



Research on the Adaptation of the Life Skills Facilitator Programme in Co-delivery with CAMFED Tanzania



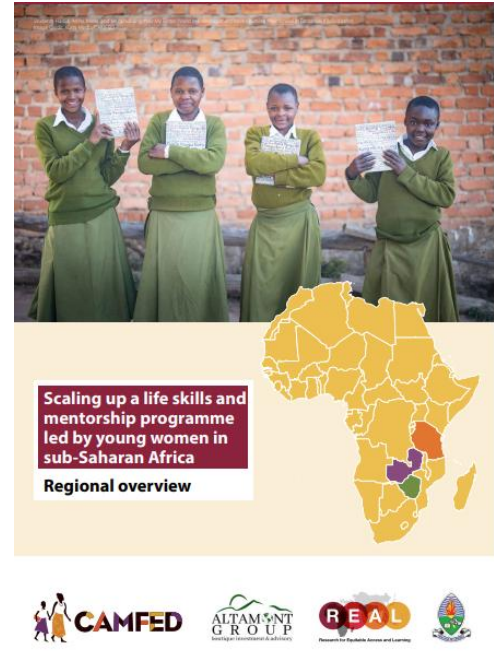
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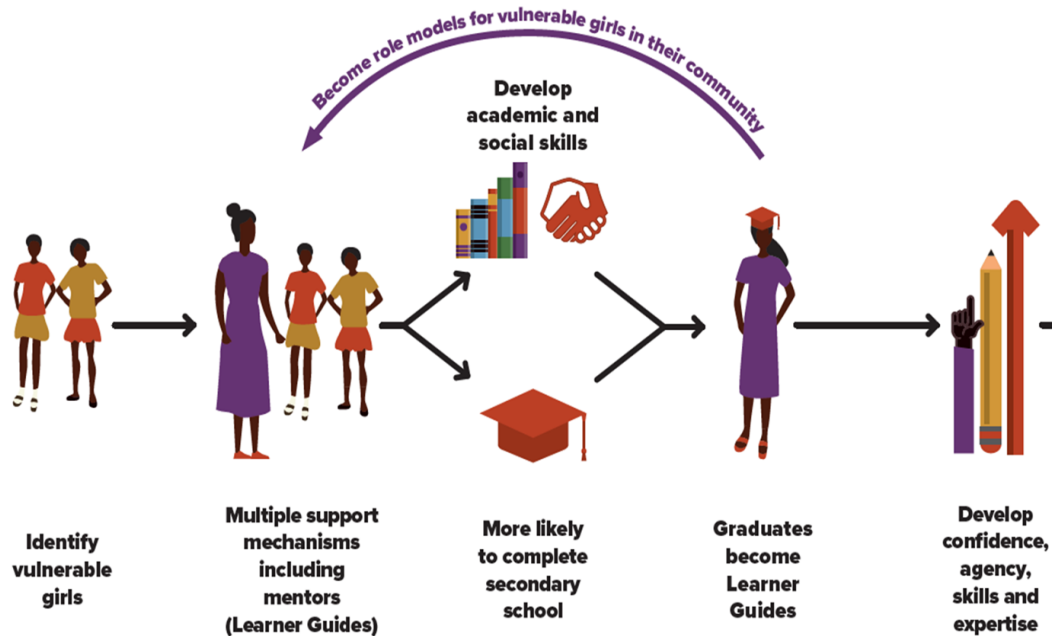
This study builds on our collaborative research

Previous phase: focused **on the national level**,
on scaling CAMFED's **Learner Guide model**

Current phase: focuses on **the middle-tier**,
exploring how the model is being adapted,
embedded, and scaled as **the Life Skills
Facilitator programme** within Tanzania's
education system



CAMFED's Learner Guide model



- **Led by CAMFED**, working in partnership with the government
- Supports vulnerable girls in government secondary schools, including graduates/young women returning to their former schools as **'Learner Guides'**
- Learner Guides deliver the **My Better World life skills curriculum**; work with female government school teachers, **Teacher Mentors**, and **communities** to keep vulnerable children in school and improve their learning; act as peer mentors and role models in communities

The Life Skills Facilitator programme

- **Led by the government**, with support from CAMFED.
- Focuses on **empowering young students with essential life skills** and **addressing critical issues** such as school dropout, early marriages, and economic hardship
- Involves **male and female community volunteers as Life Skills Facilitators** in schools to provide life skills education
- Leverages the government guidance and counselling structure to train **Guidance and Counselling Teachers** in schools to work alongside the Life Skills Facilitators in addressing students' issues
- In districts where CAMFED does not have district-level staff, engages the **District Adult Education Officers (DAEOs)** to oversee programme implementation

The study's research focus

- The ways in which the Learner Guide model has been adapted and adopted at scale as the Life Skills Facilitator programme
- The processes involved at the district-level for operationalising the adapted Life Skills Facilitator programme within schools
- The opportunities and challenges arising in the process of adapting and embedding the Life Skills Facilitator programme within districts, and how these are being addressed

Data collected through key informant interviews

- Two schools selected in three districts: **Morogoro, Chamwino** and **Handeni**
- Interviews conducted with 88 stakeholders:
 - **District:** District Adult Education Officers and District Secondary Education Officers
 - **Ward:** Ward Education Officers
 - **School:** School Heads, Guidance and Counselling Teachers, and Life Skills Facilitators
 - **Influential community members:** such as Parent Teacher Associations, Community Development Committees, Parent Support Groups, village leaders, traditional leaders and religious leaders
 - **CAMFED officials** at the district- and national- levels

Sample

- Total of 88 interviews

- Approx. half female

Respondents	No. of male respondents	No. of female respondents	Total no. of respondents
District Adult Education Coordinators	0	3	3
District Secondary Education Officers	2	1	3
Ward Education Officers	5	1	6
School Heads	3	3	6
Guidance and Counseling Teachers	5	6	11
Life Skills Facilitators	5	7	12
Village leaders	4	2	6
Religious leaders (Christian)	2	6	8
Religious leaders (Muslim)	4	0	4
Traditional leaders	6	0	6
Parent Teacher Association members	2	4	6
Community Development Committee members	3	3	6
Parent Support Group members (Handeni)	3	1	4
CAMFED district-level officials	0	3	3
CAMFED Tanzania officials	1	3	4
<u>Total</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>88</u>



Key Findings

The adapted Life Skills Facilitator programme

Learner Guide model	Life Skills Facilitator programme
Led by CAMFED	Led by the government , with support from CAMFED
Involves young women returning to their former schools as 'Learner Guides'	Involves male and female community volunteers as Life Skills Facilitators
Learner Guides deliver the My Better World life skills curriculum	Life Skills Facilitators deliver the Life Skills curriculum adapted from CAMFED's My Better World curriculum
Engages female government school teachers, called Teacher Mentors	Engages male and female government school teachers, called Guidance and Counselling Teachers

Selection criteria for volunteering Learner Guides and Life Skills Facilitators

Learner Guides	Life Skills Facilitators
Must be a female	Can be a female or male
Must have completed lower secondary education at the school	Must complete at least lower secondary education
Must reside within walking distance from the school	Must live within the village where the school they will be working is located
Must have demonstrated good conduct during her studies at the school	Village vets their social behaviour
Must be between 18 – 25 years	Must be between 18 – 25 years
Must be ready to volunteer to teach life skills lessons to students	Must be ready to volunteer to teach life skills lessons to students

Age criterion likely to pose challenges in recruitment

Fewer young people in the age category who meet the other selection criteria, especially in more marginalised communities

More people above the specified age category wanting to participate

“There is one criterion that is very difficult in rural areas, even for someone who is willing to volunteer, and that is the age criterion.”

- CAMFED district-level staff

“Sometimes people try to deceive e.g. someone might be 30 years old when we only need those aged 18-25.”

- District-level officer, Morogoro

Broadening Life Skills Facilitator recruitment may risk reducing Facilitators' relatability to students' lived experiences

Learner Guide model: volunteers are CAMFED beneficiaries who have graduated from the same schools and overcome similar adversities as their students

“In the new [Life Skills Facilitator] programme, there are no CAMFED beneficiaries...The selection is open to youth, but we advise teachers to bring people who can serve as role models and relate well to the students they are supporting, especially those from challenging backgrounds. If someone comes from a privileged background, they cannot fully relate to the realities of the students and teach them effectively.” (KII, CAMFED official).

The focus on supporting marginalised girls is less explicit in the Life Skills Facilitator programme

- **Both programmes:** supporting vulnerable young people in Tanzania
- **CAMFED's Learner Guide model:** Strong focus on:
 - Supporting marginalised girls
 - Female leadership, including young women being role models and change agents within their communities
- **Life Skills Facilitator programme:**
 - Demonstrating commitment to all children, targeting both adolescent girls and boys
 - Objectives framed in largely gender-neutral terms, potentially diluting the gender-transformative intent under the Learner Guide programme

Different incentives for Learner Guides and Life Skills Facilitators

- **Learner Guides:**
 - **Intrinsic motivation** to give back to schools and communities, being beneficiaries themselves
 - **Monetary incentives** such as access to interest-free loans, access to different opportunities for work from being part of the CAMFED Association network
- **Life Skills Facilitators:**
 - **Small in-kind incentives** from schools such as meals, tea, or permission for minor vending activities and/or local efforts to link Facilitators with short-term paid opportunities (e.g. council duties linked to voter registration)
 - **Non-monetary incentives** such as recognition certificates, letters of commendation, and opportunities for professional development

Lack of financial incentives a key challenge in motivating and retaining Life Skills Facilitators

Despite the provision of small incentives, majority of the respondents described **lack of financial incentives** as a challenge in retaining and motivating Life Skills Facilitators

“The biggest challenge is that these Facilitators do not have any income or payment of any kind...As a result, there is high turnover in schools not because they want to leave, but because they get a [paid] job elsewhere.”

- *Ward Education Officer, male*

“One of the main challenges is the issue of resources. For example, as it is now, when we come every day, we have to use our own money for transport without being paid anything in return. This becomes a challenge because at times it discourages you to the point of feeling like you should stop doing it.”

- *Life Skills Facilitator, male*

Life Skills Facilitator retention is influenced by traditional gender roles

- **Females:** likely to quit programme due to marriage and/or relocation to their husbands' villages; 'not being allowed' to continue their engagement after marriage
- **Males:** expectation to earn an income to run household

"Female Facilitators are often the majority but face more challenges. You find that female Facilitators get discouraged early and decide to leave sometimes due to marriage or other reasons while male Facilitators tend to remain."
- District-level officer, female

"The biggest challenge is that these Facilitators do not have any income or payment of any kind...As a result, there is high turnover in schools not because they want to leave, but because they get a [paid] job elsewhere."
- Ward Education Officer, male

Need to prevent unintended reinforcement of gender stereotypes under the Life Skills programme

- Majority respondents considered the **involvement of male Facilitators beneficial**:
 - Demonstrating that 'life skills are for everyone'
 - Creating openness, allowing both girls and boys to express themselves more freely

“When I was teaching these Form One students, I found that many boys opened up more than the girls. But yesterday, when we attended a session led by a male Facilitator, many girls were the ones who opened up more than the boys.”

- Life Skills Facilitator, female, Chamwino

- However, engagement of male Life Skills Facilitators **risks overshadowing or diminishing the importance of females, including female Facilitators.**

“When a Facilitator is teaching, maybe girls may not be interested to listen from a female Facilitator but be attentive with the male Facilitator. As it is in other places, when he stands as a man, women become more attentive and vice versa.” (Kil, CAMFED district-level official).

- While most respondents observed no differences in activities between male and female Life Skills Facilitators:

A School Head mentioned that male Life Skills Facilitators may emphasise business skills more during life skills sessions, while female Facilitators focus on domestic skills like knitting and cooking, risking reinforcing gender stereotypes.

Community sensitisation more limited under the Life Skills Facilitator programme

Majority of the community-level stakeholders unaware of the Life Skills Facilitator programme

“We leaders including myself, the chairperson, and my committee members should be given enough training and information about this programme: what it is, what it aims to achieve, and what its potential benefits are. Then, from our committee meetings, we could bring it to larger public gatherings and educate citizens. We could explain that such a programme exists in our schools, that it has specific goals, and that every community leader has a role in making it succeed. That approach would help. But given the current situation, since most citizens are not aware of this programme, it becomes very difficult.”

- Member Community Development Committee, male

“Parents and the community need sufficient education so that they understand the programme. Specialised individuals should provide this information to parents and the community, not just the students.”

- Member Parent Teacher Association, female

- **Community sensitisation critical** for:
 - Creating awareness of government ownership
 - Encouraging local ownership and buy-in
 - Continued addressing of challenges such as dropout, early marriage and pregnancy etc.
 - Fostering trust in male Facilitators and overcoming norms around interactions and information sharing

“Like I have said, sometimes parents think wrongly of these males Facilitators that they are engaging in sexual relationships with their girls, which is not correct.”

- Member Parent Support Group, male, Handeni

“One challenge is that, you know, in our village, there are some topics that, if a man talks about them or gives advice, people do not take them seriously. It is expected that such things should be said by a woman. This affects how information is shared. This also happens when male youth cannot talk about certain issues, since the programme mixes boys and girls.”

- Ward Education Officer, male, Chamwino

Successes and challenges in implementing the Life Skills Curriculum

- Majority of respondents described the life skills curriculum as:
 - supplementing the national curriculum
 - practice-oriented and student-centered
 - employing interactive teaching methods
 - involving improved curriculum books

“This curriculum fits perfectly with the curriculum of the Tanzania Institute of Education. It’s just a bit different in approach. The way it is taught makes all the difference. Life skills, for example, are a practical subject that attract the student. If you look at the subject from the Institute, it is more academic but this other one is a subject the student enjoys and relates to.”

- District-level officer, female

Successes and challenges in implementing the Life Skills Curriculum

- Described benefits of the curriculum included:
 - Making learning engaging and interesting
 - Enhancing life skills among students
 - Influencing/reducing harmful traditional practices within communities

“...young children at school were sometimes confined and subjected to practices called “kunemwa” (early marriage). However, after being taught life skills, the students have become more aware and have realised the need to distance themselves from harmful traditions...The key thing now is to continue educating the parents.”

- District-level officer, female

But there are **challenges** in implementation:

- Large student to Facilitator ratios

“Facilitators are much overloaded. For example, one Facilitator is assigned two classes, but in reality one class does not just have 45 students but up to 80 in one grade... Therefore, you find that the Facilitator teaches students from more than two classes... The student population in schools should be considered and divided among Facilitators to have a fair distribution.”

- CAMFED district-level official

- Too few curriculum books for too many students

“What I would say is that more books should be provided. There are few books but many students. This causes even the Facilitators to have a heavy load in the classroom. That is the main issue, that more copies of the curriculum books should be supplied so that our youth can teach more easily.”

- District-level officer, female

The Life Skills Facilitator programme trains the middle-tier, but there are gaps in coverage

- Trainings for district- and ward- level officials
 - importance of teaching life skills to secondary school students
 - capacity building for effective programme implementation
- **However, gaps in training coverage indicate need for closer follow up at the middle-tier**

Strong coordination at the middle tier is evident, but need for greater involvement at the regional level

- Evidence suggests **strong coordination** between district-, ward- and school- levels and CAMFED
- **Need greater involvement at the regional levels** in coordinating activities, demonstrating greater political will and leadership, and promoting community engagement

Programme monitoring is helping identify and respond to local challenges

- Implementation being **monitored at different levels** as also confirmed by CAMFED officials
 - **District and ward:**
 - conduct monitoring visits to schools
 - meet with School Heads, Guidance and Counseling Teachers, and Life Skills Facilitators and address any issues raised.

“...there is close monitoring at the district level. Sometimes, we demand information and have meetings with the District Education Officer or Regional Education Officer. They always have the information which means that there is close monitoring. They make follow ups at all levels, for example, the district office, the ward education officers and School Heads all make follow up. And CAMFED also makes follow up to get the big picture to be able to offer the needed support.”
- CAMFED official

Internal monitoring mechanisms:

- **School Heads:** Day-to-day monitoring
- **Guidance and Counselling Teachers:** Facilitator attendance, use of the Life Skills Curriculum handbook, and alignment of lessons with curriculum
- **Life Skills Facilitators:** Preparing monthly reports for submission to the district office

“As their [Life Skills Facilitator] leader here at the school, I make sure to follow up on their class attendance. We have been doing that.”

- School Head, male

“The Facilitator is involved on the issues of collecting data of the programme and producing a report. And I look through them and sometimes I give them to send to the district office.”

- Guidance and Counselling Teacher, female

“Every month, we must submit a report. Yes, it is mandatory to send the report, and the lesson plan must be written. In that report, you indicate, “In the past month, I taught this and that.”

- Life Skills Facilitator, female

Lessons learnt

Programme objectives and design

- **Scaling the Life Skills programme carries potential for providing benefits for students, schools, parents, and communities, but deeper attention to gender in design and implementation is needed to preserve CAMFED's transformative intent.**
- **Involving male Life Skills Facilitators has benefits, provided gender-sensitivity is ensured in their engagement.**
- **Core elements of the Learner Guide programme, such as peer-to-peer mentoring and the life skills curriculum, are central to delivering the programme's observed benefits at scale.**
- **Programme design should address and be responsive to contextual realities such as government schools' resource constraints including large class sizes and limited facilities.**

Lessons learnt (continued)

Community engagement

- **Community engagement, a cornerstone of CAMFED's Learner Guide programme, is vital for successful implementation of the Life Skills Facilitator programme and needs to be more deeply embedded in design and implementation.**
- **Support from community structures, influential community members, and schools can enhance Life Skills Facilitators' motivation and retention as volunteers.**

Lessons learnt (continued)

Scaling at the middle tier of government

- **Clear implementation arrangements, including well-defined roles, responsibilities, and guidelines, are key to supporting scaling efforts.**
- **Strong institutional networks and multi-level communication at district- and lower levels of government are a key strength.**
- **Participation from middle-tier government officials in decision-making processes is important to illuminate and address challenges in programme implementation.**

Recommendations

- Explicitly **integrating gender considerations** in the Life Skills Facilitator programme's design and implementation.
- Ensuring the programme **design is responsive to government schools' resource constraints** and broader contextual realities.
- Enhancing **community sensitisation through the regional and district offices**, particularly leveraging community structures and influential community members to enhance local understanding and ownership of the programme.
- **At the regional level, establishing feedback mechanisms** with districts, wards, and schools to address local implementation challenges.
- **Generating more comprehensive evidence**, including official monitoring reports at the middle-tier level, to track the programme's progress and benefits over time.

Reflections for scaling programmes with gender equality and social inclusion lens

- Embed **gender equality and social inclusion in scaling processes.**
- **Co create** scaling plans and ensure **multi-level stakeholder engagement** to ensure smooth transition and create strong ownership.
- **Work with and through communities**, leveraging community structures and influential community members, to challenge social norms that restrict young women.
- Ensure **middle tier enablement** through clearly defined roles, training and capacity development and feedback mechanisms for addressing challenges.
- Ensure sufficient technical support in initial phases of scaling, gradually moving towards **systems building.**



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Thank you