of this study is to understand if and how CAMFED's Learner Guides are shifting gender social norms in Tanzanian communities. Gender social norms are beliefs and behaviours which are widely accepted, internalised, and enacted, including ones that can be detrimental to others. Learner Guides are recent graduates, including young women who were supported by CAMFED during their secondary education. They return to their schools to volunteer peer-to-peer mentorship, deliver a life skills programme, as well as contributing to school and community committees and activities. The Learner Guide programme aims to shift gender social norms that adversely affect girls and young women by supporting girls to complete school, empowering them to be able to change their own life trajectory, and, in turn, enable them to support other girls and young women in their communities to do the same.

The study focuses on identifying if and how CAMFED's Learner Guide's in Tanzania are contributing to shifts in gender social norms in the communities in which they work. This aim is addressed through three research questions:

- What gender social norms were hindering gender equality in the communities in Tanzania in which CAMFED works?
- Who in the community did Learner Guides engage with to support the shift in gender social norms which were holding back opportunities for girls and young women?
- To what extent did Learner Guides help shift gender social norms?

Report structure

This report is structured around the three research questions that guided the study. It begins by defining gender social norms for the purposes of this study, and summarising available evidence on gender social norms in Tanzania. Section 3 provides an overview of the CAMFED Learner Guide programme, and a review of existing evidence of the effects of this programme. Section 4 presents the research approach and methodology. Sections 5-7 address the research findings for the three research questions. Sections 8 and 9 provides a conclusion of the findings and recommendations for the wider academic and practitioner audiences.

Gender social norms in Tanzania

This section begins by defining gender social norms for the purposes of this study. It then provides a review of existing evidence on gender social norms in Tanzania.

Defining gender social norms

We use the terminology ‘gender social norms’ throughout this report to refer to the unspoken, deeply entrenched rules shared by people in a given group or society which foster what is deemed ‘normal’ or appropriate behaviour for men and women (Bicchieri, 2006; Cislighi, 2018; Cookson et al., 2023; Manji et al., 2020; Paluck, 2009; Prentice, 2012). These norms often result in ‘the undervaluation of women’s capabilities and rights in society [which] constrain women’s choices and opportunities by regulating behaviour and setting the boundaries of what women are expected to be and do’ (UNDP, 2023, p. 3). Gender norms represent ‘a hierarchy of power and privilege that typically favours what is considered male or masculine over that which is female or feminine, reinforcing a systemic inequality that undermines the rights of women and girls and restricts opportunity for women’ (UNFPA & UNICEF, 2020, p.1). While not all gender social norms are negative, those that are likely to have adverse consequences for girls and young women could be considered harmful.

Research on gender social norms involves examining gender discrimination which is often pervasive and held in place by beliefs, behaviours, and institutions (OECD, 2024; UNFPA & UNICEF, 2020). A comprehensive definition in a recent UN Women publication encompasses many of these facets:

Gender norms are social norms defining acceptable and appropriate actions for women and men as well as girls and boys in a given group or society. They are embedded in formal and informal institutions, including social, political and economic systems and the built environment, nested in the mind, and produced and reproduced through social interaction in private and public life. They play a role in shaping women’s and men’s access to resources and freedoms, thus affecting their voice, power and sense of self. (Cookson et al., 2023, p. 19)

Gender social norms are found in multiple, connected spheres of individual and societal life. There are a range of frameworks which aim to capture and support the study of gender social norms. For example, the UNDP Gender Social Norms Index identifies four dimensions of political, educational, economic, and physical integrity (UNDP, 2023). The Social Institutions and Gender Index identifies indicators and underlying variables related to the four dimensions of women’s rights in the family, physical integrity, access to productive and financial assets, and civil rights (OECD, 2023). The Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) conceptual framework which is rooted in the capability and rights-based approaches, outlines six key areas where norms may exist (GAGE Consortium, 2017). These include economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and nutrition, psychosocial wellbeing, education and learning, bodily integrity, and voice and agency. For the purposes of our study, we have been guided by the GAGE framework to help shape our conceptual framework (see Section 3).

Gender social norms in Tanzania: What do we know?

Evidence from Tanzania identifies a complex and intertwined set of gender social norms. Available studies include ones consisting of large-scale surveys which often speak to the outcomes of gender social norms, and smaller in-depth qualitative studies which identify gender social norms within specific contexts in the country. This section aims to provide an overview which highlights evidence from these studies recognising that norms vary between and within contexts in Tanzania.

Overall, there has been some progress towards gender equality in Tanzania. Overarching measures such as the Gender Development Index which measures life expectancy, knowledge and standard of living, shows that in Tanzania, the gaps between males and females are slowly decreasing (UNDP, 2024). The Gender Inequality Index, which measures the three dimensions of empowerment, labour, and reproductive health, ranks Tanzania as 146th out of 191 countries (UNDP, 2021). This raises questions of whether and how gender social norms are playing a role in gender inequality in the Tanzanian context. We cluster these into six areas (many of which are interconnected) identified for our analysis, namely education, early pregnancy, early marriage, gender-based violence, paid or unpaid work, and decision making and leadership.

Education

A recent study indicates that parental attitudes towards the value of educating girls are becoming more positive (Iddy, 2023). However, other studies indicate that negative perceptions toward girls' education persist in some areas of Tanzania (Raymond, 2021; Silas Mollel & Chong, 2017). Such attitudes are connected to views identified by studies in some regions of Tanzania that indicate that girls should be married, and therefore education is a lower priority (Beckford & Lekule, 2021; Raymond, 2021; Silas Mollel & Chong, 2017).

Another recent study conducted in Mwanza identifies that there are overt and covert issues of harassment by boys and male teachers against female pupils in the classroom (Wamoyi et al., 2023). This may link to classroom arrangements where schools often segregate by gender (such as seating boys on one side of the classroom and girls on the other, or separate sports activities for boys and girls (Cherewick et al., 2021). One recent study also indicates that, whilst girls are more frequently visible and represented in the curriculum and textbooks, gender roles were portrayed as stereotypical images and ideas which encourage gender bias (Losioki & Mdee, 2023). However, a study conducted in the Tanzanian district of Mafia indicates that secondary school teachers are aware of and implement gender-responsive pedagogy in secondary schools (Thabiti et al., 2024).

Early marriage

In some communities, early marriage, often linked to poverty, is identified as being a necessity and normality of ensuring social and economic security and that a girl or women is financially taken care of (Baraka et al., 2022; Mboya et al., 2012; McCleary-Sills et al., 2013; Schaffnit et al., 2021; UNFPA, 2015). This is viewed as a benefit which extends to the wider family through the bride price (Muñoz Boudet et al., 2013). Whilst much less common across the country, some communities identify earlier ages for marriage for their daughters, and virgin brides can fetch larger bride payments (Baraka et al., 2022; Misunas et al., 2021; OECD, 2022). This normalisation means that girls are taught to expect to marry early (Ito et al., 2022).

Early pregnancy

Early pregnancy remains an important reason for girls dropping out of school with recent national data indicating that 8.1 percent of dropouts in secondary school are due to pregnancy (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2021). There is some evidence of women being able to meet their family planning needs in Tanzania (UN, 2024). However, discussion of sexuality at home remains taboo and is inadequately communicated in schools (Ito et al., 2022). This lack of information is compounded by conflicting messages girls receive about engaging in sexual activity. On the one hand, traditional gender social norms imply that girls should refrain from sex until they are adults and preferably married. On the other hand, they receive contradictory messages from persistent pressure from men and their male peers to have sex (McCleary-Sills et al., 2013).

A study conducted in four districts of Mwanza indicates that girls have limited access to reproductive healthcare should they fall pregnant (Hokororo et al., 2015). This can result in dangerous abortions and limited options on family planning (Hagues & McCarty, 2022; Mosha et al., 2013). In addition, menstrual health and hygiene remains a taboo area, with a study conducted in Northern Tanzania indicating that menstruation is labelled as 'unclean' (p. 16), 'inappropriate' (p. 6) and needing to be 'hidden' (p. 11) (Benshaul-Tolonen et al., 2020). Because of these norms, girls can face period teasing from boys who face peer-pressure to participate in the teasing (Benshaul-Tolonen et al., 2020; Tamiru et al., 2015).

The Re-entry Policy Directive issued in 2021 by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2021a) offers the opportunity for students who have dropped out of education for various reasons including pregnancy to continue with their studies in formal education. However, studies from Zanzibar and the Morogoro region indicate that girls who get pregnant whilst still in school continue to face barriers in returning to school (Ngaza & Mwila, 2022; Timothy & Juhudi, 2023). The study from Zanzibar also indicated that the perspective that girls should not get pregnant before marriage is linked to views that those who do, should be punished by not being allowed to return to school (Ngaza & Mwila, 2022). This is related to views identified in a countrywide study that girls who become pregnant have misbehaved and are seen as 'errant' (Hagues & McCarty, 2022, p.23). Related to this, a study conducted in Dodoma identified views that, if girls were assured of readmission, this would further encourage early pregnancies; and, should teenage mothers return to school, they would encourage more girls to become pregnant. Perspectives were also put forward that, if a new mother returned to school, she would be abandoning her child (Maluli & Bali, 2014). These perspectives relate to view that if a student gets pregnant, she should be expelled (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2013).

Gender-based violence

Tanzania is seen to be strong in having legal frameworks which promote, enforce, and monitor gender equality, particularly related to gender-based violence. These include recent national strategies and policies to support gender equality, such as the Tanzanian National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children and National Strategy for Gender Development (Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 2005; The United Republic of Tanzania, 2016b; UN, 2024). However, high levels of gender-based violence persist across the country, with half of all Tanzanian women having survived some form of violence (OECD, 2022). The norms underpinning this are complex and vary between communities, with some studies indicating that poverty and traditional beliefs are lead causes in acts of gender-based violence (Mboya et al., 2012). In some communities, women deviating from their 'normal' gender role or not behaving as is deemed appropriate have been accused of witchcraft, or subject to physical violence (Badstue et al., 2020). Similarly, women who disobey their husbands are viewed by some as deserving to be beaten (Badstue et al., 2020). This is connected to studies which suggest that blame is placed on women for abandoning traditional values in favour of Western value systems (Abeid et al., 2014; Jakobsen, 2014; Sommer et al., 2013).

One study conducted in the Morogoro region of Tanzania indicates that many young women remain unaware of what constitutes rape (Abeid et al., 2014). Another study conducted in Mwanza identifies the norm that men are expected to provide economically in sexual relationships (Howard-Merrill et al., 2022). Other studies in the same region examine exploitative aspects of transactional sex for both men and women (Wamoyi et al., 2011, 2019). Other studies indicate that, in some cases, it is considered fashionable for schoolgirls to have a 'Mshefa' or older boyfriend to feel emotionally and economically secure (Abeid et al., 2014; Wamoyi et al., 2019). Age differences between young girls and older men often have implications of the power dynamics of negotiation for safe sex practices, intimate partner violence, engagement in transactional sex, and having the power to determine girls'

life pathways (Jani et al., 2021; Muñoz Boudet et al., 2013; Silberschmidt & Rasch, 2001; Tanzanian Commission for AIDS et al., 2008). Transactional sex is also interconnected to poverty and the need for women or girls to meet basic needs requirements (Hagues & McCarty, 2022; Wamoyi et al., 2019). In these situations, many parents and community members blame the girls for putting themselves at risk, and there is a perception that such girls are simply desiring material goods for themselves, referred to as 'tamaa' or greed (Abeid et al., 2014; McCleary-Sills et al., 2013). This also has a link to early marriages with studies indicating that early marriages may be driven by men offering immediate or promised social and economic benefits (Baraka et al., 2022). It should also be noted that the Social Institutions and Gender Index indicates that three quarters of the Tanzanian population agree that a man gains ownership over his wife by paying the bride price (OECD, 2022).

Several studies indicate that insufficient, corrupt, and costly support services for gender-based violence survivors remain as barriers for reporting, recovering, and holding perpetrators accountable (McCleary-Sills et al., 2013; Mtaita et al., 2021; Sommer et al., 2013). Systems which fail to support survivors of all forms of gender-based violence, including normalisation of transactional sex, and fears around disclosure directly impacts psychological wellbeing (Abeid et al., 2014; Stoilova et al., 2022; Wamoyi et al., 2023).

Paid/unpaid work

Based on a country wide survey, women are estimated to spend three times more time on unpaid domestic and care work than men in Tanzania (OECD, 2021). Studies indicate that gendered norms that result in housework often falling to girls and women can affect girls' education opportunities, with the pressure increasing as girls get older (Badstue et al., 2020; Hedges et al., 2019; Muñoz Boudet et al., 2013). One study conducted in the Rorya district indicated that norms around food distribution within households mean that women are expected to cook, but men eat most of the food, and have first choice of what to eat (Von Salmuth et al., 2023). Norms that women are homemakers or carers because they can get pregnant, is sometimes used as an explanation of women's roles (Feinstein et al., 2010).

Pervasive norms also infiltrate aspects of economic empowerment for girls and women in Tanzania, with one study in Arusha identifying that boys and men have more freedom and access to explore public spaces and urban areas than girls and women (Evans, 2006). A study conducted in Mwanza notes that women who challenge the traditionally male role as the household breadwinner may be subject to violence as men's position of authority is threatened (Manji et al., 2020). This is linked to the findings of a recent country wide study, which identifies that 74 percent of the Tanzanian population agree that men should have the final say on important decisions in the home (OECD, 2021).

Decision-making and leadership

There are some examples where women have more control over their incomes in some areas of Tanzania. However, it is noted that men can and do ask for part of these earnings, and it is difficult for women to say no (Leavens et al., 2011). One study conducted across four different regions of Tanzania indicates that despite supporting notions of gender equality, men control household incomes (including women's income) and make most decisions (Badstue et al., 2020). Such power dynamics are accentuated by structural systems in which most Tanzanian communities follow patriarchal kinship patterns whereby inheritance and power stays within the male's clan (Abeid et al., 2014). This affects females' opportunity to own land and other resources (Badstue et al., 2020; Mason et al., 2015). It should be noted, however, that there are some matrilineal clans in which land rights are passed down the female line (Leavens et al., 2011).

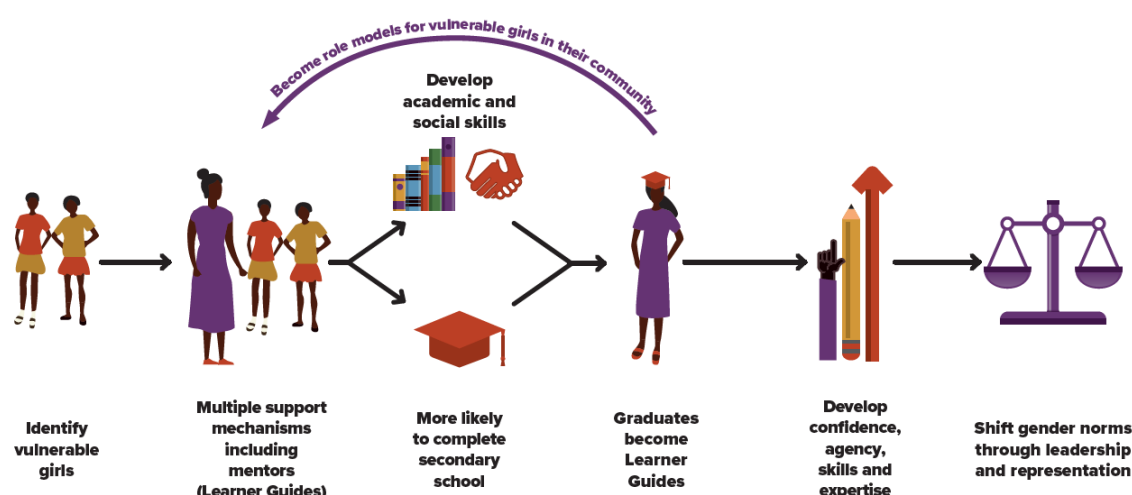
Linked to decision making and power dynamics between men and women, there have been improvements in terms of wider leadership representation and leadership opportunities for women, not least the election of the first female President of Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan. As of February 2021, 36.7 percent of seats in parliament were held by women (UN, 2024). This relates to shifts connected to a range of national strategies and policies which have been put in place to support gender equality such as the Fee-Free Basic Education Policy, the Tanzanian National Strategy for Gender Development, and the 'special-seat system' adopted in 1995 to increase female participation in political and leadership spaces.

2. Overview of CAMFED's Learner Guide programme and existing evidence

Operating in Tanzania since 2005, CAMFED's Learner Guide programme responds to evidence which highlights that adolescent girls continue to face multiple disadvantages in access and learning in secondary schools (PMA & CAMFED, 2022). Many of these disadvantages are rooted in gender social norms that can have adverse consequences for girls and young women. The programme is premised on recent school graduates, called Learner Guides, who were previously supported by CAMFED in government secondary education (Figure 1). They subsequently return to their local schools to support underprivileged children in their studies. Learner Guides volunteer for an 18-month period during which they are trained to deliver a life skills and wellbeing programme to students called My Better World. The intention of the programme is for Learner Guides to act as role models and support students in developing life skills and self-worth, and so encourage them to stay in school and improve their learning. The Learner Guide programme ultimately aims to change gender social norms by supporting girls to complete school, empower them to be able to change their life trajectory, and lead other girls and women around them to do the same.

Learner Guides receive training from CAMFED and support from the CAMFED Association (a peer support and leadership network of young women activists) and have roles in community groups and committees. As an incentive for volunteering in schools, they also receive access to interest-free loans to enable them to start up their own businesses.

Figure 1: The Learner Guide programme



Evidence from studies conducted in Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe shows that the Learner Guide programme has improved retention in schools and learning outcomes (PMA & CAMFED, 2022; Rose et al., 2022). Curtailing dropout rates due to reducing early marriage and pregnancy have been noted as being connected with the programme having a community-wide impact (Girls Education Challenge & CAMFED, 2022). It has been reported that Learner Guides have taken on leadership positions within communities and are increasingly being recognised as key community actors and active participants on multiple decision-making committees in their communities (Girls Education Challenge & CAMFED, 2022; PMA & CAMFED, 2022).

Research has identified that the CAMFED programme, including Learner Guides, is cost-effective in Tanzania (Sabates et al., 2018). In a recent study assessing whether and how the Learner Guide programme could be scaled up through the government education system in Tanzania, it was found that the programme is well aligned with national priorities. This includes complementing school guidance and counselling services, addressing the current gap in essential 'soft skills' required for employment, and improving participation and access of young women in school and beyond.

(Mgonda & Ciampi, 2023). Tanzanian government officials identified that the peer-to-peer mentoring approach and broader attitudes of 'giving back' to the community by the Learner Guides were key aspects of the programme which should be prioritised for scaling up (Mgonda & Ciampi, 2023).

Building on the available evidence to date which shows that the programme is effective within schools, we assess in this report whether and how the Learner Guides are enabling a change in gender social norms within their wider communities.

3. Methodology

Conceptual framework

For the purposes of this study, we developed a framework, adapting existing ones and linking these to the available evidence. Our approach is informed by the Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) Conceptual Framework (GAGE Consortium, 2017) and accompanying research tools used in similar contexts, including Ethiopia (Ogunbiyi et al., 2023; Presler-Marshall et al., 2023) and Rwanda (Pincock et al., 2023).

We identified six areas to assess shifts in gender social norms: education, early marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence, paid/unpaid work, and decision-making and leadership (summarised in Figure 2). Whilst we used these themes to structure the data collection and analysis processes, we recognise that many of these themes connect with one another.

Figure 2: Thematic areas for framing our analysis



Research overview

Ethics and safeguarding

Before any data collection took place, we acquired ethical clearance for this study from The University of Cambridge Ethics Board, The University of Dar es Salaam Ethics Board, and the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) in Tanzania.

Because this research is exploring gender social norms, there was a risk that traumatic experiences faced by the research participants may arise. The research team completed safeguarding training and strictly followed ethical protocols ensuring that informed consent was obtained, anonymity was protected, and that participation was voluntary (see supplementary annexes for further information on consent processes).

The research team was fully briefed on what protocols and reporting lines to take in case a participant disclosed any safety concerns or showed signs of distress. We ensured that there was always a local welfare officer available throughout all data collection activities for participant referral if required. Through the research design we applied careful consideration to ethical issues and aimed to mitigate them as much as possible by:

- Ensuring questions were contextually framed and carefully asked
- Ensuring that research activities took place in a safe, secure environment
- Monitoring participants emotional responses, and identifying if the participant was becoming stressed
- Pausing the discussion if there were signs of participant distress
- Identifying discrete mechanisms for the participant to let the researcher know if they wanted to take a break
- Being prepared to signpost the participant to appropriate sources of support if needed.

The data collection was undertaken by a research team from the University of Dar es Salaam, and our research consisted of four field supervisors and four research assistants. One field supervisor and one research assistant were allocated to one district each where they conducted all data collection activities to ensure continuity of participant engagement. All members of the research team completed six days of an introductory training programme. Before each data collection phase, all members of the research team participated in the joint reflection of the tools, piloted them, and used the pilot data and feedback to adjust the research tools to suit the research objectives.

The Tanzanian CAMFED team supported the logistical arrangements of the field work and alongside the field supervisors for each district, conducted a series of ward sensitisation visits in advance of the fieldwork to support ward understanding, preparation, and awareness of the research programme.

All interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Swahili, recorded with permission of participants. The recordings were translated and transcribed to English for analysis purposes.

We recognise that some research participants would be identifiable given their job role and ward location. Therefore, to protect the anonymity of our interviewees, we have omitted specific job titles and ward names. Throughout this report we refer to the gender, organisation or office (where relevant), and district of each participant.

Research design

Given the complexity and subtlety of assessing gender social norms, it was important to generate research tools to enable sensitivity to contextual differences, reduce social desirability bias, and ensure interviews and group discussions were of a manageable length.

We undertook a range of research preparatory, collection, and analysis activities between the start of the project in September 2022 and the end of the project in April 2024. Key preparation activities included a review of the literature and data to identify key demographics and gender social norms in Tanzania which informed our research site selection process. Upon gaining ethical clearance, we conducted training with the research team, and piloted all research tools. The data were collected between October and November 2023. The research leads from the University of Dar es Salaam visited the field teams during data collection to check for consistency and conduct of the data collection process. The data analysis and write up were completed prior to the dissemination activities held in Tanzania with research participants, policy makers, and colleagues at the University of Dar es Salaam in April 2024.

Data collection was undertaken in three phases, with each phase speaking to one of the research questions:

Phase 1: What gender social norms were hindering gender equality in the communities in Tanzania in which CAMFED works?

It was anticipated that there would be some important and contextual variance between existing gender social norms in different communities within Tanzania. During the literature review of gender social norms in Tanzania, it was identified that there is limited evidence on gender social norms at district and ward level throughout Tanzania (see Section 1). Given the study is interested in assessing shifts in gender social norms within communities, we needed to collect data to support the understanding of contextual nuance within and between each study site. To inform this, the first phase of data collection involved key informant Interviews both with government stakeholders at the national and community levels.

We interviewed over 50 participants in relevant national government organisations who would be able to inform us of the general understanding and policies about dominant gender social norms nationally (Table 1). Individuals were selected based on their job roles to ensure that they had an active understanding of our area of investigation.

Table 1: Phase 1 National-level key informants

Organisation	Organisation mandate	Job role of interviewee
Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups	Promotes community development, gender equality, and children's rights through formulating policies, strategies and guidelines with other country stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Gender Development • Director of Children • Assistant Commissioner for Social Welfare, and Children Affairs
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Responsible for determining the direction and policies of education systems in Tanzania.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Policy and Planning
Tanzania Institute of Education	A government institution underneath the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology which holds the responsibility of interpreting government policies on education to ensure that the curriculum and quality aligns with the policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Curriculum Development Officer
HakiElimu	A local Tanzanian non-government organisation that advocates for government policies to promote accessibility, equity and inclusive education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Advisor
Tanzania Gender Networking Programme	A local Tanzanian non-governmental organisation that contributes to and influences gender responsiveness of policy creation and implementation in the areas of education, agriculture, water, health, and extractive industries for equitable resource allocation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director

To capture understandings of gender social norms at community and ward level, we selected participants from various community structures based on their job role from each of our selected study areas (Table 2).

Table 2: Phase 1 Community-level key informants

Level	Community Structure	Office of the interviewee
District	District Governance Structures	District Education Office
		District Community Development Office
		District Social Welfare Office
		Police Gender and Children Desk
Ward	Ward Governance Structures	Ward Executive Office (3 different positions including Ward Executive Officer; Ward Development Officer; and Community Health Worker)
		Local leader
	Schools implementing the Learner Guide programme	Headteacher

Phase 2: Who in the community did Learner Guides engage with to support the shift in gender social norms?

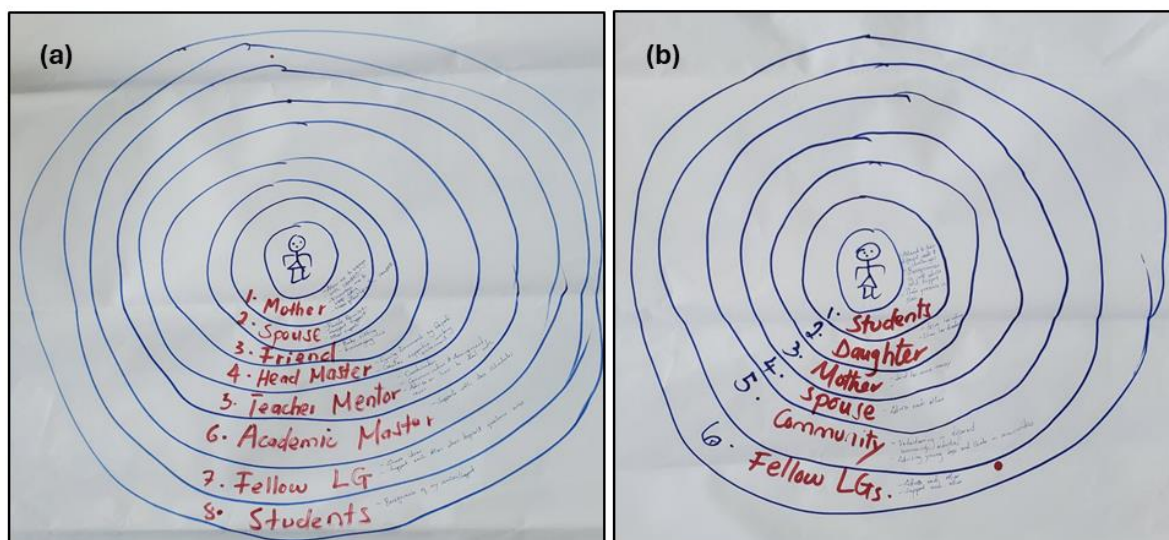
The second phase of data collection was conducted with the Learner Guides to identify their support structures and who they engage with in their communities in their capacity as a Learner Guide. This aimed to enable us to trace any shifts in gender social norms identified within the community back to interactions between the Learner Guides and community members and groups. These data also supported the selection of the community participants in Phase 3 (summarised in Figure 4).

We selected four Learner Guides in each community for this purpose. We aimed to select Learner Guides who were still living in the community they had worked in. They were selected based on the length of time since being a Learner Guide. We aimed to identify two Learner Guides who had recently completed their 18-month Learner Guide contract, one who had completed 2 years ago, and one who had completed 5 years ago. This ensured that they had spent sufficient time in the community, recognising that it takes time to shift gender social norms. We also aimed to select at least one of these Learner Guides who had used the CAMFED loan.

The selected Learner Guides individually completed a 'stakeholder mapping' exercise. The exercise took approximately 2 hours to complete and consisted of:

1. A set of individual interview questions which explored the process of becoming a Learner Guide and the opportunities and challenges along the way.
2. Two stakeholder maps which placed the Learner Guides at the centre of a set of concentric circles. The first map asked participants to identify who had supported them within the community in their role as a Learner Guide, placing the most important closer to the centre of the map. The second map asked Learner Guides to identify who they supported in their role as a Learner Guide in the community, placing those they interacted the most frequently with closer to the centre of the map. Examples can be seen in Figure 3.
3. A final set of interview questions were then asked to understand what perceived effect the Learner Guide felt they had on the community and why.

Figure 3: Examples of Learner Guide stakeholder maps. (a) Map 1 – ‘Who supports me in my role as a Learner Guide?’ (b) Map 2 – ‘Who do I support in my role as a Learner Guide?’



Phase 3: To what extent did Learner Guides help shift gender social norms?

The third and final phase of data collection was conducted with a range of community stakeholder groups using group discussions and in-depth Interviews to identify which gender social norms communities felt were changing, and what the reasons were for these changes. Making use of our data collected in the Phases 1 and 2, we identified key community groups and individuals to engage with. We identified these groups and individuals by considering:

- Group and individual interactions with the Learner Guides (including both those who the Learner Guides had interacted with and those they had less engagement with)
- The existence of similar community groups and structures across all eight study wards
- The level of influence of the groups and of individuals within these groups in the community
- The alignment of these groups in respect to gender social norms identified in the conceptual framework
- Length of time individuals had been in the community to see shifts in gender social norms.

Students were not included because they would not yet be able to identify any long-term shifts in gender social norms within communities.

Based on these criteria, we identified the key community sectors from which to select our research participants. For each community, we selected:

- Four individuals in the local governance structures and three individuals from the local leaders for in-depth interviews
- Four key community groups which included the Village Development Committee, the CAMFED Parent Support Group, a Community-Based Financial Group, and the School Management Group from the local school for the group discussions. We invited 10 members from each group to participate in the group discussions.

All members of each group were invited to participate in the group discussions, ensuring the individuals who were identified for the in-depth interviews were part of the group. Given the varied composition of these groups, most of the group discussions had both male and female participants except for the women's only groups found in the CAMFED Parents Support Groups and Community-Based Financial Groups.

After the group discussions were completed, we selected the group chair and longest participating male and female group member for the first three groups, and the headteacher, school counsellor, and longest participating teacher from the School Management Group to undertake in-depth interviews.

Figure 4: Summary of Phase 3 group discussion and in-depth interviews with research participants



Study areas

To identify variations in gender social norms within and across communities in Tanzania, we selected eight wards across four districts where CAMFED supported government secondary schools. The districts were selected based on where the Learner Guide programme has been operating for the longest period (at least over 5 years) to allow for gender social change to have taken place. Amongst the 14 districts that met this criterion, we identified districts with relatively high levels of gender inequality based on relevant national demographic datasets (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021b; Ministry of Health et al., 2016) including on indicators related to early marriage, social-economic status, and education (including dropout, enrolment, and completion rates).

Once the districts had been identified, the wards were selected based on several criteria. Through discussion with CAMFED colleagues, we identified locations where the Learner Guide programme had been working effectively in schools, so that we could identify situations where the programme is most successful. This enabled us to see whether and how, in situations where the programme itself has been working well within schools, it is possible to shift gender social norms within the wider community.

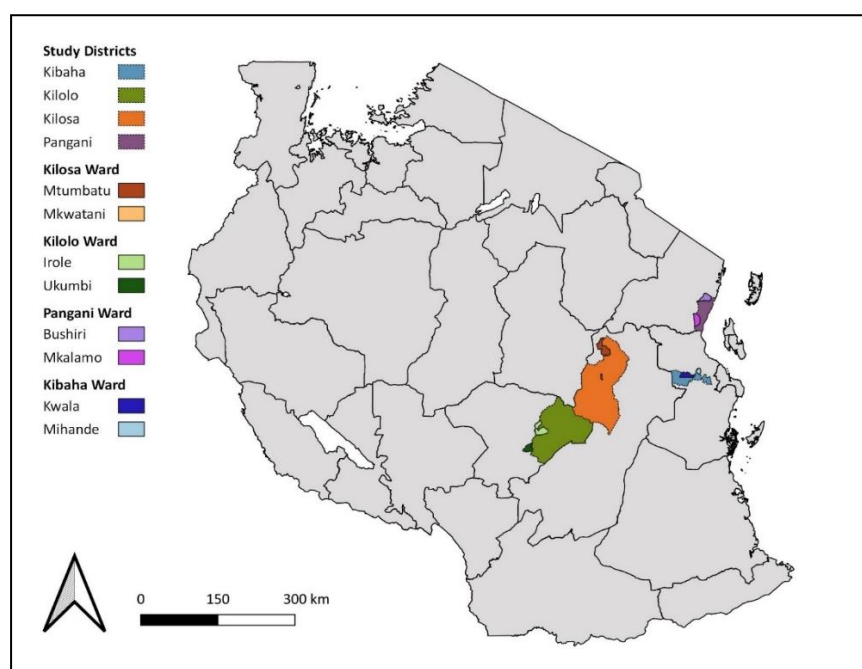
Wards also had to have at least four Learner Guides who had graduated at least five years ago and had been working within their communities. All the communities were rural. Once these criteria were considered, we also assessed the accessibility of the communities.

Based on these criteria, the following districts and wards were selected as the study areas. School names have been omitted to protect their anonymity.

Table 3: Summary of selected study districts, wards, and schools

No	Area	District	Ward	Village
1	Iringa	Kilolo	Ukumbi	Ukumbi village
2	Iringa	Kilolo	Irole	Lundamatwe
3	Morogoro	Kilosa	Mkwatani	Mkwatani village
4	Morogoro	Kilosa	Mtumbatu	Mtumbatu village
5	Tanga	Pangani	Mkalamo	Mkalamo village
6	Tanga	Pangani	Bushiri	Maslaza village
7	Pwani	Kibaha	Mihande	Mihande village
8	Pwani	Kibaha	Kwala	Kwala village

Figure 5: Map of selected study districts and wards



Source: Generated using Geographic Information Systems data

Data collection

In Phase 1, we interviewed a total of eight national level key informants (6 male and 2 female), and 45 community level key informants (27 males and 18 females). In Phase 2, we undertook a total of 31 Learner Guide stakeholder maps and interviews. Currently, all CAMFED Learner Guides are female. In Phase 3, we conducted 32 group discussions (both mixed and female only groups based on the nature of the group), and 146 community in-depth interviews (72 males and 74 females). The gender balance was generally equal across the data collection. However, there were fewer females interviewed at the national level and community level in phase 1, because fewer women are in roles

that were included for these interviews. Where it was possible in the other phases, we purposively sampled to ensure similar numbers of females and males were included (Table 4).

Table 4: Data collection summary

Phase 1													
National level key informant Interviews	6 male (M), 2 female (F)												8
Community level key informant interviews	Kilolo			Kilosa			Kibaha			Pangani			Phase total
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
	8	3	11	5	6	11	6	5	11	8	4	12	45
Phase 2													
Learner Guide stakeholder maps and interviews	NA	8	8	NA	7	7	NA	8	8	NA	8	8	31
Phase 3													
Community in-depth interviews	20	16	36	17	20	37	16	21	37	19	17	36	146
Community group discussions	Mixed	F	Total	Mixed	F	Total	Mixed	F	Total	Mixed	F	Total	
	7	1	8	7	1	8	5	3	8	5	3	8	32
Total	28	27	63	22	33	63	22	34	64	27	29	64	254

Data analysis

All data collected were transcribed in Swahili and then translated into English for the data analysis. The data analysis team used the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO to thematically analyse all data from Phases 1, 2 and 3. All members of the analysis team completed training and undertook a comparative coding exercise in NVIVO to ensure analysis alignment across all team members. Having completed this, the data were thematically coded using a coding framework guided by the conceptual framework. The coding framework was adapted during the analysis process to ensure that additional themes were included (see supplementary annexes for the coding framework). The data from all three phases were triangulated to identify inconsistencies between the three data sets, and the analysis team made use of comparative coding queries to identify similarities and differences between gender norms and changes in gender norms between study wards.

Contextual summary of each study district

Understanding the contextual context of the study sites is important, as this identifies the specific features of gender social norms in which the programme has been working. District disaggregated data is somewhat limited, but this section will provide some overarching insights into the four study districts by briefly examining key differences in livelihoods, key gender data, and education data.

Drawing on livelihood maps produced by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) (2008), all four districts were identified as primarily relying on agricultural production and labour for their livelihoods and incomes, although with some slight variations. Kibaha is close to Dar es Salaam, and so access to commodities is easier. Poorer households often supplement their income with seasonal agricultural labour. Many households in Kilosa rely heavily on crop production to meet their annual cash and food needs, with better-off households selling livestock, and poorer households providing labour to better-off households. This region has a history of conflict between farmers and pastoralists. In Kilolo, all households rely on production of food for cash, but many fail to produce enough for these needs so have to buy food. Their income is supplemented by paid labour and brewing. Pangani is the only coastal study site, with many people relying on agricultural production for both food and cash. A minority of households rely on fishing activities, and most of the poor households earn cash by working on farms and fishing boats. As will be shown in the analysis that follows, these livelihood settings have important links to gender social norms especially in terms of paid work and gender roles.

Limited data disaggregated by gender are available by district. Those data available at either the district or regional level, show important differences between the locations. In terms of family planning, in all four regions, less than half of the women use a modern method of family planning: 39 percent in Morogoro, 43 percent in Pwani, 45 percent in Iringa, and just 26 percent in Tanga (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2022). The prevalence of female genital mutilation or circumcision of women who are aged between 15 – 49 was 10 percent in Morogoro, 5 percent in Pwani, 12 percent in Iringa, and 19 percent in Tanga (United Republic of Tanzania, 2022). There are also differences in estimates of child marriage across the four districts, with data suggesting that the percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years old who were first married or in union before the age of 18 was 0-10 percent in Pangani (Tanga) and Kilolo (Iringa), 21-30 percent in Kibaha (Pwani), and 31-40 percent in Kilosa (Morogoro) (UNICEF, 2015). These differences point towards variations in cultural practices and systems of beliefs among other aspects.

National data indicate that, until the age of 17, female enrolment exceeds male enrolment, but from then onwards falls below male enrolment rates (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2020). These data do not allow for further disaggregation by other forms of disadvantage, such as poverty or disability. Such disaggregation tends to show that girls from more disadvantaged backgrounds are least likely to complete schooling (Zubairi & Rose, 2019). Recent data on learning indicate that 89 percent of men between the ages of 15 to 24, and 85 percent of women between the ages of 15 to 24 are considered literate. The percentage of literate women as the age increases is consistently less than the percentage of men (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2022). Regional data show that gender differences in enrolment vary across regions and across forms but, as shown in Table 5, enrolment rates for girls are generally higher than boys across all forms (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2023).

Table 5: Percentage of district male and female students' enrolment by grade (2023)

	Form 1		Form 2		Form 3		Form 4		Form 5		Form 6	
District	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Kilolo	45	55	43	57	43	57	42	58	44	56	48	52
Kilosa	49	51	48	52	51	49	48	52	51	49	47	53
Kibaha	46	54	42	58	42	58	44	56	39	61	41	59
Pangani	50	50	48	52	50	50	49	51	43	57	43	57

Source: Calculated from Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2023

When examining dropout rates from the most recent gender disaggregated national data, (United Republic of Tanzania, 2020) Tanga has the highest secondary school dropout rate at 4.5 percent, followed by Iringa at 4.3 percent, Morogoro at 3.4 percent and Pwani at 2.3 percent. Across the four regions, more girls dropped out than boys in Tanga and Morogoro, and more boys dropped out than girls in Iringa and Pwani (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021b).

According to government sources (Table 6), the main reason for girls and boys dropping out is absenteeism (referred to as truancy). For girls, the next most important reason is pregnancy (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021b). The highest number of girls dropping out due to pregnancy is in Morogoro. Boys were more likely than girls to drop out due to indiscipline and death.

Table 6: Number of secondary school dropouts by reason, region, and sex in 2020

Region	Truancy (2020)		Pregnancy (2020)	Indiscipline (2020)		Death (2020)	
	M	F	F	M	F	M	F
Iringa (Kilolo)	1768	1482	164	35	21	7	9
Morogoro (Kilosa)	941	1695	344	115	62	22	15
Pwani (Kibaha)	1027	903	174	60	19	23	11
Tanga (Pangani)	2608	2365	195	35	33	20	14

Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021

According to government data, across all four regions, the most common vulnerability is families with low incomes, which generally affects girls more than boys (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021b). Morogoro and Pwani both have higher numbers of students living near wild animals and having to use marine transport, with females in Morogoro being more affected than males. Except for Tanga, females are more often absent through sickness than boys, while more boys are head of the household than girls (Table 7).

Table 7: Number of Secondary school pupils living in vulnerable environments by vulnerability type, region, and sex (2021)

Region	Number of secondary school pupils living in vulnerable environments (2021)									
	Family with poor income		Pupils living near/passing in wild animal areas		Pupils using marine transport (whole year)		Pupils who are heads of household		Sick pupils for more than 3 months	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Iringa	4613	5895	0	0	0	0	153	130	56	103
Morogoro	7040	9215	422	446	50	67	648	478	159	243
Pwani	5764	7607	313	281	10	10	251	110	80	125
Tanga	6039	7433	189	209	45	62	307	367	70	67

Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021

Ministry of Education (2021) data indicate that over half of secondary schools in all four study districts are implementing sex education in their curriculum (Iringa 71 percent, Morogoro 64 percent, Pwani 69 percent, and Tanga 66 percent). However, all four regions have low proportions of trained teachers who are teaching health and reproductive education (Iringa 52 percent, Morogoro 43 percent, Pwani 52 percent, and Tanga 46 percent), as well as a limited number of teachers providing training to parents on HIV and health. They also have limited rules and guidelines for staff and students about HIV and AIDS (Iringa 54.1 percent, Morogoro 40.3 percent, Pwani 52.5 percent, and Tanga 43.7 percent).

4. What gender social norms were hindering gender equality in the communities?

Our first phase research question set out to establish the main gender social norms in each study district. This section presents the identified norms, and effects of these norms, as identified by eight national level key informants, and 45 community level key informants (approximately 11 from each district). It highlights some of the key nuances between each district. The section has been structured around the six areas of the conceptual framework: education, early marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence, paid/unpaid work, and decision-making and leadership.

Education

Out of the 45 interviewees, 23 indicated that, overall, there have been improvements in various aspects of girls' education, frequently mentioning enrolment and performance:

There have been significant changes compared to the past because nowadays, girls are given priority in enrolment and there's motivation. They are enrolled even in academic classes, and they perform well. Also ... the education policy now emphasises infrastructure that is more friendly to girls, such as safe spaces, toilets, and the ratio of toilets for men and women. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Right now there is that awareness. I think it is education that has helped them a lot; who is a girl and how is she expected to be, what is her role in society, who is she expected to be when she is educated? There are things that have happened somewhere in the middle to make them feel that they are important people. They have valuable things that they carry, and that education can take them far in life. (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

One of the national level interviewees identified that despite general improvements in education, it varies across the region because of differing traditional values:

Regions differ ... there are some regions which are known for their passion for education, [for] example, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Mbeya ... There are some regions due to their cultural norms such as Mtwara Lindi and Mara - their values hinder girls' education. (Male, Tanzania Institute of Education)

However, several interviewees identified that completion of secondary schooling for girls, especially after Form 2, continues to be challenging:

When they start, there is very little difference in the number between girls and boys joining Form 1. But by the time they complete Form 4, [there are] many dropouts and the majority of dropouts are girls. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

Intrinsically linked to the norms about girls needing to marry, several interviewees indicated that this is connected due to norms around education for boys being prioritised over that for girls:

Many parents don't care about educating their daughters. Society believes that the right to education belongs to boys. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

In the coastal region, some families in our community prioritise educating boys more than girls. Now we see some improvement, but we haven't reached equality yet. We still need more effort. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Distance from schools and the establishment of hostels in Kilolo was identified as one of the reasons for improvement in girls' education. However, one interviewee indicated that access to these hostels was dependant on family income:

Some students walk up to 15 kilometres a day. Some schools have hostels, but not all students can afford the hostel costs. Looking at the hostel fees for a year, it goes up to 500,000 Tanzania shillings. So, for families without income, many cannot afford it. Therefore, when selected, they [the girls] start coming in the beginning, but eventually, they get tired and lose hope and disappear. If you look for them at home, you won't find them because they have left, searching for economic options. So, education is affected in that way. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

Connected to this, four interviewees from Kilolo, Kilosa, and Pangani suggested that, because of the greater priority being placed on girls for education, boys are increasingly facing difficulties in education, often being left to fend for themselves:

Only truants cause problems ... In my experience, it's boys more ... [they are] joining street gangs ... there are other gangs who don't like studies and adopt street habits there like weed smokers who will go to school, [but] also do not focus on studies. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

In attendance, there are no problems for girls because they stay in hostels, but for boys, it's a challenge because they stay in the streets. It's easy to hear about boys dropping out due to being sent to risky activities or jobs by their parents or guardians. Even in contributions, girls are prioritised before boys. The results bring about gender equality. When the results come out, parents with girls fight to get them into school even if they didn't pass, while boys are left to fend for themselves. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

Similarly, there were norms identified by a few interviewees such as boys preferring to earn an income rather than complete education:

Nowadays, you can say that boys drop out more than girls ... It depends on the areas. I think in this area, many boys believe in doing manual work. For example, children from the Ibofu area believe a lot in farming – you find one saying, 'I would rather leave school and grow potatoes'. So, perhaps it is the mindset of that area that parents also believe more in farming than education. (Male, Headteacher, Kilolo)

Recently, there is a strong influence on people seeking more money for economic reasons. So, even [the] boys we expected to be in school are absent. They engage in various activities. For example, some drop out and become motorcycle taxi drivers. Others are not seen at home because they go to other places for economic reasons. So, absenteeism affects both genders. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

Early pregnancy

The recently updated Re-Entry Policy Directive issued in 2021 by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology states that the government will offer the opportunity for students who have dropped out of education for various reasons to continue with their studies in the formal education system (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2021a). The policy specifically states that this 'will include pupils/students who dropped out due to pregnancy' (p. 2). The policy identifies that pupils who have dropped out are allowed to return to school within two years; that headteachers will provide them with guidance and counselling services; that teachers will ensure teaching and learning happens in a conducive environment for all students; and that education leaders at all levels will monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy.

Alongside this, the Alternative Secondary Education Pathway Implementation Guidelines indicate that the target group for this initiative is learners between 14-19 years old (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2022). This focus is directly linked in the document to difficulties students face with 'conventional schools generally comprising of rigid rules into drop-out reasons such as early marriage and early pregnancy in girls' (p. 46). The guidelines also highlight those students from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups who drop out of formal secondary school.

The perceptions of an accepted age for girls to have children varied across the interviews. Of the 45 interviewees, 16 indicated that girls should be over 18, eight identified that they should be above 16, and 12 identified that it was normal for a girl to have a child once she reaches puberty. Interviewees indicated that there are mixed views for an accepted age within districts, with more people reporting that over 18 is acceptable within Kilolo and Pangani (Table 8).

Table 8: Count of acceptable age for girls to have children by district

Acceptable Age	Kilolo	Kilosa	Kibaha	Pangani
Over 18	6	2	3	5
Over 16	2	1	3	2
Puberty	2	3	3	4
No Answer	1	5	2	1

However, across all interviews it was noted that the accepted age to have a child is older for boys than for girls. Several interviewees indicating that norms vary across contexts:

In our communities, some of the pastoral communities on the issue of childhood pregnancies still exists, because they believe that once a child starts menstruating, she must be married ... There are a lot of [cultures such as] WaKwere and WaZazaramo, where if we come to the pastoralists community – [cultures such as] WaMang'ati, WaSukuma, WaMaasai –[they] still believe that once a child enters into puberty, she should stay at home to raise a family, so [this] automatic[ally] brings us childhood pregnancies. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Some norms are also connected to ideas about the fertility of a girl with comments such as:

What I've discovered about the Wahehe [people] is that if a girl reaches the age of 18 without giving birth, they see her as if she's infertile ... Therefore, some girls might be tempted to engage in such practices just to be seen as having a favourable reputation in society. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

Other perspectives on the accepted age to have a child were connected with 'coming-of-age', such as believing that once a girl reaches puberty, she is an adult:

In our community, one significant thing I observe is that they believe once a girl reaches puberty, what we call "kuvunja ungo," they already consider her as someone who has matured. That's the impact I can see. Even though reaching puberty doesn't mean she is ready to be a mother or should be a mother, the community here views it differently. Once a girl reaches puberty, they believe she can get married. The way they talk to her is like an adult; they treat her as an adult without any conditions. They consider her as an adult, like a twenty or thirty-year-old woman. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

Connected to this, interviewees indicated that once girls reach puberty they should participate in coming-of-age initiation ceremonies, including participating in social activities and being kept inside:

When a girl reaches the second year of secondary school in our context, having already experienced puberty, she is expected to engage in social activities. When she is introduced to such engagements, she starts to learn about things that could potentially affect her education system. From that point, she begins to lose focus, and not all girls manage to complete the fourth year. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

At the end of the day, the baby girl is probably in Form 1, Form 2, the day has come and it's time to break the sieve [start menstruating] ... She was kept inside for a whole month while others continued their studies ... we noticed a big impact ... they fail because of those reasons. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

Across all interviews, the age for boys to have children was viewed as higher than for girls, with all interviewees suggesting that boys needed to at least have completed form 4, and twelve interviewees identifying that boys should be over 25 with comments such as:

Young men from the age of 20 to 25 years can be accepted to be called fathers. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

For boys to have a child? It's 27 years old. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

[Being a father] does not bother [him] even if he reaches 25 or 30 years. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

Of the 45 interviewees, 27 reported that girls who got pregnant whilst still in school were considered negatively by the community with views expressed that girls who get pregnant whilst still in school have misbehaved or are troublemakers. This is exemplified by comments such as:

I can't say it's unique to the Wahehe [people]; it's almost three-quarters of Tanzania. When a person gets pregnant outside of wedlock, they are seen as some kind of offender. Once pregnant, the family may lose hope, and if possible, they might let her fend for herself. They see her as if she has no value anymore, as if she has embarrassed them. Maybe they expected her to bring a fiancé, pay the dowry, and celebrate, but now it has happened. She appears as if she has no worth anymore, and they discourage her. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Basically, the society does not react well toward it [early pregnancy]. In our African societies an issue of getting pregnant while in parents' house is not a joyful event and it is a mistake. Therefore, the society does not celebrate it. (Male, District Education Office, Kilosa)

Our society's notion is that these children are prostitutes. Changing it [the belief] is difficult. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

One national-level key informant indicated that these attitudes vary between rural and urban areas, with urban areas more likely to support girls who get pregnant:

In urban areas, when a girl gets pregnant, most of them get support from their families and the families does not chase them away. Rather, they find ways for them to achieve their dreams ... while in the villages, when a girl gets pregnant, mostly it is the end of their career dreams. (Female, Tanzania Institute of Education)

These negative views directly impact girls' willingness to return to school despite the current policy which supports the girls with the option of returning to school after getting pregnant. Most interviewees identified that girls were not returning to school because of feelings of shame, worry over being teased, and being seen differently by others:

The society mistreats them and abuses them [girls who get pregnant whilst still in school]. At times they call them bad names and insult them. For example, they call them a whore or a failure in life as they stop reading and follow men around ... The society has negative reactions towards her as she failed to honour and value the opportunity that she was granted and study hard. Instead, she slept around with men and ended up pregnant. And it leads some to not even go back to school. They don't come back. Even if they wish to return back to school, they do not as they are saying that they will be isolated by their peers. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

Other perspectives included people thinking that if a girl returns to school, she will just get pregnant again:

You can find other members in the community who see that the child or daughter who goes to school while she has a child is just wasting the money of the parent, guardian, grandfather or

grandmother. Others see them as going to school only to grow and give birth to another. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Due to my experience, most of the parents see them [girls who get pregnant whilst still in school] as a failure of [their] studies, so they keep her home waiting to be married, but not [as] someone to continue with studies after giving birth ... For they see there she will get another pregnancy. She will not be able to change [or think] that 'I made a mistake [so] I should settle so as I continue with my studies'. Eventually they see ... she will go and get another pregnancy. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

Interviewees also expressed the view that allowing girls who have given birth to return to school is seen as 'rewarding' poor behaviour, and that they will be bad influences on other children:

How the community perceives them [girls who return to school after pregnancy]; the outlook probably wasn't positive. Even when the announcement to allow them to return was made ... it was strongly criticised. People took it negatively, as if it was endorsing inappropriate behaviour within institutions, telling them that they can engage in such practices and return the next day to continue. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

They [girls who return to school after pregnancy] will affect other children: if the child returns to school, what will others learn from that child? ... Parents still view it differently. They believe it might encourage other children in school to get pregnant because they see the opportunity [thinking] 'I can go and stay at home for a while, then return to school'. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Several interviewees indicated that boys had no consequences for their actions, which is partially connected to difficulties in being able to track down perpetrators of early pregnancy:

If someone gets a student pregnant, he runs away. You find that when a child becomes pregnant, she stays with his parents. So, the parents start raising their son. No action is taken, because if we take action the suspect runs away. (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Pangani)

In Kilosa, the issues of 'chikimanya' (or protecting those you know) was particularly problematic in protecting boys from taking any responsibility or suffer the consequences of early pregnancy:

It is a society where you cannot sue [or make someone take responsibility] someone who belongs to your community 'chikimanya' - it is knowing each other ... that is, you know each other - you can't take action against someone whom you know. (Female, Headteacher, Kilosa)

One of the national level key informants supported this saying:

When it comes to [the] matter of pregnancy, girls are more victimised since they are carriers. Those boys mostly are congratulated for doing a manly thing unless [they are] in a situation where a girl's family asks him to be responsible. (Male, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology)

Linked to this is the view that boys or men should financially support the family. Several interviewees indicated that this means that many families do not bring the perpetrators to justice because of the need for someone to look after the child, and the concern that if the perpetrators are reported, they will go to prison for some time:

It has become a sort of belief that, since they share the same tradition, they should cover each other considering the fact that the girl has already got pregnant. If you are to report the father, who will support her? (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

One interviewee did however identify that the community sees boys who get young girls pregnant as 'thugs':

We have to see that the person who got [the girl] pregnant is a thug. Maybe it is someone who is not calm you see, so they consider him to be someone who is different in the society. And if you look at our societies, especially the pastoral ones, they can completely exclude him from that society ... because even these pastoral communities tell you that, even if it is a male child, if it happens that he rapes or physically interferes with a female child without her consent, and gets her pregnant, he is fined a lot. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Early marriage

Legally boys need to be 18 to get married, whilst girls can legally get married at 15 (Equality Now, 2021; Law of Marriage Act, 1971). This is connected to the Local Customary Law which allows ethnic groups to make and follow decisions based on its traditions and customs (The United Republic of Tanzania, 1963). Perhaps in contradiction to this, a law put in place in 2016 states that 'Any person who impregnates a primary school or a secondary school girl commits an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to imprisonment for a term of thirty years' (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2016, p. 12). There have been ongoing disputes and pressure to change the age of marriage so that the law of early pregnancy and early marriage are concurrent with the Tanzanian High Court recently ruling that marriage under the age of 18 is illegal alongside an advisory to the Tanzanian government to change the law of minimum age of marriage to 18 for both boys and girls (Equality Now, 2021).

Of the 45 interviewees, 23 identified that the rates of early marriage were reducing. Several identified that this was due to the change in the punishment of perpetrators of early pregnancy which was put in place in 2016. This means that people are increasingly fearful of the repercussions for early marriage, which is connected to early pregnancy:

So, changes are happening because churches teach and prohibit child marriages under certain legal ages. Schools also provide education. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

The attitude [supporting early marriage] is still there, [but] he is afraid of the law that 'If I do this I will perish'. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

One interviewee however indicated that laws stating the legal age of marriage (15 years for a girl and 18 for a boy) and punishment (30 years in prison for impregnating a girl under 18 years of age) are contradictory saying that:

The marriage law is contradictory. It says a girl can get married at the age of 14 with the consent of her parents. It's like a contradiction where advocates for women's rights have raised their voices a lot. (Female, Community Development Office, Kilolo)

However, interviewees also identified that despite these shifts away from early marriage, early marriages are still happening in secret, as they are rooted in traditional practices and beliefs:

If they happen, [marriages] are those done under tradition and in secret [which is] different from before where there was bride price and celebration for the marriage of young girls. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

Early marriages have significantly reduced, but unfortunate cases still occur. If a girl becomes pregnant, there is pressure from parents, a pressure to perform rituals. (Female, Community Development District Office, Kibaha)

Interviewees also indicated that early marriage beliefs vary between different cultures. One interviewee provided a detailed explanation of the complexities of how the norms shift between contexts:

Let me talk about it [early marriage] culturally. Now, there are contextual differences. For example, in our area, there are people like the Zaramo, Kwere, Pogoro, Sukuma, Maasai, and Mang'ati. The Zaramo, Kwere, and Pogoro who accept child marriages, but we don't see them forcing it. They don't compel and they don't provide education about the consequences for the person who gets married, even if it's a child. They don't have that commitment to educate, saying, 'You may agree to get married, but your age doesn't allow it'. They don't insist on marriage. However, they also don't prevent someone who wants to get married, even if they are very young. They don't give warnings about what the person will face at their age. These three communities, the Zaramo, Kwere, and Pogoro, are the ones we live within our coastal community. There is a mix. But the Maasai, Mang'ati, and Sukuma allow child marriages, and they force it. They compel, even if the person doesn't want to, they force it violently. Sometimes they take the girl away without her knowing; she's just handed over. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

One interviewee noted that boys need to complete their education, have a stable income, and a house so they can look after the family:

The main provider is a man, even though plans are joint, he must be superior to his partner. When it comes to marriage, a young man should have built a house and established himself on the farm before seeking a woman to marry. (Male, Local Leader, Kilolo)

This is related to expectations about the roles of boys and girls in the family. One local leader noted, for example, that a boy is 'the man is the leader of the family and the provider' (Male, Local Leader, Kilolo). This links to the view of another interviewee that 'the community believes that a boy is the one who will take on the responsibilities of marriage' (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Kilolo). Consequently there is an expectation that boys need to be older to achieve economic stability before they get married:

The difference is that when a girl finishes school, she gets married, she is given money. For a boy who finishes school, because he doesn't have money, and the boy's age might be the same as the girl's, but he doesn't have the means to bring a girl. To get married depends on his income. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

In order to get married, boys need to prepare first in order to take on the responsibilities of raising a family. He should have a house. If he doesn't have a house, he should pay for it. He should have money to take care of his wife. He should have money to pay the dowry. So for boys, they always prepare first, that's why the rate [of early marriage for boys] is very low. (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

Interviewees also indicated the boys could consent to marriage, and did not have to commit to marrying:

For boys [marriage] is until they [have] consented to it. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

The boy is the one who, in our society, is the man; is the one who carries the responsibilities of raising the family. Now it seems that when he is under that age, he still seems unable to handle the responsibilities of a family ... Even if they are playing games, having sex in the bushes; standing up and saying 'Now I want to marry' is unlikely. (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

One interviewee identified that there is a difference in the accepted age of marriage for girls and boys because 'a girl is owned, and a boy is the owner' (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha).

Girls getting married early is rooted in norms which are similar to those related to early pregnancy, such as girls are ready for marriage when they reach puberty:

There is no exact age for a girl to get married. They only consider physical and biological growth after a girl [has] reached adolescence ... and her breasts have grown, then she is fit to marry. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

As long as a person has been initiated [participated in a coming-of-age ceremony] she says she has the ability to live with a husband [and] handle things like that. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

One interviewee also identified that girls getting married at a younger age are seen as 'lucky', saying:

It seems that if you get married at an older age, you don't look good when you get married, but even if you get married early, you look like a lucky person. That is 'This child is very lucky, she is still very young.' But if you get married as an adult, you don't look lucky. (Female, Headteacher, Kilosa)

Of the 45 interviewees, 23 across all districts also noted that practices of child marriage continue to be rooted in financial stability citing norms around receiving dowry for daughters, escaping poverty, and marrying girls to reduce the financial burden on families:

We say poverty leads to early marriages. You find that in our community, people still have low income, so parents still believe that maybe if a daughter gets married, she can earn, maybe their income can rise because when this person gets married, she will go to her husband and maybe even the parents will get help from her son-in-law. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Girls from low-income families believe that by getting married, they can have a better life. Also, for parents, marrying off their daughter is seen as a way to acquire wealth. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Especially in the Wahehe community, [they] want to get rid of girls as they are 'a burden' and are likely to get pregnant and bring home a baby which increases the burden on the family. So they want to get married to 'get rid' of her [They say] 'We want to marry you like this and this because tomorrow and the day after, you will be a burden to our family'. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Several interviewees indicate that it is less acceptable for children, especially girls, to get married whilst they are in school:

If you leave aside the matters of marriage law or the age of an adult, once a person has reached the point that she has dropped out of school, that either she has become pregnant or she has been expelled for various offenses or absenteeism, that disqualifies as a student. When she sees that she is free from 15, 16, 17 [she] can get married. Or she has finished the seventh grade, but she did not perform well, she gets married. A person can marry at 14 years old and it is accepted in the society. No one shouts. Once she is free from the age of 15, the society is free, they allow it completely and even celebrate. (Male, Headteacher, Kilosa)

With these girls under 18, if she has stopped her studies ... she has nothing else to do. So, she might face some sort of embarrassment from her family that she is just sitting there with nothing to do ... Since she has nothing to do, she is essentially a burden to the family so she may start thinking that 'I better start my own family'. (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

If she is a student, that's where the problem is ... if she [is a] student, it's a real problem. You cannot marry her. (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

Several interviewees indicated that few girls refuse early marriage, with one stating that refusal was not an option:

For this society, rejecting marriage is not a thing. They are [dependant on] the consent of both parents, so this person does not have the freedom to speak about them, so they have already agreed. (Female, District Community Development Office, Pangani)

However, there were mixed views on girls who refuse early marriage. Some indicated that girls who refused early marriage were seen as 'aware' (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha), 'principled' (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo), and 'worthy of praise' (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha). However, negative attitudes also included seeing girls who refused early marriage as 'stubborn' (Male, Headteacher, Pangani), 'embarrassing' (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani), 'defying their parents' (Female, District Community Development Office, Kilolo), and 'disrespectful' (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha).

Gender-based violence

The main policy addressing gender-based violence is the Sexual Offence Special Provisions Act (SOSPA) of 1998 which imposes harsh penalties for perpetrators of sexual violence, but only covers acts against girls and women, not men and boys (The United Republic of Tanzania, 1998). Whilst this covers domestic violence, it does not cover marital rape. Domestic violence is also not an offence under the Law of Marriage Act. Whilst it does not give a definition of female genital mutilation, the SOSPA also prohibits female genital mutilation on girls under the age of 18, which is supported by the Revised Law of the Child Act which states that perpetrators will be fined at least two million shillings or be imprisoned for between five to 15 years (The United Republic of Tanzania, 1998, 2019). There have been a number of ongoing institutional reforms which aim to respond to and prevent gender-based violence. Examples include other ministries, departments and agencies, and the Tanzanian police force which has been working to make police more accessible and responsive at community level. They have created the Tanzania Police Female Network and gender desks to respond to cases of gender-based violence (Mihyo et al., 2017; Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 2005; The United Republic of Tanzania, 2014, 2016b).

Of the 45 interviewees, 24 interviewees across all districts indicated that gender-based violence was becoming less prevalent overall, but that challenges persist. 26 interviewees indicated that women and girls were the most affected groups, and 19 indicated that males are the most frequent perpetrators.

Some interviewees noted that men could be physically violent to women who challenge male authority:

The men have authority, so if [a] woman becomes too powerful or answers back, the men use their authority to discipline them. Women accusing men of having extramarital affairs is another cause of violence. (Male, Local Leader, Kilolo)

Society views women as tools for someone's pleasure, sees women as not meant to be above men, not to be too assertive. This places her in significant environments to be pinched by gender-based violence. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

The most affected group is women, especially those under 24 years old ... they do not know where they can speak out their thoughts. (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Kilosa)

Some interviewees indicated that these norms vary according to context:

[In] pastoralist communities, you find that beating a woman is a normal thing. This is when you find that a woman is interfered with and is subjected to an act of marriage without her consent. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

One of the national-level key informants supported this notion saying that:

They differ. As in some regions physically abusing a woman, it is a usual thing, even educating girls there are some areas which still do not value women education. In our country this varies from one area to another and depends on the level of awareness and exposure they have. (Male, HakiElimu)

Gender-based violence is viewed as being associated with men making the financial decisions, with interviewees (three from Kilolo and one from Kilosa) indicating higher rates of gender-based violence during the harvest season:

There is a wave that comes, and during certain times, such as the planting season, these cases of rape increase. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

Most cases are reported during harvest season because many marriages break up ... considering the fact that you may find a couple has put joint effort in farming but, after harvest, a man takes all the profit and shares [it] with other people who did not contribute. And when a woman enquires about it, that is when the fights begin, and woman can receive [a] beating simply because she has asked about it or [the woman can] get deserted [by the man]. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

One interviewee indicated that once women start to make their own money, they become disrespectful which results in gender-based violence:

When a woman is empowered and succeeds to have [the] financial ability to take care of her basic needs, she normally becomes gullible and proud, which is not the whole aim of women empowerment. In our society, when a woman can earn 2000, 3000 or 4000 thousand [Tanzanian shillings] [she] will start to despise her marriage and become disrespectful and it is the source of marriage breakdown ... That is why gender violence [is] not caused by men alone ... As you know men have a calm personality, so they may remain observant of such woman behaviour, but when they get tired of it, they just run away to find a peaceful environment. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

Stepmothers were also frequently identified as perpetrators of physical violence against children:

Sometimes abuse is done by someone close to you, such as an uncle, a stepmother, even a father or mother. (Male, Headteacher, Kilosa)

I have seen that there was a young child who was staying with the stepmother, she was hitting very much and burning him. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Boda-boda drivers were also seen as frequent perpetrators of sexual violence and harassment against girls and women:

Truly, transporters like boda-boda riders and drivers of vehicles, are the major suspects [of gender-based violence] ... They entice girls with chips. (Male, District Education Office, Kilolo)

You see groups like boda-boda [motorcycle transporters], who basically want an advantage to take these daughters by giving them a lift. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Pangani)

I see these groups of boda-boda ... these young people can be [a] source of gender-based violence. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Causes of gender-based violence varied between districts. Alcohol was particularly noted as a cause in Kilolo which is probably connected the livelihood of brewing in this area:

The effects of alcohol are numerous, making a man leave his wife or completely abandon his children. It also makes people have multiple partners. If a mother is drunk, no family can tolerate

it; it humiliates the family by getting drunk to the extent of undressing and being unable to walk without assistance. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

In Kilosa, a certain local dance (called Vigodoro¹) was associated with gender-based violence and risk of transactional sex:

There is a huge chance for gender-based violence to be committed in Vigodoro, since a lot of dirty things are practiced during the dance. Personally, I do not think there is a need for such dance as it is a shameless dance as during this dance women wears shameful clothes and dances in [an] obscure manner in public. Even though it is a way one can increase their income, but the harm caused by it is way beyond it as it affects our future generations that young children will learn it is normal to do shameful things in order to increase your income ... A sad thing is that people use a lot of money to pay in Vigodoro, but when asked to do something that would benefit the future generation such as building school toilets, contribution for feeding children while at school, they abscond from it. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

The issue of Vigodoro dance has contributed to sexual abuse because when a child gets access to participate in there at first, he sees that he is enjoying because they do not set limits, but afterwards, the harm he or she gets there is very big because the child will be tempted to try it as the adults do. (Male, Headteacher, Kilosa)

References to witchcraft were mentioned by six interviewees (four from Kilolo and two from Kibaha), all of whom spoke of a practice prescribed by witchdoctors which suggest that if you rape a child, you will get rich:

In cases of child rape, some are influenced by false beliefs or witchcraft, thinking that committing such acts will bring them wealth. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

There is a wave that comes, and during certain times such as the planting season, these cases of rape increase. Everywhere we go, there are reports of rape cases every morning. But at the end of the day, we go there to deal with them. Once we start arresting people, we find out that they say they went to a witchdoctor and they were given medicine and they were told to commit this act and that act so they could have a bountiful harvest. So, it is a challenge that often occurs when a certain season has passed. (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Kilolo)

People struggle for a better life, trying to make money. They go to traditional healers who tell them to sleep with a three-year-old child. Also, the excessive drinking - things are getting tougher here. (Female, District Community Development Office, Kilolo)

Sometimes maybe a person who decides to do this has money. They think maybe if you sleep with a young child, then you'll be rich ... That's why one can be told by healers to do this and you will get this, that is superstitious beliefs. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

A large percentage of us believe it is a false belief, someone has gone there to the traditional healer there to look for wealth, while we are to provide education, we are told that many healers have told them ... to go and sexually violate the male child. He is doing that for wealth. That's the high percentage of sexual violence against children. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

One of the national-level key informants identified that witchcraft beliefs remain a central belief system that underpins gender-based violence:

¹ Vigodoro is a fusion of several local performances and song that have developed into a dance that displays inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature in public. The performances along streets usually attract a lot of people including children.

There are many factors but still it is because of entrenched beliefs in witchcraft and hence, people tending to practice what they believe. (Male, Ministry of Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups)

One interviewee (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Kilolo) identified that finding witchdoctors is very difficult because they don't use their real names, and due to their status as traditional healers, they have an authority which makes it difficult to prosecute them.

Whilst less identified, three interviewees suggested that it is shameful for a man to admit being a victim of gender-based violence:

Sexual harassment or violence exists in some families where a woman may pull a man's genitals, although such violence is not easy to detect early because men tend to think that by expressing certain things, they will appear weak. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

I said women [are more affected by gender-based violence] directly because of how we receive reports, but if you go deep inside, you'll find that even men experience violence. Men tend to keep it to themselves. They might experience immoral violence within their homes, but they don't report. We continue to encourage them to come forward, even though they think it's shameful; not worth losing face. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

One of the national level key informants identified that boys are suffering from gender-based violence now more than before. This is linked to economic hardship and boys not being able to report acts of violence against them because of the shame it entails:

We work with a hospital at Mwananyamala where it is reported at the One-stop centre [that] they receive 70 boys daily who have been sexually violated ... Now since the challenge has not been given the deserving priority ... on how it should be addressed, ... you often find that the challenge is left to the community [to deal with] ... Since people do not have money, you can say that girls will get pregnant, but for boys ... because he [has] no money, boys see sodomy as an opportunity for them to get money and enter into the practice. (Female, Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme)

The interviews indicated strong connections between gender-based violence and gender social norms related to decision-making (see following sub-section) and echo issues such as 'chikimanya' (protecting those you know) identified in the sub-section on early pregnancy.

Only four interviewees raised issues related to female genital mutilation (two from Kilosa and two from Pangani), noting that it happens secretly, and two (one from Kilosa and one from Pangani) mentioning that is reducing. One of the national-level key informant interviewees suggested that the traditional beliefs play a role in supporting the practice, but that the style has changed over time:

Incidents of female genital mutilation have not decreased nor increased ... but what is changing are the styles of circumcision ... I hear these days they make a small cut, to what extent this is, there is no one who has witnessed these cuts other than the practitioners themselves, but still, this is a problem... This is a problem that is still existing, but it is a problem that is based on cultures and traditional beliefs ... These beliefs have also been upheld by men themselves ... that if you do not marry a woman who has been circumcised there are things that you will miss, so even men refuse to marry women who have not undergone female genital mutilation. (Male, Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups)

Paid/unpaid work

Most of the interviewees agreed that young women and men are expected to take on different types of work. Physical capability of women and men was given as a reason for this:

There is no work which is specialised to a certain gender alone, but [rather] due to social requirement in division of labour that has aligned both male and female duties ... Females should do light work and males heavy work. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

You can't find a woman doing heavy jobs. Although a woman can do all those jobs and so on at the same level that a man does, they can even do better, but they don't. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

One of the national level key informants identified that males were more likely to pursue technical skills training than women, which is connected to gendered job roles:

I see male children opting to go to technical skills-based training that offer better employment opportunities in future compared to females who opt to continue with theoretical education up to university ... Those who have technical skills will have a better opportunity in employment or to self-employ themselves compared to females. (Male, Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups)

Another echoed this saying that few women have technical skills, and that women were more likely to occupy lower-level jobs and that very few hold decision-making job roles (Male, HakiElimu).

This notion was also connected with the view that women should look after the family and home and men should generate the income:

Women in the community still believe that the job of looking after the family is the job of men. That environment leads them to choose what to do with a man and what to do with a woman. You will find now that a woman is frying cassava, a man frying cassava is not his job, [but] frying fish is everyone's [women and men] job. (Male, Headteacher, Mkwatani, Kilosa)

To a large extent, it's like a showcase job. When I say showcase, it's for people to see ... Even if a woman has the ability to do the work for a long time, men will still be selected ... Also, when a woman is told to do men's work, even if she goes, she does not fully accept herself, that she is going to work. It's like she's going to a job that is not in her heart. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

These perspectives also affect unpaid work, for example the norm that girls must do household chores, which effects their engagement with school:

[The] norms and customs of African[s] that remove a girl to [the] right to education [are that] she stays at home in kitchen. Still, [these] norms and customs in our society still exist. Why do you educate a girl? She is there for marriage. (Female, District Education Office, Pangani)

Academic performance is good, meaning it is balanced between girls and boys. The challenge for girls is that we rely on them a lot in the family. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

One interviewee indicated that expectations of gendered job roles vary by context, suggesting that the Maasai culture had much stricter norms on what men and women could do:

While [in this Ward], I have not seen it [gendered job roles]. There are other communities, [for example], you will find that in the WaMaasai ... women are not allowed to do some activities. (Female, Ward Development Office, Kibaha)

In Pangani, a fishing community, it was frequently mentioned that fishing was a man's job. This was related to views that fishing is unsafe for women because it takes place at night, with a danger that women are exposed to sexual assault:

The fact that the fishing jobs are often done at night [means] that it is impossible for a woman to stay there all night. (Female, District Community Development Office, Pangani)

Maybe a woman who works as a fisherman, then the society may have a different perspective. That's why I said any work that involves any labour-intensive activity, which can also be a threat to the endurance and tolerance of the female sex, can lead to sexual harassment. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Pangani)

This connects to the wider perception identified by 19 interviewees that women are at risk of sexual assault and physical risk when they take on male jobs. One interviewee identified that this may be linked to men discriminating against women who engage with men's work:

Since there are men who have [a] discriminatory nature, they would treat her as unworthy of working there and see her as ... lost and unfit for such work. Though women believe they are capable of doing all work, but still there are men with the perception of discriminating [against] them. (Male, District Education Office, Kilosa)

Eight of the interviewees identified that women doing men's job roles was seen negatively, with two saying women only engaged in men's work if they were desperate, or that they are engaging in 'bad behaviour':

The community sees them [women] as entering into work that is not theirs. They lack cooperation from men, especially in construction. Some view them as seekers ... believing that hardship has forced her to seek employment. However, if she goes to build a house, she is seen as encroaching on male work. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

In our society, we see a person working like that [doing a male job] can have bad behaviour. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

By contrast, 10 interviewees suggested that women are increasingly taking on more 'men's' jobs. Reasons given for this are connected to a range of positive views about women who engage in such work. 14 interviewees (seven males and six females) identified that the community sees women who are engaging in men's job roles in a positive way indicating that they are seen as 'role models', 'strong', 'brave', and 'respected':

A woman doing a job traditionally considered for men is seen as courageous and as a role model. It's not surprising anymore ... changes are happening, and men are beginning to understand that women can do jobs that were traditionally seen as men's jobs. Men are starting to worry about job competition, but it motivates and enhances professionalism. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Kibaha)

Society sees them as exceptional women. They are considered courageous women. For example, we ... were going to work, and when we saw a female motorcycle taxi rider, we said we want to ride with a female rider, and we admired her as an exceptional and courageous woman who dares to do jobs that others believe women cannot do. That's the community's perspective—they don't judge her as abnormal. They see her as brave, daring to do tasks that others believe others cannot do. Because we started with one, and others will follow. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Some interviewees noted that equal pay for men and women was normal practice:

We hear this in Sweden that they do the same work but are paid differently. I have never heard of this in Tanzania; that people who have done similar work but are paid differently. (Female, District Education Office, Kibaha)

Women are treated equally, and they are getting paid as per their worth [the] same as men, also there is a promotion of equality between men and women. (Female, Community Health Worker, Mkwatani, Kilosa)

Only one interviewee identified that there may be a difference in pay due to men having more bargaining power than women (Male, Local Leader, Kilolo).

Decision-making and leadership

Women and men's roles in decision-making cuts across many of the areas addressed in the previous sub-sections. Interviewees indicated that men have the final say in decisions with comments indicating that this is due to norms about men being the head of the household:

It's a patriarchy. Only men make major decisions, even though women have good ideas and women can save money better than men ... the man is the one who has the final say ... Big decisions are made by us men ... Traditions come in a lot. It is also a habit to learn how my father used to live, how I live. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

Usually, the father is given the responsibility to manage all activities, even though in many families, the father's money is considered shared, while the mother's money is hers alone. That's why the father can decide on anything because his money belongs to both. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Kibaha)

One national level-key informant interviewee suggested that such norms vary between contexts:

In offices [in the workplace] I think both genders have equal chances for decision-making. However, in our societies it differs as some customs do not allow women to speak in front of men. (Female, Tanzania Institute of Education)

However, many of the interviewees also point to a general shift in these 'traditional norms' identifying that women are starting to speak their minds more, and are proving that they can make good decisions:

There are many changes in ... society. Nowadays a woman can decide, and a man agrees. In the past, men did not listen. Now men have seen that women have good decisions. The patriarchy is greatly reduced. Maybe only a few communities are left because of their traditions. Here in the Coast, men are not very strong. Women have a say. (Female, District Education Office, Kibaha)

One national level-key informant echoed this by saying:

As the days go by, the masculinity mentality has been eradicated ... Nowadays women are decision- makers in [the] family and... in most cases, they are holding down the family economy. (Male, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology)

In Pangani, it was noted that women seem to have more power in decision-making because of the matrilineal society:

They [men and women] get equal rights. There is no problem here in matrilineal societies. You'll find that the female child has more rights. Even dowry is not received by the parents; it is received by the daughter getting married. That's the law. (Female, Community Development Office, Kibaha)

Different areas of decision-making are likely to be made by women or men. For example, whilst some interviewees indicated that men decided how many children to have, 18 interviewees across all districts reported that reproductive health decisions were made by women:

The mother is primarily involved [in reproductive health decisions] because she is the main victim; responsible for carrying the pregnancy, giving birth, and breastfeeding. Most fathers stay aside when it comes to reproductive health. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

However, other views indicated that family planning is immoral, harmful, and that it defies the importance of having children:

Some see a woman using a family planning method in the family, they think women will become immoral, while it is a way to prevent unplanned pregnancies. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Many men don't get involved [in decisions about family planning] because they still believe family planning has harmful effects, and they have misconceptions about it. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Religion does not allow the use of birth control, the scriptures do not allow it, so someone says they cannot use the methods of birth control because religion does not allow it. But the woman, who is the biggest victim, decides to go secretly. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

It was also identified that norms which result in sex being a taboo topic for discussion, also made joint decision making on family planning difficult:

We've had many meetings with them [men and women]. They don't make joint decisions. Customs and traditions make issues of sex secretive and not discussed. Our societies haven't evolved to the point where matters of childbirth are discussed together, including deciding on the number of children to have. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

In this society issues of family are not openly discussed ... You can never find people talking about it in [the] open therefore it is a bit hard to give [an] explanation about it. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

One national level-key informant agreed by saying:

The biggest [problem] is this of the parents to not be able to speak to their children. Especially when they come of age or grow from one stage to the other and in the absence of proper guidance, they fall victim to these incidences [of early pregnancy]. (Male, Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups)

Such beliefs have repercussions for women being at risk of being found out by husbands:

There are many women who want to have sterilisation due to the current situation of life [being] difficult and the father still wants to have children. But the opposition comes to the male parent because he is far away, he does not fully participate in all the issues that his wife encounters. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Pangani)

Sometimes someone has put an implant in her and she comes back and tells you that 'my husband has beaten me and he wants me to take it out'. So, you find it a challenge. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

It is the woman who decides to use contraception because often men want children. A woman decides to use contraception secretly ... due to fear of their men, men's tyranny, ... perhaps morals... the patriarchal system. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

As identified by several interviewees, this set of norms means that often women make decisions regarding their family planning in secret:

Here men do not really like this issue [of reproductive health], so the women here tend to do it themselves ... Right now, reproductive health education is given to both men and women. Even in the clinic men attend with their wives; with it we have a chance to give education about the health issues and birth control. However, male response is still low. That why women do it in secrecy because if they inform [their husbands], they would not be allowed by their men. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

With respect to financial decisions, 24 out of 45 interviewees reported that these were made by men, with comments such as:

You might find that the woman brings in the money, but it's the man who decides how to use it. It's just a cultural norm and they are used to it. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Two interviewees related this to the view that men are the heads of the family and above women:

It is very difficult to change this, very difficult because this issue, even in holy books, is explained that women are under men. We go forward ... but we can't fight God. (Female, District Education Office, Pangani)

The fathers usually control and manage finances because they are considered the heads of the family ... In these communities, such as among the Wahehe, the patriarchal system prevails; women are not given much chance to speak. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

Men were frequently reported as the landowners:

There are very few ... women who own land, because even by that time when we used to provide for fertilizer loans, many women who came for it, a lot of them ... were using their husbands' deeds or some they used rented farm contracts. (Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

Of the 45 interviewees, 13 across the districts identified that women make the decisions regarding the education of children. This related to the perception that women are responsible for the care of children:

Most decisions about a child going to school are made by mothers - fathers are not very involved. Many fathers here, after leaving in the morning, are gone for the day. Therefore, the time for making decisions is very limited ... The mother is the one who is mostly responsible. In the community, fathers are not very involved in children's issues. It's like everything related to children is the mother's responsibility. (Male, Police Gender and Children Desk Office, Kilolo)

Here women are the ones who deal with children's health, children's education, that is, here women are the ones who carry everything. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

Women are the ones with power in supporting children education. That is why even [when schools] discipline their children, [the] ones who usually come [for consultation] are women - fathers do not attend. Mothers are the one who feel [more] hurt when children drop out [of] school than fathers. (Male, District Education Office, Kilosa)

One interviewee from Kibaha identified that women in certain contexts are particularly responsible for the upbringing of the girl child:

A large percentage of them [women] cooperate [when making decisions regarding education], according to what I know. Except there are a few communities, a few areas, [where] some families leave the upbringing of the girl child and her development to the mother ... The father says, 'I cannot ask my daughter about women's issues.' (Male, Headteacher, Kibaha)

Interviewees also identified that, although women are often active participants in their children's education (such as by attending school meetings, following up if the child has challenges, monitoring their children's progress, sourcing school materials, and participating in school meetings), men have the final say in decision-making on education:

Many [parents] do not sit together to decide on that [education]. Only those with education sit together. The main monitor is the mother, but the main obstacle is the father—they make decisions in the community. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

It depends whether parents are living together or separated. If they are living together there is uncertainties as I have attended a lot of parent's meetings in schools and number of women exceeds men. But when a teacher put forth an agenda on the table, men are the ... first ones to

... speak out their concerns. It rare to find women contributing first. I think ... they act that way because they do not have [the] final decision. Men sent them to represent them since they cannot attend. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

Women's opportunities for leadership are closely linked to decision-making opportunities.

Interviewees suggested that women cannot lead, with one connecting this to religious beliefs:

[Men] say that maybe women cannot lead men the way they want. They have not considered equality. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

The community does not believe that women and men have equal opportunities ... They use the Bible to reject the idea that women and men can be equal. [They] claim that women's special seats [seats reserved for women only] are forcing them. In this community, a female leader is viewed negatively. (Female, Headteacher, Kilolo)

The natives [local people] here have a bit of contempt; the man wants to be the spokesperson. So, even if a woman has something to say, if she doesn't present it properly, it won't be accepted. There's still that mindset that the man should be the main spokesperson and decision-maker, and if a woman doesn't follow, she's seen as disrespectful ... if she disrespects, actions might be taken. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

However, 28 interviewees identified that views towards leadership capabilities of women are shifting. Reasons given for this shift include the role model of having a female President of Tanzania, showing that women can lead:

Right now, you find that the president is a woman. There are other countries that have women prime ministers, so they see that these things are possible. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Looking at the country's leadership with a woman at the top, it's encouraging others to learn that women can also lead. There are many female ministers, and the awareness is growing through education that this is possible. (Male, Headteacher, Kilolo)

These changes were often attributed to the government's push for gender equality on leadership through 'special seats' (local leadership seats reserved for woman), as well as through women having more confidence to run for local leadership positions:

Even in the position of councillors, women are there, not just through special seats but through elected positions. In villages, there are female members, and there are also female village chairpersons. These changes have been brought about by numerous campaigns, and these campaigns need to continue. (Male, Social Welfare Office, Kibaha)

Two interviewees did however express the concern that females did not have the financial backing needed to campaign for political positions:

Economic challenges hinder women from running for higher positions like councillor or Member of Parliament, but they participate in lower positions like village chairpersons or members. These positions have no benefits or expenses to contest. Economic power lies with men - women with economic power are few. (Female, Community Development Office, Kilolo)

One also identified that women must get permission from their husbands to take on leadership roles, so do not necessarily have the ability to make their own decision:

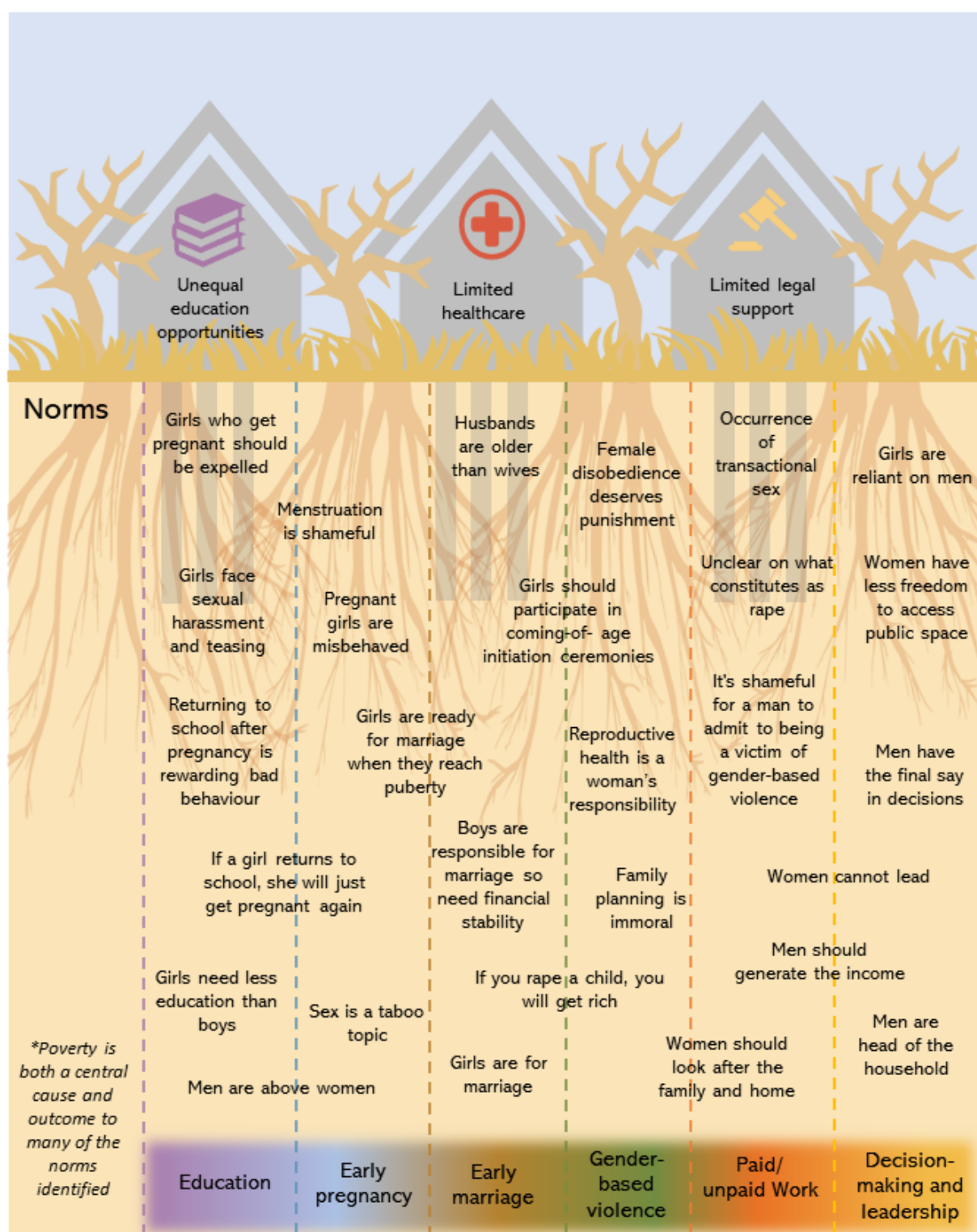
Women have to get permission from their husbands. They believe that these women with leadership positions ... are no longer in their marriages, so a man can't easily allow his wife to run for any political position. Therefore, if a woman is very tough, she can run for leadership, otherwise it will bring a lot of trouble and even the marriage will break. But once she gets success,

the man comes back because of the success. But many men themselves do not believe that a woman can stand up for herself, so the opportunities are not equal. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

Summary

The key norms identified in our analysis are summarised in Figure 6. There are synergies between these norms and those summarised in the literature reviewed (Section 2). The interviews provide a deeper and contextually nuanced understanding of the gender social norms in specific locations in Tanzania, including identifying the interconnectedness across the different cluster areas used in our analysis. The analysis has also identified that there are differences in perspectives between districts (and communities within districts) including matrilineal and patrilineal arrangements, livelihood activities, and cultural practices.

Figure 6: Gender social norms identified in study districts



Note: This diagram summarises some of the most common norms identified in the data collection

Source: Phase 1 individual interviews

5. Who in the community did Learner Guides engage with to support the shift in gender social norms?

The second research question aimed to identify community groups and members who Learner Guides engaged with in their role. This was particularly relevant for identifying if and how the Learner Guides felt they were able to challenge gender social norms within their community. The data presented in this section is based on individual stakeholder mapping exercises and interviews with 31 Learner Guides in total across the four districts.

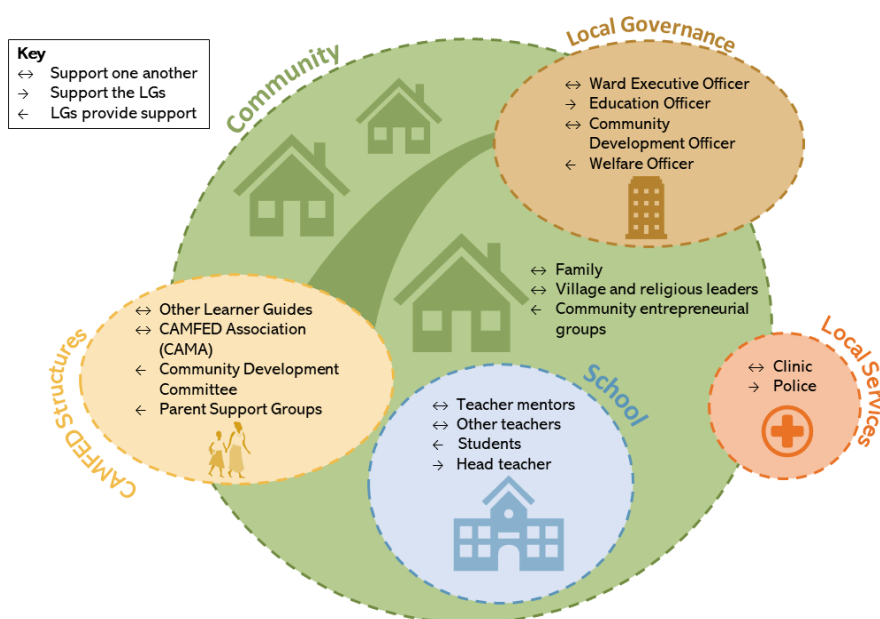
Understanding who Learner Guides engaged with enables us to identify their perceived community reach and compare this to the views of community members themselves, as presented in Section 7. In addition, understanding the views of Learner Guides' and how they believe they are perceived by the community could play a role in their perceived and actual ability to engage with and influence community gender social norms.

Who do the Learner Guides engage with in their communities?

Learner Guides identified that they engage with a range of stakeholders across the community (Figure 7). In schools, which are the key location of their core activities as a Learner Guide, they support and are supported by teacher mentors and other teachers, provide support to students, and are supported by headteachers. Within the CAMFED structures, Learner Guides reported both receiving and giving support to other Learner Guides, the CAMFED Association (CAMA) and supporting CAMFED organised community groups including the Community Development Committee and Parent Support Groups.

Within wider local governance structures, Learner Guides reported both supporting and receiving support from the Ward Executive Officer and Community Development Officer, receiving support from the Education Officer, and providing support to the Welfare Officer. They also reported both supporting and receiving support from the local clinic and receiving support from the local police service. Within the community, Learner Guides reported supporting and receiving support from their families and village and religious leaders and supporting community entrepreneurial groups.

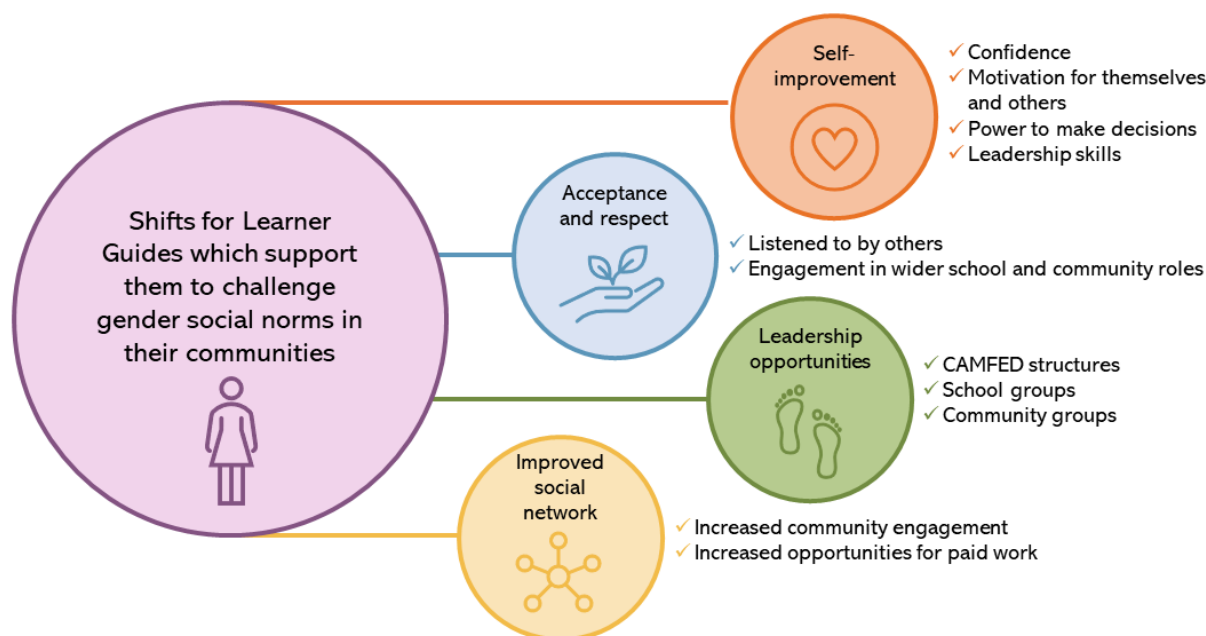
Figure 7: Learner Guide engagement within the community



Source: Phase 2 stakeholder maps and interviews

Many of the forms of engagement indicate that Learner Guides are being exposed to wider networks within their communities beyond the CAMFED-specific structures, and that the engagement is often mutually beneficial. Learner Guides indicate that many of the stakeholders are supporting Learner Guides to develop a range of skills and opportunities which help them to contribute to shifting gender social norms. The main shifts identified by the Learner Guides include self-improvement, acceptance and respect from the community, opportunities to engage in leadership, and improved social networks (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Areas of shifts for Learner Guides which support their ability to support challenge gender social norms



Source: Phase 2 stakeholder maps and interviews

These shifts support Learner Guides in their ability to shift gender social norms in a range of areas. Learner Guides frequently noted that they felt they have more power to make positive decisions in their own lives:

It [being a Learner Guide] has given me that ability [to make decisions] because not everything that comes to me, I should agree with, but I have to analyse them to understand their validity before I make the decision. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

In terms of choices, it [being a Learner Guide] has made me like to lead myself or choose for myself because being a student mentor has made me know myself better from advising others. It has made me know myself and live by the advice I give to others ... In terms of decision-making, it has built my ability to make productive decisions. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Two Learner Guides associated this increased ability to have autonomy over their ability to make decisions about who and when to get married:

It [being a Learner Guide] has enabled me even more because, even if I stay at home [and] I live with my mother, I have the power to decide. I have the power to decide that 'Mother, today I am going to do something. Mother, today I am going to volunteer in community activities' ... It has helped me a lot because ... I see, for example, some girls give birth before their age. But myself, I have already set my goals. I have to stay until I see that now is the right time to get married and

the right time to have a family, so, it has really helped me that way, and right now I know myself, who is wrong for me and who is right [for] me. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

You know, we girls are often pushed around in the family, for example, in marriage. But now, through this peer counselling, I advise my peers to make choices that I know are right. I will accept the right one and I will refuse the wrong one. Because I have the freedom to choose what I love and to leave what I don't love. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Two interviewees also noted that being a Learner Guide has empowered them to be able to protect children within their communities, as they have increased confidence in speaking up:

The role of a Learner Guide has given me [the ability] to defend sexual violence even at the level of where the child lives ... If I was not in this role of a Learner [Guide], I would have ignored the situation. I would just say, 'it is your child at your home'. But due to the position of a Learner Guide and defending children's rights, it gave me the courage to go. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

Being a Learner Guide ... has made me become a very confident woman. It made me brave ... If I were not a Learner Guide I do not think I would have the courage to stand with leaders and discuss with them different challenges; I could have [a] certain fear to face leaders. In the past, I was afraid of policemen even when I saw the police uniform. I didn't even want to come close to them. I indeed feared them. However, right now I can meet with police officers and report anything that needs their attention. So being a Learner Guides has helped me to be courageous. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Learner Guides identified that their role meant they were more accepted and respected by their families, schools, and wider communities:

It [being a Learner Guide] has made me feel good. it has also made me stronger, confident, and respected by the community. For example, if I pass through the community, they call me a 'student facilitator'. It has made me recognized by the community and made me different from other people in the community ... We are also accepted in society and we are listened to. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

I am respected. For example, the way a person sees you does not see you as a passerby, he knows that person has something that makes him bring success to someone else how they live ... even for my husband there is respect. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Learner Guides indicated that through this respect and their increased confidence they are listened to in their communities:

When I am a member of the village government, there we are mixed with men or boys. It means that when there is a topic being discussed, I stand there and explain, so my opinion must be heard, my contribution will not be ignored... so they must involve me ... In society, when I make decisions, I am listened to because they believe in me and I believe in myself. So, whatever I say, they accept me and understand it. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

[Being a] Learner Guide has first given me confidence, acceptance in the community ... when I go to those community meetings, when we are talking in interviews, if I stand up and explain or give advice in those meetings. Maybe there is a chance of being proposed, they will all point their fingers and mention me [saying] 'We recommend someone because of [her] confidence and speaking things that have entered their minds. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Learner Guides also reported gaining leadership skills through the Learner Guide programme:

Being a Learner Guide has given me leadership knowledge. It has helped me get rid of my fears, because if you are a coward, leading becomes a challenge. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

In terms of leadership, being a Learner Guide has given me the ability to adapt. For example, in community activities, I want to be seen as a leader ... It has also helped me to be selfless and to increase my participation in social activities. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Closely linked to this, interviewees noted that their increased networks gave Learner Guides more opportunities to be leaders within CAMFED, schools, and community structures:

My efforts of working with students and cooperating with teachers made the headteacher see me fit for the position of member of the school board. I received a letter later for my nomination and when the school board met, I was selected to be the chairperson of the school board ... I lead the meetings, answering the questions. Many people saw me there ... They saw me as a fit candidate for the position of chairperson of [the] Umoja Wa Wanawake Tanzania (UWT) [The Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Party, women wing] in this ward. So, they convinced me to take a form and participate in that election. I was elected both as a CCM ward chairperson and a chairperson of UWT. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

In the community, they have looked at me like 'Aah she is a Learner Guide', and until now I have had opportunities. I have become a member of the village government ... I have also had the opportunity to enter as a member of the township or village government. And also, at the primary school I am on the school committee, a member there. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

Another opportunity, perhaps on the part of the government, I am an ambassador. I got it after becoming a peer mentor. I didn't run for it. I was just elected. I was not there the day I was elected. I just came back and was told that you have become the Balozi [Party/community leader] ambassador of our neighbourhood because of how we see you, your appearance. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Some Learner Guides also reported that they had more opportunities to undertake paid work and improve their businesses:

Another opportunity that I get is on my business. I get a lot of support from the students who buy [my goods] and even teachers support me, I am thankful. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

It has given me the opportunity to be famous among the students; also, I am a tailor and students bring to me their clothes to sew them. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Learner Guides reported several challenges they faced in terms of enacting their role as Learner Guides within the community. Many of these challenges are similar to those experienced by other young women in their communities as identified in Section 4. Five out of the 31 Learner Guides interviewed reported that holding the post of a Learner Guide caused difficulties at home with tensions over competing priorities for gendered activities such as household chores and childcare:

There are challenges, like for some of us who live there in our communities, or within the family, ... you may be volunteering too much. Within the family it becomes a problem ... they will say that I have become lazy about household activities. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

I had a baby and at the time of [the Learner Guide] training, it was just a week since I stopped breast-feeding her. My father was not in support of that training because my child was still very young. However, my mother who lives separately with [my] father, agreed to take care of my baby until I return so that I can take that training. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Related to this, some Learner Guides also identified challenges with gaining permission from husbands:

Another challenge was when I entered into a marital relationship ... now comes the issue of asking for my husband's permission. It was a bit challenging, but I explained it very well to him. I told him that, before our marriage, I was doing these activities and those activities helped me to run my life. In addition, the training that I take will be of advantage to both of us so he must allow me to go for our benefit. Then he permitt[ed] me to go and I left him with our little baby ... since then no CAMFED journey [he] has forbidden me to go; he is a very understanding man. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

I faced a major challenge. First, I was married with one child. When I got the opportunity to go to training, my husband refused to let me go. He said, 'What is the benefit of going, and who is supervising them [the children]?' ... He told me 'Even if you go, go, but if you come back, it's over between you and me!' We went to our parents, but the decision was that way. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

I told them at home [about the Learner Guide training] and they know the benefits of it, [so] they allowed me to go. When I came back that's when I got a boyfriend. But I had a boyfriend who refused at first, but because his parents also know and have someone like me, they advised him and allowed [me]. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Eight Learner Guides also identified sometimes having difficulties in effectively engaging within the community with comments such as:

There are challenges, though they are normal. The first challenge you know in the environment where people have been very familiar with you, and identify you as a normal farmer or parent, so when you stand in front and speak to community members that they need to fulfil needs of their school children and how to raise up their children, many they [have] contempt [saying] 'What will you advise us?' (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

In joining the CAMA network there are a lot of challenges we faced. There were children that we advised, and their parents had low understanding and ended up speaking ill words against us. But we continue to fight with them and explain things to them until they understand us. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Three Learner Guides identified that their relatively young age played a role in hindering their ability to facilitate changes in the community:

The challenge, at the very beginning when I was teaching, I used to be afraid but then I got used to it. And for example, in the villages in the community... you find that maybe when you go to educate young people sometimes you find that they answer you badly. You find that changing someone's habits to their best, is a lot ... so you find that someone else responds badly to you, so you need to have a patience and tolerance. So, there are things that I encounter but I tolerate. Currently, I'm used to it, I'm just normal. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

The challenge ... is that parents are not ready to be advised. And if you look in our communities, you find that [I] can go to advise someone, and you find them telling you, 'Now, how can you advise me, a small child?'. So, it's a challenge ... age. You find that it causes us not to give advice in the village. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

These are only normal challenges that I can face because they are my village mates, same culture... yes they looked down on me... a small child, teaching them, motivating them but... at the end of the day they came to understand me. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

One mentioned that she faced difficulties with initially being accepted by teachers in her school saying:

In the beginning, I was so confident with myself, but the first time I arrived at school as a Learner Guide and started to introduce myself to the teacher who I am and what I am doing there was a very hard time for me. Others understood me while others did not bother to understand. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Practically, several Learner Guides also mentioned difficulties in paying for transportation, which potentially limits their ability to engage with the whole community.

What gender social norms do Learner Guides believe they are challenging in their communities and how?

In this section, we identify which gender social norms Learner Guides themselves felt they were shifting and how they were able to do so. This will be compared in the next section with the gender social norms that the wider community believe Learner Guides are shifting to identify similarities and differences in their perspectives.

Education

Most Learner Guides reported that they felt that they were challenging and shifting a range of gender social norms through the support they provide in schools. This included grouping students according to ability to avoid gender-segregation:

When I was given training at ... [my] school, I found that girls were on their side and boys were on their side, that is, they were separated by the way the chairs were arranged. I ... combined the boys and girls and divided them into groups of five boys and five girls in the groups. And in their average at school [grades], I looked at those with a positive average and those with a negative average, and I mixed them. So, they were exchanging ideas and had good results. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Learner Guides believe they play a role in improving the self-confidence of both boys and girls in school:

For example [in the] class that I am teaching, the form one, I do ask each student to go in front and present [the] assignment provided to them. So, they normally go in front, introduce themselves and present without fear; this has made [them have] confidence [in] themselves. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

Other Learner Guides identified that they were able to support girls with information about puberty in schools, particularly in contexts where there are a limited number of female teachers:

There are great changes, I will say especially for girls in the school where I work. There were very few female teachers and hence it was not easy to teach and nurture girls ... Therefore, we started to teach them how to take care of their bodies and observe cleanliness every day, especially during their menstrual periods ... The students did not like to attend school and there were very few female teachers so when we started operating in schools, we increased the number of female teachers, so we were able to oversee the girls' wellbeing properly. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Learner Guides also frequently reported being able to challenge cultural practices through their support in schools, such as the coming-of-age practices of 'Ngoma' or 'Vigodoro' (traditional dancing ceremonies) or 'Unyago' (a traditional practice that includes temporary seclusion and coaching on certain cultural issues) which cause girls to miss school in some districts:

On the other side of culture, most of the time girls of twelve years are participating in the cultural ceremony 'Unyago' which requires them to stay indoors for some time as they are taught and prepared for womanhood. This can take some time and even hinder them from returning to school on time ... They challenge me to continue to educate the parents that in this generation some of these practices are not beneficial to their children ... I advise them [parents] to try to push them [girls] more in formal education so that they can be able to face life challenges later in life. Most of the parents are starting to change and practice their ceremony after their children finish school. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

[I have helped] to reduce the habit of parents playing 'ngoma' with their children during school hours. It has reduced teenage pregnancies, and it has also increased the academic success of students. I have reduced truancy from school, for example, I followed up on the child of my aunt so that she would not play ngoma with her child and I was able to make the child continue with school and later she passed [her school examinations]. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

In school meetings between teachers and parents, we student mentors provide various education that helps to give parents an understanding of the importance of education, reduce customs that undermine the well-being of children, such as dancing during class, [and] the importance of girls going to school. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Learner Guides reported that they were able support changes in parental attitudes towards prioritising education for girls as well as boys:

We are influential. We can influence a parent who has refused to take his child to school, we can influence a parent who does not give food to their children, they can give them food, they can take them to school and give them all the necessary needs. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

Early pregnancy and early marriage

Learner Guides also reported that, by increasing students' attendance and participation rates in school and in running school groups beyond the classroom, they believed that students were more likely to 'avoid temptations':

Our contribution is on inspiring the students to attend classes and to make more efforts on their studies. In addition, to avoid temptations that exists so that they can win in their lives; and we help them to form group discussions. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

You have [study] groups. You know for sure that maybe at 4 o'clock I am going to do something with my colleagues. Even the time to roam is reduced and once they reduce the time to roam, for girls it also reduces pregnancy. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

Learner Guides also reported being able to reduce early pregnancy through increasing awareness of the potential outcomes of sexual activity with students:

I always speak to them, especially those who are having sexual relationships, I always tell them to stop having such kind of relationships as they can find them when the right time comes [meaning after completing studies]. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

On the issue of girls and relationships, we are working so much to advise them not to engage themselves in sexual relationships because it will make them not able to reach their goals. By showing them the effects of that, some of them understand and start to focus on their studies. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

This counselling has really helped to a large extent to reduce teenage pregnancy, as we leave them with family planning education ... We work with various committees ... We teach them methods of family planning. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Connected to this, Learner Guides also report that they believe that the My Better World programme which they deliver has played a role in making students aware of pregnancy:

Through this book right now [My Better World book] ... we talk about pregnancy. In the past, many girls got pregnant while in form two, form one, but now it's better. That situation does not happen [because] ... the students themselves are self-aware. Girls and boys are self-aware, because when we enter the classroom, we teach them all. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

One Learner Guide also noted that she was shifting gender social norms around early pregnancies by engaging with and educating village leaders and parents and supporting pregnant girls to continue education:

Many times ... I advise them [community members] and they listen and act accordingly. For example, I proposed to village leaders that, the pregnant students, instead of just leaving them at home, they should come at the village office so that I could teach them life skills. The village office allowed me, and I have been meeting with that group. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

Learner Guides reported that through their work of increasing girls' self-confidence and self-value, they believed that girls were able to say no to sexual approaches:

Students are confident, and school pregnancies and absenteeism rates have decreased, because we have taught them to say no. Even if the teacher attempts to ask for a sexual relationship, they should say no, and not to be tempted just because it is their teacher. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

The children are now very educated. They think it's better to study than to run into street affairs ... When they get that self-confidence ... pregnancies really decrease. The student sees that even if she is stopped like this by a boda-boda [driver] ... she sees it's better to answer him ... because I have taught the student how to believe in herself in class, and how to be aware of her goals, and how to agree with the situation she has in life. So, she fights against that situation even when she is at home or on the street, she fights against those temptations. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

Two Learner Guides also reported supporting changes in early marriages by intervening in cases where girls were being married at young ages:

Personally, I have witnessed and reported one incident [of early marriage] when a student was about to get married, and we managed to stop that violence ... In this village, most of the parents do not push through with their plans of marrying their children early because they fear if I learn about it, I will fight against it ... Most of the people in the community acted as my spies in informing me. So my fellows Learner Guide and I intervened and cancelled the matter. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Gender-based violence

Learner Guides identified that through the My Better World sessions, they were able to improve relations between boys and girls in school:

Before the programme 'My Better World', it was a usual thing for boys to act offensively towards girls especially by using bad words, but [by] training and advising them that tendency has reduced. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Several Learner Guides identified that they make girls aware of what constitutes as being treated badly, and provide them a safe space to ask questions:

Students now understand what is cruel ... it has changed their attitude to a great extent ... Now they understand themselves and they frequently come to report to me [more often] than previously. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

So, when we gave them education on sexual violence, it was easy for them to consult us and ask questions of us related to the matter ... It has also become easier even in the family to reduce violence against women in education due [to the] education provided to them. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

In addition to providing education, Learner Guides also noted that they were able to follow up on cases which support perpetrators of violence to be punished:

Violence is decreasing due to our follow-up and we provide information. For example, there was a father who was raping his daughter. We followed up [on the issue] and the father was imprisoned for five years in jail, so through this, others are afraid. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

One girl student reported to me about the boy who was forcing [her] to have a sexual relationship with him. I called the boy, warned him about his actions, he understood me, and refrained from harassing the girl. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Several Learner Guides identified that they believed they challenge the norms around gender-based violence by also engaging with parents and the community:

There have been people who stay there ... waiting for students who are late to return home ... So, we talked to the teachers, we talked to the parents, [saying] 'We should advise our children that at 6 o'clock the child should return home'. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilosa)

[Some community members] beat children severely ... When I see this situation, I advise other parents about parenting in general for the benefit of children to get their basic rights. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Paid/unpaid work

Whilst Learner Guides did not comment as much on how they felt they were directly influencing norms around young women's opportunities in paid work, one identified that they were teaching girls trading skills:

Now entrepreneurs are working hard, and for example, like me, people often follow me at home [saying] 'I need to teach you [how to make] peanuts, I need to teach you [how to make] chili'. I teach them ... So now women are also entrepreneurs. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Another Learner Guide suggested that she was challenging conflicts which were caused by income inequality suggesting that:

The perception is [that] busy and responsible women ... work hard and push themselves to improve themselves economically ... I just advise people whom I am in contact with that they should respect one another despite the issue of income, especially for those who are in marriage. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Learner Guides did not provide examples of how they felt that they were contributing to shifts in the gender division of labour in unpaid work.

Decision-making and leadership

As noted in the previous sub-sections, Learner Guides identified that they have contributed to shifts in some aspects of decision-making such as girls and young women being more able and empowered to say no sexual advances, and having increased self-confidence and self-value which enables them to participate more in school and community groups. Learner Guides also identified that the girls' greater self-confidence and self-value enhanced their ability to participate in community committees and leadership positions in the future:

To girls, I teach them to be confident that even if they stand in the group of men, they must be confident enough to speak out their ideas. For instance, one of the students was so cowardly to the extent that if you made her stand to answer a question in a class she would start crying. I take my time to talk to her until she completely changes and has confidence in herself. I believe in the years to come they can stand in large meetings, participate, and even contest for political seats. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

The forums for running for government, chairman, ward, even for council are also allowed. They have also reduced the contempt of saying that a councillor must be a man. Anyone can run. Even I will run.... All of this has been caused by us being confident. I think it is this education that we ... received in peer education. Society also considers that even we women can [run for leadership positions]. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Learner Guides also identified being able to influence other women in their community by encouraging them to participate in local leadership opportunities:

I have advised them [women in this village] to see that they can [compete for leadership positions], and some have taken initiatives. For example, in the village leadership, the deputy chairperson of the ruling party is a woman. She previously came and told me, she wanted to compete for that position, I told her, 'Mother, you can, only if you make yourself helpless, they will see you as unfit, but if you have courage, you will be able to stand and speak up' and that's what she did. (Female, Learner Guide, Kilolo)

Very few women participate in village meetings compared to men ... Very few participate but as it is my role, I will do my best to advise them to participate on the community issues and not to wait for men to make the decisions for them. (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Learner Guides also believed that they are seen as role models to other women in the community to be able to stand up for themselves:

In the past women lacked confidence in themselves that they have a voice, men made all the decisions ... I have contributed as a woman when I stand and tell others that I passed through some things and overcame them and now I am confident. Why should they not have confidence too as I am, [so] that they fight to get their rights? (Female, Learner Guide, Pangani)

Regarding educating women on the issue of running for local government, we tell them not to be afraid to dare because if you dare, you can. Because we women are considered to be a role model in society. When they see our behaviour ... they want to be like CAMFED mentors to lead in their governments. They want to do so because of their performance, they see it as a success; we have reduced violence in the communities, put in place vigilante [sungusungu] protection, [we] give them advice. So they think we are fit to lead. (Female, Learner Guide, Kibaha)

Summary

This section identifies that the Learner Guides engage with a range of community structures including ones directly related to CAMFED as well as within their schools, families, and wider community. These engagements were mostly mutually beneficial forms of engagement support Learner Guides to develop skill sets in terms of educating others and leading, provide them with a social network to support them in their work and life, support their opportunities to engage with leadership roles and work within their communities. These aspects play an important role in enabling Learner Guides to have the confidence, networks, skill sets, and respect from the community to effectively engage with and shift gender social norms.

Overall, Learner Guides believe that they are influencing a range of gender social norms across all six areas of education, early pregnancy, early marriage, gender-based violence, paid/unpaid work and decision-making and leadership (Table 9). In education they believe that they are shifting the norm that girls need less education than boys by educating the community on the value of education. In early pregnancy they believe they are shifting a range of gender social norms around early pregnancy, including ones which inhibit the ability of students to return to school, by providing sex and reproductive education, safe spaces in the classroom to ask questions, and being role models to girls. In early marriage they identify that they are shifting norms around participating in coming-of-age ceremonies and ideas that girls are ready for marriage when they reach puberty by challenging cultural practice and educating that girls need to complete education before getting married. They believe they are shifting norms about gender-based violence by teaching about it, shifting norms about paid work by teaching women a trade and being a role model, as well as shifting norms around decision-making and leadership by increasing girls' confidence and being a role model. There were limited comments on how they felt they were contributing to unpaid work.

Table 9: Gender social norms Learner Guides believe they are challenging and how

Area	Norm	Learner Guide challenge
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls need less education than boys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educating the girls and community on the value of education
Early pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex is a taboo topic Family planning is immoral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing children a safe space to ask question, and more female teachers Providing education about puberty in class
Early marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls should participate in coming-of-age initiation ceremonies Girls are ready for marriage when they reach puberty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging cultural practices that keep girls out of school Educating that girls should finish school first
Gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female disobedience deserves punishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching what counts as gender-based violence in class
Paid/unpaid work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women should look after the family Men should generate the income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching women a trade; being a role model
Decision-making and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men are above women Men have the final say in decisions Men are the head of the households Women cannot lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving gender relations between boys and girls in school Increasing the confidence of girls, and encouraging them to say no Being a role model by leading, and improving self-confidence of girls

Source: Phase 2 individual interviews

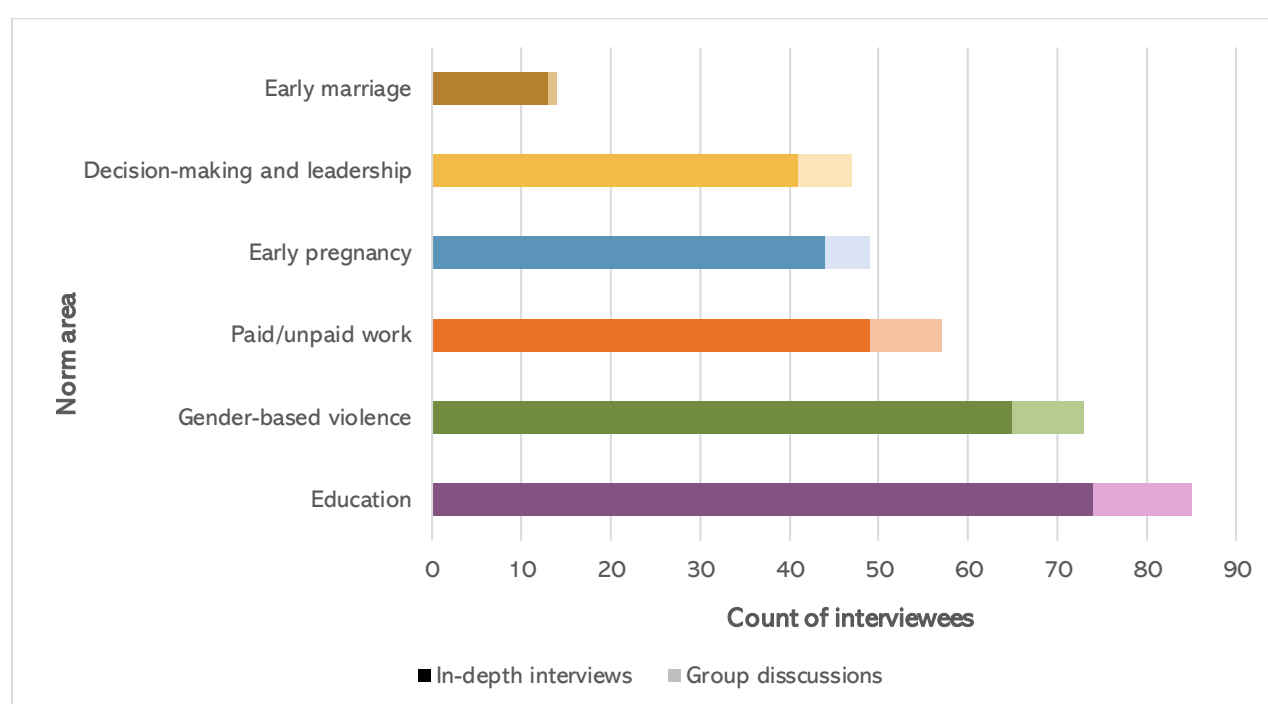
6. To what extent did Learner Guides help shift gender social norms?

The third research question focused on the extent to which community groups and members attributed shifts in gender social norms to Learner Guides, and their views on how Learner Guides were able to achieve change. The section also presents other change mechanisms identified by interviewees which were viewed as contributing to shifts in gender social norms.

What is changing and why?

The majority of community groups and members (95 out of 146 in-depth interviews and 16 out of 32 group discussion groups) consider that Learner Guides are contributing to shifting gender social norms. This is most notable in the areas of education and gender-based violence (Figure 9). Of those who did not directly attribute any change to Learner Guides, but rather identified other reasons for change, 10 (out of 16) were Islamic and Christian religious leaders, and three (out of 7) were traditional leaders across all four districts.

Figure 9: Extent to which Learner Guides change gender social norms



Note: Numbers relate to the count of interviewees and group discussions who mentioned the theme at least once

Source: Phase 3 group discussions and in-depth interviews

Several community members identified that it is important that Learner Guides are part of the community as this enables them to support shifts in beliefs and behaviours, and helps them bridge gaps between the school, parents, and community:

The community listens to them [Learner Guides] because they have built relationships with the community. They can enter deep into our society, educate, and bring about change through these peer mentors. Parents have changed significantly in our community because these mentors have motivated them. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kibaha)

These peer facilitators come from a similar cultural background, and they are more easily accepted when sharing lessons or experiences with their peers ... When these mentors educate the children, they go back and inform their parents that we have been told that girls should study, so they encourage parents to recognise the role of girls in society. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kibaha)

Whilst in the minority, several community members put forward some indications of limitations of the Learner Guides in shifting gender social norms. It was suggested that Learner Guides may be limited in their ability to shift gender social norms because they themselves are embedded into existing cultures and practices:

There is one thing that I see on these Learner Guides, as they are indigenous to the community they are trying their best; but sometimes they engage themselves in the negative traditional practices for the fear of being segregated with the community ... I advise that it will be possible to shift the Learner Guides of this community to work in another community and vice versa so that they can be able to stand firm in the fight against the harmful gender social norms. (Group discussion, School Management Group, Pangani)

Two other community members noted that Learner Guides would be more effective if they had more confidence and economic empowerment:

I think one thing that poses a slight challenge for peer mentors is that they lack a bit of confidence. You know, confidence is crucial; you need to be overly confident to face those people [in the community]. I also believe that these peer mentors should be empowered, perhaps economically, to be stronger. (Male, Community Financial Group Member, Kilosa)

The peer educators have good behaviour, and they monitor well, but there's one thing that needs to be looked into. Some are financially empowered while others are not, making it challenging for some to actively engage in community mobilisation. I say they have contributed, although not a very significant amount because they mainly focus on those girls completing primary school. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kibaha)

Two community members identified that not everyone in the community would listen to the Learner Guides:

You will tell a person, you will advise them, but their awareness is very small, because of the globalisation that we have. Just 1 out of 10 will listen to the Learner Guide. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilosa)

Facilitators contribute, but it depends on how the message is received. Some accept it and implement it, while others receive it without implementation they [Learner Guides] add their voices every day, and gradually, things are changing. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

Some community members also suggested that, whilst Learner Guides are supporting shifts by providing education, change is slow:

Peer mentors provide education, and they receive it, but in our community, changes truly take a long time. More needs to be added. Girls still need more. If possible, parents should be enlightened [as] parents lack insight. More education is needed for parents. (Male, Local Leader, Kilosa)

They do have a role, but it's not significant because change is a process. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

This view links to another which indicates that Learner Guides' main influence of change is within the school:

They have their role at school but if it is possible [they] should be empowered to go beyond schools and reach the large community. (Female, School Management Group Member, Pangani)

One group discussion identified that Learner Guides being volunteers may have an impact on how community members perceive them:

The Learner Guides are getting tired, a person volunteers to her [bone]... Our community has the mentality that a person [who] goes to school must have employment. So, [being a] Learner Guide should be a [paid] job. (Group discussion, School Management Group, Pangani)

Connected to this, one interviewee identified that Learner Guides not having formal qualifications may be limiting the Learner Guides' ability to effect gender social norms:

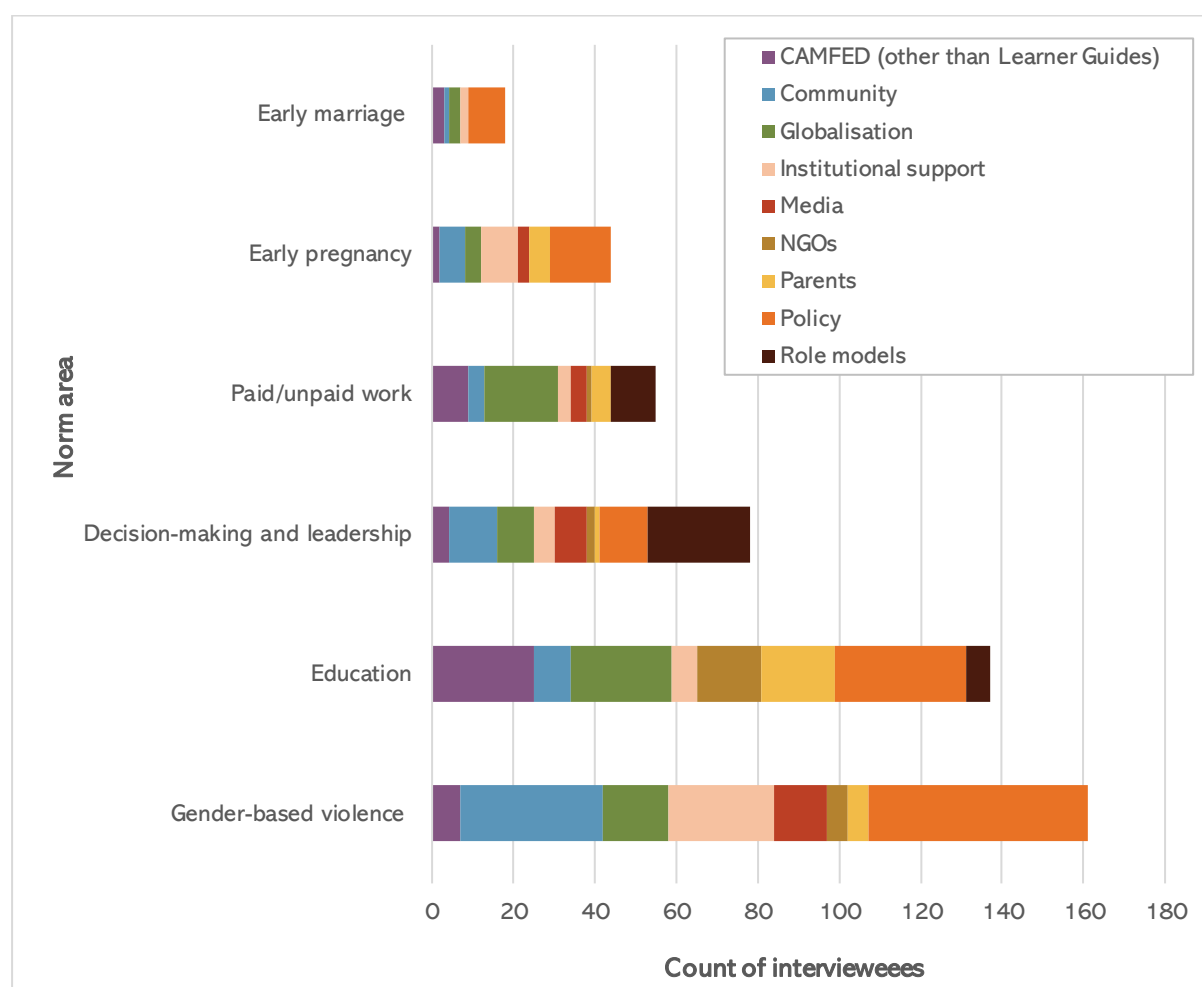
Even peer educators cannot just come and say [that] women should send their children to school ... There are other factors people consider and act upon based on societal norms and the environment they live in But if you look at their [Learner Guides'] achievements, particularly in academic performance, using their 'My Better World' book, it seems good but faces challenges in delivering the message. Because teaching also has its qualifications, and for these CAMFED educators, I don't know how they assess if they are qualified teachers ... I want to emphasise that [this] community is vast, and these peer educators do not have the capacity to convene meetings and talk to all citizens. They mainly engage with students, so through this, there is a slight change. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kibaha)

Interviewees also identified a range of other change mechanisms in addition to Learner Guides that contributed to shifts in gender social norms (Figure 10). These included the following:

- government policies and interventions (referred to as Policy)
- non-governmental organisational activities not including CAMFED (NGO)
- urbanisation, migration and globalisation (Globalisation)
- role of parents (Parents)
- role models other than Learner Guides (Role model)
- CAMFED activities beyond the Learner Guides such as financial support (CAMFED)
- community interventions and engagement (Community)
- support from governance, legal structures, and other institutions (Institutional Support)
- influences from media exposure (Media).

External mechanisms were most frequently noted with respect to gender-based violence and education. For both, government policies and interventions were most often referred to. For gender-based violence, this was followed by community interventions and engagement, and support from governance, legal structures and other institutions. In education, the most frequently identified mechanisms beyond the Learner Guides included government policies and interventions, urbanisation, migration and globalisation, and CAMFED activities beyond the Learner Guides specifically. Policy was also mentioned as a key change mechanism for early pregnancy and early marriage. Role models were most frequently identified as change mechanisms in decision-making and leadership, with urbanisation, migration and globalisation suggested as change mechanisms for paid/unpaid work.

Figure 10: Factors affecting shifts in gender social norms beyond Learner Guides



Source: Phase 3 group discussions and in-depth interviews

Recognising that the changes attributed to Learner Guides do not happen in isolation from this broader environment, the following sub-sections review community member perspectives on how Learner Guides are supporting and influencing changes in gender social norms. Each sub-section reviews community members perspectives on how these shifts are also influenced by the other change mechanisms identified, and if and how Learner Guides are contributing to these wider change mechanisms.

Education

74 of the 146 in-depth interviewees and 11 of the 32 group discussions identified that Learner Guides were contributing to shifts in education. Interviewees indicated that Learner Guides are contributing to changes in improving girls' academic performance and attendance:

Many female students, I believe, are the top performers. We know all this has happened because of the hard work of Learner Guides. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kilolo)

They teach them not to continue with bad behaviours and improve their school attendance, which results in good performance. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kibaha)

They are very helpful in the community when we face issues of harassment against the children or dealing with the students that do not want to attend school. They are showing the community the way they should take. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Pangani)

Comments on if and how Learner Guides were supporting boys' and girls' engagement with each other in the classroom were limited, but one interviewee identified that Learner Guides are contributing to changes in how boys and girls interact with each other in the classroom by encouraging them to sit and learn together. The interviewee also identified that this change contributes to increasing girls' confidence:

They [the Learner Guides] teach a lot of things in the society. For example, in the past, in secondary schools, it was not likely to see male and female students sitting at the same desk; but now, due to education, when you enter a classroom, you find boys and girls have not been separated. So, that indicates there are changes as girls are confident. Unlike in previous years, a girl sitting near a boy was considered unacceptable, but now it's normal. (Female, Community Finance Group Member, Kilolo)

Of the 146 interviewees, 34 identified that the Learner Guides are providing education to both students and the community. Interviewees noted that this includes sexual and reproductive health education entrepreneurial skills, and educating students on self-awareness and confidence. An important shift that 27 interviewees identified is that Learner Guides are advocating for the value of education for all children within their communities:

In this community, Learner Guides have been involved in advocating for the community to change its mindset regarding discriminating practices in supporting their children. Here, there are two aspects: we can't say only females were discriminated against, but in our context, even males sometimes faced difficulties because they were employed to herd [livestock] instead of going to school. So, Learner Guides have been involved in educating the community that all children need education, and parents should ensure their children are educated. (Male, Parent Support Group Member, Kilolo)

Most of the interviewees who identified that Learner Guides were advocating for the value of education also indicated that they play an important role in teaching and advocating for girls in particular to be educated:

They [Learner Guides] have been changing the community's perspective to see that a girl child has the opportunity for education and can go to school and study unlike in the past ... There are changes nowadays in beliefs ... because of these Learner Guides educating parents, meaning nowadays education is equal, that both girls and boys go to school. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

In a previous time, the community members had a thought that educating female students is waste of resources; but through [the] Learner Guides, they changed the perception as they now view [that] in educating female students there are advantages. [Learner Guides] give examples of themselves that 'You see we have studied, and we help our families, relatives and society'. So, you find through that education, the society understands that to educate females is not waste of money, there are advantages. You find now many of them are sending female students to school. (Female, School Management Group Member, Kilolo)

The most basic thing is the change of society's attitude towards the girl child. You know these Learner Guides in the society are role models. Many people like to learn from them due to what

they have achieved. So, the society changes its attitude and sees if it sends a child to school and gets an education, she can reach a certain place. (Group discussion, School Management Group, Kilolo)

Several interviewees identified that Learner Guides were supporting this notion by being role models to both girls and community members:

Most of the girls were not serious with education because they see others that graduated [from school] and have nothing. However, now as they see the Learner Guides who are from their schools, they [have] graduated and trained and now are standing in [front of] the black board and [are] teaching them and then they are inspired. Therefore, they inspire the girls to have self-awareness and know what they are doing. Parents in the community also are inspired by these girls and the Learner Guides. [They think that] that if girls are encouraged and given opportunities, they can do something positive for the community. (Female, School Management Group Member, Pangani)

Some of these peer mentors have faced certain challenges in the past, so they educate their fellow girls not to go through the paths they took before they were helped by CAMFED. Therefore, our daughters are highly motivated through these peer mentors, and they pay close attention when these mentors talk to them ... they have brought changes. Through educating these children in schools, they have [educated] parents. So, when these children are educated and educate their parents about what they have learned from the peer educators, changes occur. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kibaha)

These comments point towards a virtuous circle of providing girls with education which encourages shifts in gender social norms around what girls are capable of, what they can achieve, and therefore what their roles are in society. Interviewees identified that Learner Guides are part of this process:

They [Learner Guides] have been educating the community to shift from negative perspectives to positive ones. They emphasise that a girl is part of the community and has the ability to do what a man can do. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

The first importance is that they [Learner Guides] bring motivation, especially they motivate girl children to love education. But another thing that I have seen, they bring the community closer to the school. Because, when the child graduates here, goes back to the community, but is still attached to the institution she came from, it means there is a good bridge. It creates hope in them that someday they could return as teacher. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kilosa)

While Learner Guides are seen to be contributing to shifts in some norms related to education, there are other factors which are contributing to the momentum of change. 32 interviewees identified that government policies and support were playing a large role in supporting girls to attend and complete school with several referencing policies around free education and punishment for parents who fail to send their child to school:

There are changes due to the punishments provided to parents, especially when their children left to Dar es Salaam while they have been selected to join secondary school. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

Due to the government's declaration or policies that the parent should not be concerned about the issue of children's education, [saying that] the child should come to school even if they do not have a uniform, they will get it later on along the way, has made many parents motivated to allow their children to go to school. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kilosa)

Ever since the free education policies have started to be practised, I have seen it has brought about a significant change because all the girls and boys and parents are satisfied. (Group Discussion, School Management Group, Kilosa)

Of the 146 interviews, 25 interviewees identified globalisation as a change mechanism. Interviewees largely spoke about how communities were becoming increasingly aware of the value of education through processes of globalisation, urbanisation, and increased migration. 25 interviewees also identified that the CAMFED programme overall was a change mechanism. Here interviewees primarily spoke about how the financial support CAMFED provided girls was supporting an increase in girl engagement and completion of school:

They encourage students to go to school by giving them bicycles and clothes and now they [girls] cling to education. (Female, Community Financial Group Member, Pangani)

It was mentioned that CAMFED is a company that assists students in schools by providing educational materials. I have seen instances where they bring bicycles, and students who are part of the programme receive these items. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

In the context of shifting gender social norms in ways that benefit girls' education, several interviewees indicated concerns that boys were not being supported to complete education:

In the past, a male child was considered better than a female child, but now, [through] the education that has passed, I can say, is a mistake because it has led to neglecting the male child, and society deals with the female child. Thus, in the future, we will find that the male child has been left behind, creating a significant gap ... The male child has begun to be neglected. In my view, both should be empowered so that one is not left behind, as it is now. Therefore, balancing is crucial to empower both. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kibaha)

Girls receive aid such as school bags, shoes, uniforms, and sometimes even transportation, creating a gap for boys in the community. As a result, we are creating a situation where girls are preferred over boys, and currently, boys are the leading group in school dropouts. The problem might be due to a lack of support for boys. (Group Discussion, Village Development Committee, Kibaha)

Early pregnancy

Out of 146 interviewees, 44 indicated that they believed Learner Guides were supporting shifts in the reduction in early pregnancy. 28 of these 44 identified that Learner Guides were contributing by providing education, largely in the form of sex and puberty education, and by educating both students and the community about family planning:

As Learner Guides provide education, starting from schools, continuing to secondary schools, and reaching the community through meetings and discussions, people gradually become aware. If you were unaware and didn't have an idea about family planning, someone entering a family now knows about it because they received education. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

They provide education of self-awareness for the student to understand who they are, and self-awareness starts from [understanding] their body ... They focus on the girl child, because she is at risk of getting [an] unwanted pregnancy, causing her to dropout, [and have an] early marriage. So, they target girl children because of that, and I should say that they are helping a lot on that ... They teach that 'NO! You should not engage in sexual activities during this time for one, two, three, four or five consequences'. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kilosa)

I see that they help girls and boys by giving them gender awareness; how to use sanitary pads and how to have self-awareness ... They help a lot in teaching women about family planning. Even if they find an expectant mother who is not attending a clinic, then they educate her [on] the importance of attending clinic. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

The cases of childhood pregnancies were so many and now [these] have diminished ... They [Learner Guides] are helping a lot ... acting as informers and by sensitising people about gender-based violence helps a lot ... For instance, in the area of early pregnancies there is a big change. They taught the children the effect of early pregnancies and helped a lot to reduce the number of early pregnancies. (Male, School Management Group Head Member, Pangani)

One interviewee from the Village Development Committee in Kilolo identified that Learner Guides supported the local clinic with awareness days for the community about family planning.

Two community members contradicted these views by saying that Learner Guides did not teach about family planning because they cannot reach the community:

They do not have influence on this because they have no means to reach the community and educate them about family planning. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Pangani)

Only two interviewees directly reported that Learner Guides were encouraging girls who got pregnant in school to return to school after their pregnancy:

They [Learner Guides] advise them by informing them [girls] [that] getting pregnant is not the end of education. You can give birth and continue schooling. It's like someone who was studying here got pregnant, and might have held onto the idea of education. But now she thinks, 'I got pregnant while in this school, it will be shameful for me go back to study at [this same school]' Those Learner Guides advise her by saying 'It's not necessary to study at [that same school]. If your child is old enough; you can go anywhere, and the child can receive care while you pursue education'. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

There are those who got pregnant in school and, after giving birth, they were advised to go and get training. In Tanzania, typically, when a child gets pregnant in a family, they are often left without support. However, CAMFED still supports them. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Kilosa)

Changes in early pregnancy were also attributed to shifts in policies by 15 interviewees, particularly those around perpetrators being sent to prison. They were also attributed to increased engagement with family planning or contraceptives. Whilst it is unclear from the interviews to what extent adolescents are engaging with family planning and contraceptives, interviewees indicate that men are being pressured by local clinics and government mandates to go to the clinic with their wives:

In the past, fathers wouldn't go to clinics. They would say 'Just go, my wife'. But now, things are changing because the government is enacting laws. If you don't go to the clinic with your wife, you can't be tested. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

The village officers instruct mothers to attend with their partners. [For] those who fail to do so, there is a fixed amount to be paid as a penalty of a fine. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

Poverty was also mentioned several times in conjunction with an increasing engagement in family planning, with comments suggesting that families are unable to look after as many children as before

due to economic hardship. One interviewee identified a link between this perception and the law which makes education compulsory for all children:

I cannot say my wife should have ten children because circumstances are different now. Education was not compulsory in the past, but now we pay millions for education. If I say otherwise, I will face difficulties. (Female, School Management Group Member, Kilolo)

Early marriage

Of the 146 interviews, 11 interviewees identified the Learner Guides were directly supporting shifts in gender social norms in relation to early marriage, although one indicated that they have not focused too much about how to get married. *(Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo).*

Two of the 11 interviewees indicated that Learner Guides provided students with testimonies which advocate against early marriage:

They don't just teach. They try to give ... testimony of early marriages ... It helps a lot [as] they are provided with real life examples about the good and bad. It helps them a lot ... There are laws which protect children [from] early marriages, but the role of Learner Guides is still needed. (Male, Parent Support Group Member, Kilosa)

Seven of the 11 interviewees indicated that Learner Guides are contributing to shifting gender norms in early marriage through educating students and community and advising against early marriage:

They provide education to children who haven't reached the age of marriage, and for those getting married early, they educate by prohibiting it. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

We Muslims, our religion allows marrying at a young age when a girl reaches puberty, but these Learner Guides help by saying, 'This world has changed. It's okay, the religion says so, but in these times, these things are not there'. (Female, Local Leader, Kilolo)

Two of the 11 interviewees indicated that Learner Guides have intervened to stop early marriage ceremonies:

There are no child marriages here anymore, everybody in the community fears another and the credit goes to Learner Guides. In one incident a girl of sixteen years was about to get married because she had failed her standard seven exams so they thought they should [get her] married. On the day of the wedding, the Learner Guide learned about that and reported it to the Ward Development Officer. The father was called to the Ward Office and commanded to call off the wedding. (Female, Community Financial Group Member, Pangani)

There was minimal mention of other change mechanisms contributing to shifts in early marriage with just two interviewees identifying policies and interventions playing a role in reducing early marriage rates *(Male, Local Leader, Kilolo and Group Discussion, Village Development Committee, Pangani)*, and one indicating that the reduction of early pregnancies may be related to reductions in early marriages *(Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo).*

Gender-based violence

65 of the 146 interviewees and eight of the 32 group discussions identified that Learner Guides were supporting shifts in gender-based violence. Of these, 53 indicated that Learner Guides were supporting shifts by providing some form of education to students and the wider community. Many

indicated that Learner Guides were providing education to students about what counted as gender-based violence and when to say no:

In terms of their education, they go through various areas starting from schools. They educate the girls: 'If a man calls you, don't go. Avoid teenage pregnancies, be cautious'. (Male, Community Financial Group Member, Kilolo)

They [Learner Guides] have done it through the provision of education to girls, emphasising the importance of recognising some signs, such as a teacher behaving in a certain way that triggers sexual violence [and] encouraging girls to report such behaviour to a matron or herself [the Learner Guide]. So, Learner Guides have built confidence to girl students on how to handle violence related behaviours. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

These educators [Learner Guides] have helped girls a lot to teach them self-awareness. They show her the right path for a girl to get a chance to cross many hurdles as she is trained to realise that first she has to understand when to say no. (Group Discussion, School Management Group, Kilosa)

These comments have strong links to improving girls' confidence (see Section 7) which can help them to say no to sexual advances, but also indicate that Learner Guides are helping the shift in the gender social norm that sex is a taboo topic which was identified with one group discussion indicating that Learner Guides are supporting the normalisation of discussions around relationships between men and women:

There have been changes because in the past, when you sat down with a child and talked to them about the relationship between a man and a woman, they found it strange... but now, since they are told in school by their fellow girls [Learner Guides], they see this as a normal thing for a girl. (Group Discussion, Community Financial Group, Pangani)

Interviewees also reported that Learner Guides were providing education both to the students and to the community in terms of how and where to report acts of gender-based violence and encouraging people to do so:

They [the Learner Guides] sensitise girls and boys about gender-based violence and inspire them to report to them any incident. Now girls are sharp in reporting gender-based violence cases and the Learner Guides do their best to deal with that information. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

They [the Learner Guides] sensitise the community to know what to do in cases of gender-based violence ... and to be courageous in reporting those cases ... They appear in the meetings and educate people... [and] parents [in] school meetings. (Female, School Management Group Member, Pangani)

The contribution I understand the most is that these peer mentors have helped prevent gender-based violence against all children, both boys and girls. Nowadays, reports on child abuse are being made, thanks to CAMFED peer educators who have made the community brave enough to report such incidents. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kibaha)

Three interviewees specifically identified Learner Guides speaking out against and challenging harmful traditions such as coming-of-age ceremonies which are closely related to gender-based violence activities, and early marriage and early pregnancy:

They share with us that it is not good to take a child out of school for the purpose of engaging them in traditional practices of initiating them into womanhood. (Female, Community Financial Group Member, Pangani)

Their importance lies in changing harmful customs and traditions in the community. That's their significant role. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Kibaha)

One comment also reported that Learner Guides provided a safe space for people to bring their concerns about such practices to them:

They criticise those traditions, like the cultural practices of subjecting young girls to rites of passage [Unyago]. I don't think those things really help in nurturing the girl child. What do you gain from it? ... Those who were trained [the Learner Guides] are very close to the people. It's easy for someone to take their problem to them. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

Throughout all the interviews, female genital mutilation was only mentioned three times. One of these interviewees indicated the My Better World programme delivered by the Learner Guides taught against this (Female, Islamic Religious Leader, Kilolo), another mentioned that female genital mutilation has reduced since CAMFED has been working in the community (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo), and the final one indicated that:

Different organisations are working in our community, and each have a programme of educating residents about gender-based violence and hence our understanding ... Some communities have stopped the practice of genital mutilation on their girls because they are afraid of the law taking action against them. (Group Discussion, School Management Group, Pangani)

Nine interviewees identified that Learner Guides had intervened in cases of gender-based violence with some identifying that Learner Guides made local authorities aware of any cases:

If the situation persists, these Learner Guides ... use their influence to engage the government to intervene and help fathers understand the importance of mothers and children in the family. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

Peer counsellors contribute significantly. When they see violence happening, they take action and intervene. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Pangani)

This view was supported by the indication that Learner Guides provide students with a safe space not only to discuss and learn about gender-based violence as previously indicated, but also to report any assaults:

They [Learner Guides] are educating the children in schools, so even if something is done to them, [and] they are not satisfied, they speak about it. They are not afraid because they are not treated differently than before. A person can be treated to something strange and stay with it, that is, he/she is only hurt by what is in his/her heart, but now she/he will speak and tell, so she is even afraid of his safety, but now, due to the education provided, she/he knows that 'I will tell it to someone and she will report it to a certain place, so it will be safe'. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kilosa)

Other factors were mentioned as having an influence over reducing gender-based violence. For example, 54 interviewees identified that shifts in rates and norms of gender-based violence were due to policies. This was also most frequently identified as the change mechanism behind shifts in early pregnancy (15) and early marriage (9).

Many interviewees indicated that policies enforcing prison sentences and punishments of perpetrators have made people increasingly fearful of being caught and punished. In several cases this was linked to increases in media and the ability to record and take photographs to support reporting and being punished should they engage in acts of gender-based violence:

The issue of gender-based violence has become a national matter ... The government, at the city level, has been actively monitoring it. It has become a permanent agenda even in meetings. So, the community has already been educated, and when they notice any incident, any form of violence against a child, woman, or man, they report it. So, the relevant authorities have been taking action. So, this taking of action now makes the community afraid of gender-based violence. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Kilolo)

Those who committed rape have been taken into custody; they've been sentenced to 30 years [in prison] right there ... after the government set a very strict strategy: 'If you, as a parent, want to settle your child's pregnancy here, we will prosecute you'. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

Interviewees also indicated that there were a range of other actors providing education and awareness campaigns including local leaders, non-governmental organisations, community groups, and government programmes such as the School Safe Programme (Male, Parent Support Group Member, Kilosa).

35 interviewees identified that the community took action against acts of gender-based violence, and 26 identified that there was institutional support in place for reporting gender-based violence. It is likely that the community awareness and engagement identified by interviewees is connected to national policies and campaigns.

Paid/unpaid work

Of the 146 interviews, 57 interviewees indicated that Learner Guides are contributing to shifts in norms relating to paid work. Nine of these indicated that Learner Guides have been contributing by providing students and the wider community with entrepreneurship education and skills. Interviewees indicated that Learner Guides provide these skills to girls and to the community through public meetings.

16 interviewees said that Learner Guides were role models in the community because they are women who have been able to successfully engage in entrepreneurial activities:

These Learner Guides have a significant contribution because they themselves do business and keep livestock, so when the community looks at them, they learn from what they see them doing, so it's not necessary for them to directly interact with them. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Kilolo)

They [Learner Guides] work hard, they do a lot of manual work. Community members, they change as they see what is being done by them. You can hear them saying, 'You see this is a woman, but she is doing all these, and I would like my daughter to be like her' and the other members also tend to imitate them. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

Even a child here, observing the Learner Guide making soap, sees her working in a shop. By doing this, she earns and gets an education after finishing school. (Female, School Management Group Member, Pangani)

One interviewee indicated that the Learner Guides have played an important role in creating and supporting community groups for economic empowerment:

You find now, due to peer educators [Learner Guides] having their own projects and incomes, some people copy ... So, changes are there ... before Learner Guides existed, people weren't involved in entrepreneurship, there were no groups. When Learner Guides came and educated people about forming groups for economic empowerment, they brought changes. People have been able to earn income from the education given by Learner Guides. (Female, School Management Group, Member, Kilolo)

Two interviewees also indicated that Learner Guides are having some influence in shifting norms around gendered job roles, primarily by successfully engaging in job roles which are traditionally for men:

In volunteering in public development projects, they [Learner Guides] participate [in] doing hard jobs just like men so they ... inspire other women to do the same and act as a catalyst for change... They have a great influence because they have access to their own money and control it. We are witnessing them doing different small seasonal businesses for instance, during the mango harvest, they are selling mangoes. Previously it was a men's job to run after the passenger buses selling soft drinks and other things, but now we are seeing them [Learner Guides] doing it and they earn their own income. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

They contribute by trying to eliminate those beliefs that maybe a woman cannot do other jobs ... The role they play is to eliminate those beliefs that people have built, that a woman cannot carry bricks, perhaps mix concrete, or even ride a motorcycle ... Because they may believe that riding a motorcycle is only for men but, in reality, even women can ride motorcycles. So, it's the responsibility of these peer advisors to see that they eliminate those beliefs and create a new perspective. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Pangani)

The interviews indicate that Learner Guides can contribute to challenging gender social norms about only men being able to earn an income:

They [Learner Guides] are teaching them that the life conditions have changed and women should not just sit and do nothing, but they should work diligently in businesses to produce income and help one another in the community and not be a burden to anybody. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Pangani)

Some interviewees identified that the ability of girls and women to earn their own income may support their capacity to be independent and self-reliant:

Learner Guides provide education for self-reliance, and provide knowledge and skills to individuals so that they can later perhaps manage their own businesses and be independent in making decisions. (Male, Traditional Leader, Kilolo)

I think there is a contribution because Learner Guides can provide education on how to be independent, how to earn income, and break free from dependency. (Male, Community Financial Group Member, Kilolo)

They [Learner Guides] advise, even if you've finished school, you should know there is a way to be independent. Start being independent. That's why now you'll find many mothers with nice houses. A mother may not have a husband, but she has a house. She continues her business and buys bricks to build; she doesn't rely on a husband. (Male, Local Leader, Pangani)

Whilst not as strong as in the areas of education and gender-based violence, interviewees also identified other mechanisms of change aside from the Learner Guides. 18 identified that globalisation was contributing to shifts in women's ability to engage with work by seeing other women working and having increased authority and freedom to engage in employment opportunities:

Due to globalisation, women are now involved in every aspect of seeking and owning money. In the past, women had no authority, but now, they have their own initiatives. (Male, Village Development Committee Member, Pangani)

It is the effect of globalisation. The world becomes like a village through media. Now we see in other communities there are no differences between men and women, that both can do any work. (Male, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

Cultural practices and traditions differ in various places; that's why we say the government has been helping a lot, gradually assisting communities. For example, if we move from here to the highways, a woman may be driving, and she will load heavy items at the back. In such places, women are doing everything, unlike in our area where the traditional norms restrict women. So, if we adopt those changes here, we will become more [like] normal people. (Male, Local Leader, Kibaha)

Several interviewees indicated that there had been a shift in gendered roles due to poverty, with comments indicating that women only take on traditionally male jobs roles out of necessity rather than choice:

Women did not use casual labour so much in this community. But now it has become more prevalent due to the hardships of life. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Pangani)

They could be going there because they do not have an alternative. Imagine a girl child working in the bar just to enable her family. They have chosen this because they do not have any other option. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilosa)

Linked to globalisation, 12 interviewees attributed the shifts in paid work to role models with comments that speak to a momentum of change which encourages women to have the opportunity, confidence, and network to engage with generating an income:

I can say my belief has developed because I see successful women, and as a woman, it makes me feel that we, too, can stand up and do something. For example, when I first had the idea to start a business, I wondered how people would perceive me when I start selling samosas. Will they accept me, or will they prefer my friend? But over time, as I see other women doing business successfully, it gives me confidence, and I stand up and start my own business ... They are changing because we see women standing up now, joining savings groups, and participating in various groups. We, women, join these groups for the prosperity of our families. (Female, Community Finance Group Member, Kilolo)

As women engage in different professions, it encourages other women to emulate what they see. So, the community gains strength in learning from others ... The education provided in schools has altered perceptions, with subjects like mathematics encouraging girls to own money. (Male, Parent Support Group Member, Kibaha)

One interviewee indicated that when women and girls engage with paid work, it can lead to shifts in gender social norms around women's capability and prescribed roles of looking after the family and home:

The significant change is in how people perceive girls, especially in the work they do. Some have even built houses for their parents, showing that a girl can achieve things. This has led to changes not just in mindset but also in action, proving that she is not just someone's wife or a caregiver but can achieve something and benefit others. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kibaha)

Decision-making and leadership

Of the 146 interviews, 47 interviewees indicated that Learner Guides are supporting shifts in norms related to decision-making. 21 of these interviewees indicated that they were helping them to develop self-confidence both in school and beyond. Comments indicated that the support Learner Guides provide girls in developing confidence in school supports their longer-term ability to make decisions and hold leadership positions:

Let's say these educators [Learner Guides] have provided education, once someone decides to do it, they already have confidence due to the foundation they've received. If they hadn't had that foundation, they might have been afraid to do it, but once they have the foundation, they have their thing and they go ahead to do it. (Male, Community Financial Group Member, Kilolo)

Not only in academic performance but also in self-expression – they [Learner Guides] have built confidence. The confidence of female students has significantly increased. Here, even in leadership positions, a female student as head [girl] is more impressive than a male student. ... With the presence of Learner Guides, many girls have gained confidence. In the past, girls and women were given instructions within the household, and there was no room for them to express themselves... Girls were afraid to do certain things, fearing they would be seen as assertive, but now they are doing them. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kilolo)

In fact, these peer educators [Learner Guides] are very helpful. We have always known that when we come to select school leaders, you find that a girl has come forward. When we interview her in the panel of teachers, the girl gives us confident answers and says 'I have a chance to be the head girl of the school because I am not different from the boys. First of all, it is my right to apply for this position because I have the ability and I believe I will do well in my role as a head girl, even if I go to the community I should have enough experience in leadership.' And we have really seen a change in that girls are brave [enough] to compete for leadership positions. (Male, School Management Group Member, Kilosa)

Comments from 15 interviewees also suggest that many Learner Guides participate in community leadership meetings and committees. This inspires and encourages other women to participate in and speak up in community meetings, and even run for leadership posts in community committees:

The contribution exists because these women [Learner Guides] have engaged in these activities, and even though the community may have a negative perception, they believe that someone who has the courage and confidence to engage in such activities will not achieve results after a few months. They may think that the person will not have positive outcomes, but those who engage in these activities prove otherwise ... Their [Learner Guides] contribution is there as some have completed their education and are now part of committees, like being the secretary in the land council. So, being in the land council, which deals with significant land conflicts, is seen as a tough and sensitive role. (Male, Parent Support Group Member, Kilolo)

These Learner Guides also tend to visit us in our group. When we meet them, they advise us, even if you are an adult, they only give you advice on various issues in life ... At public meetings they are always present ... These Learner Guides have contributed a lot to educating girls and women. They have contributed to a great extent to change women's mindset [in] viewing themselves [as] capable. (Female, Community Financial Group Member, Kilolo)

They [Learner Guides] have influence and they participate in elections and hold different positions in this ward ... Mostly through inspiring women in our meetings not to fear being engaged in leadership positions. (Female, Parent Support Group Member, Pangani)

One thing that has brought about some changes is the increased self-confidence, the courage to make decisions, and even to join various groups ... It's when we give them [Learner Guides] leadership positions, and they, too, are leaders, giving their opinions ... They [Learner Guides] have made a significant contribution in changing the perspective that women cannot hold power. (Group Discussion, Community Based Financial Group, Kilolo)

One interviewee specifically indicated that Learner Guides were teaching community members that women and men should have equal access to, and ownership of, money by saying:

They were educating the community during village meetings. They informed them that both men and women have [the] right to own money. Moreover, they have been called in the Village Office to assist in settling some of the disputes related to financial ownership among couples. So, they assisted by inviting those couples and educating them together. (Female, Village Development Committee Member, Kilolo)

The interviews indicate that Learner Guides are not the sole contributor to changes in norms related to decision-making and leadership. For example, 25 interviewees attributed changes to other role models such as females who are holding leadership positions on local governance structures. Four of these interviewees mentioned that these increases were linked to existing policies about female representation. One interviewee identified that they felt the Learner Guides contribution to these shifts may be somewhat limited as they have joined the communities after the policies were in place:

There could be a contribution, but these Learner Guides came after these committees were already elected. They continue to enlighten the community, but these committees were already in place. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

The same interviewee indicated that women who have been elected as leaders have not been successful:

I can say that women who have been elected have failed to be good examples for their fellow women. So, when women are elected, they fail to show impact on society, and as a result, the community becomes discouraged. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Pangani)

However, several interviewees specifically mentioned that having a female President has been an important influence and inspiration for encouraging females to engage with leadership and decision-making processes with comments such as:

As you can see, the top leader of our country is a woman, Mama Samia Suluhu, and she leads the whole nation... So even in the lower ranks, women are engaged in leadership positions, which is the difference we have now. (Female, Ward Executive Office, Kilosa)

During this time, the President is a woman, Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, it has also brought motivation for women to dare a bit. I see many are coming forward even to contest. In

the past, they didn't even want to contest because they knew this job is for men only, but now there's more courage, even if they are rejected, many have the courage to want to be leaders.
(Group discussion, Community Based Financial Group, Kilolo)

Summary

Overall, our analysis shows that the largest contribution of Learner Guides to change in gender social norms is in education and gender-based violence, while also contributing to paid work and decision-making and leadership. The main ways that Learner Guides are contributing to shifts in gender social norms in these areas is through their ability to engage at grassroots level primarily by providing students and communities with education and awareness, particularly in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and entrepreneurial skills. They are supporting girls and women with increasing self-awareness and self-confidence. Importantly, Learner Guides are regularly referred to as role models within the communities, particularly in the areas of paid work where their ability to generate an income is admired, and in decision-making where they participate in and lead local community groups and committees. Learner Guides are also seen as advocates for equal rights, and equal education.

Learner Guides are identified as being able to contribute to shifts in gender social norms because they are part of the community. However, this was also noted by some as potentially being a limiting factor as they are affected by gender social norms themselves. The narratives also indicate that the community has now seen, through the Learner Guides, that even the most disadvantaged girls can succeed. This also supports roles mentioned by the interviewees such as being a bridge between the community, school, and local leadership, and their role in being able to challenge and intervene harmful traditional practices. However, our analysis also indicates that Learner Guides appear to have less engagement with religious and village leaders, and many of these leaders did not directly attribute change to the Learner Guides.

Learner Guides are contributing to a complex virtuous cycle whereby as girls become educated, so they avoid early pregnancy and early marriage, they can make decisions and be independent, they generate their own income so are not seen as a 'burden', and this shifts their prescribed roles in society.

It also needs to be recognised that Learner Guides are not shifting gender social norms in isolation but are part of a much broader set of factors which are facilitating and catalysing shifts in gender social norms. In education and gender-based violence, government policies are playing an important role in supporting changes, and in relation to work and decision-making and leadership, globalisation and role models are contributing to shifts.

7. Conclusion

Whilst gender social norms that primarily disadvantage girls and women persist, we find that communities believe that many of them are slowly shifting. Our study has shown that Learner Guides are contributing to these shifts. However, they are not the sole reason. Rather, Learner Guides can influence change where they are working in a wider conducive environment, due to other change mechanisms including policies and interventions, support from governance, legal structures and other institutions, role models other than Learner Guides, and urbanisation, migration and globalisation.

In this wider context, Learner Guides are identified as playing an important role in challenging gender social norms, particularly with respect to education and gender-based violence and, to a lesser degree, with respect to paid/unpaid work and decision-making and leadership. Their influence on early marriage and early pregnancy appears to be more limited. These were also not as much of a focus with respect to other change mechanisms. This is in the context of it being legal for 15-year-old girls to get married. While there has been a recent policy shift which allows pregnant girls to return to school, changes in attitudes to the age of marriage have yet to be embedded.

Overall, Learner Guides are supporting changes in gender social norms in several ways. First, they can support change by providing education to students and the wider community particularly in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and entrepreneurial skills. Second, by advocating for the value of education, especially for girls, and the value of girls and women more generally, which provides them with increased self-worth and support from their communities. Third, in some cases, they are identified as challenging and intervening in acts of gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices. Fourth, they act as role models in the community by participating in and leading local community groups, and showing that girls and women can be independent and make decisions.

Learner Guides can effect these changes due to their symbiotic relationships with community structures. Through their role as a Learner Guide, they report feeling more confident and able to make decisions to adopt leadership roles. They also feel that this allows them to be more accepted and respected by the community, as well as having increased opportunities and an improved social network. These improvements in Learner Guides' sense of self-worth are reflected by the communities who report seeing them as role models. This is due in part to their life testimonies of being women from disadvantaged backgrounds who have been able to overcome challenges, and, in many cases, have been seen to have made something of themselves. While Learner Guides are found to have strong links with different community groups overall, local leaders attributed less change to the Learner Guides than other community groups interviewed.

Several community members also raised concerns about boys facing disadvantages in areas such as completing education. They consider this is caused by gender social norms which place pressure on boys largely around needing to earn an income, as well as norms linked to it being shameful for boys and men to report acts of gender-based violence against them.

Learner Guides also face some challenges and potential limitations in their ability to shift gender social norms. Learner Guides report facing some difficulty in influencing shifts in community behaviour and beliefs particularly due to being seen as young. A small number of community members backed this suggesting that Learner Guides may have challenges in getting the community to listen to them. Learner Guides also identified that holding the position of a Learner Guide sometimes caused conflict within their homes, which was linked to tensions about them spending time working as a Learner Guide when gendered roles dictate that they should be undertaking household chores and childcare.

Learner Guides also reported needing permission from their husbands to undertake the role of a Learner Guide. These sentiments echo the observation of a community member that Learner Guides themselves are embedded in existing cultures and practices and are therefore subject to existing gender social norms and consequences of breaking these.

Overall, Learner Guides are part of a virtuous cycle that supports long term shifts in gender social norms, contributing to a range of other change mechanisms including those associated with government policies, other role models in the community and wider society, and forces of globalisation.

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