



ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Contribution of CAMFED on Vulnerable Girls' Performance in
Tanzania Community Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have engaged in the provision of fundamental socio-economic support aimed at improving education provision in the global south. This study was motivated by the understanding that education is a vital tool for developing both individuals and societies, and that NGOs had been working in many sectors, basic education exclusively. Providing education for all children, specifically in primary and secondary schools, has been a focus of many Governmental and NGOs. The study examines the contribution of the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) on vulnerable girls' performance in Tanzania secondary schools. The study employed qualitative and quantitative approaches under a case study design to examine the contributions of CAMFED in selected five community secondary schools in Kilombero district where CAMFED has operated since 2006. Although CAMFED operates in many districts, beneficiaries in Kilombero conceivably possess a vast majority. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 120 respondents whereas questionnaires, interviews and documentary review were used to collect relevant data. The data were analyzed through content analysis and descriptive statistics. The findings show that the performance of sponsored vulnerable girls was better compared to the non-sponsored vulnerable girls. This implies that the services provided by CAMFED contribute to the improved performance of vulnerable girls. Furthermore, the government should closely cooperate with private organizations to provide education to its citizens on the importance of investing in education for their children. ©authors

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1. Introduction

International non-governmental, non-profit organizations, community-based organisations (CBOs) non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in general have become increasingly important agents of the development process in the countries of the South (Mosia & Lephoto, 2023). NGOs are reasoned to be good at reaching and mobilizing the poor and remote communities in various ways; (i) they help empower poor people to gain control of their lives, and they work with and strengthen local institutions; (ii) they carry out projects at lower costs and more efficiently than government agencies; and (iii) they promote sustainable development; (iv) supporting girls to learn, thrive and lead change (Reza, 2022). NGOs are non-profit, self-governing organizations that aim to improve the lives of individuals who are in desperate need of necessities in society (Omofonmwan & Odiya, 2017). For many years, NGOs have engaged in the provision of support aimed at improving education provision in the world, Africa and Tanzania as well. Providing education for all children, specifically in primary and secondary schools, has been a focus of many governments and NGOs (Mgondam & Ciampi, 2023; Reza, 2022). In Sub-Saharan Africa, NGOs play a critical part in the development process including in the education sector (Adu-Baffoe1 & Bonney, 2021; Terway et al., 2012). Similarly, the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2012) advocates that education is the most effective approach to breaking poverty cycles in Sub-Saharan Africa. Tanzania reflects the situation in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where girls are under-represented in education, particularly at the secondary level. This was one of the reasons for Tanzania's failure to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically goal three, which aimed to “promote gender equality and women's empowerment” (Óskarsdóttir et al., 2016). Reports by Human Rights Watch, highlight that 5-6 per cent of girls complete secondary school education in Tanzania compared to 12-13 per cent of boys (Human Rights Watch, 2017a; 2022b). That is, boys in whatsoever situation are likely to complete secondary education than girls.

Furthermore, the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) is an international non-governmental, non-profit organization founded in 1993 that combats poverty and inequality by assisting girls in obtaining an education. Ms Ann Cotton, a British philanthropist, founded CAMFED in 1993 to enable vulnerable girls from low-income homes to obtain school and reach their full potential in life (CAMFED impact report, 2010; Mwakyusa, 2012). Vulnerable children are the children who are more exposed to risks than their peers. For example, children who live with parents who are terminally ill, children who have been abandoned by one parent or both, or children who live in abject poverty although both parents are alive and thus not sure of basic needs (Gitonga, 2009). Furthermore, the CAMFED receives funding from both private and public sources, including institutions, trusts, and foundations, as well as public donations, in-kind gifts, and corporate contributions (CAMFED Annual Report, 2019). CAMFED aims to improve performance of the vulnerable girls through the provision of scholarships.

CAMFED is well known for investing in the education of girls from poor rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa. CAMFED began working in Zimbabwe through financial support to a group of 32 girls to enable them to attend secondary education regularly and then extended the services to Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia (CAMFED, 2018a). By 2019, its support had been extended to more than 3.3 million children through a network of 6,220 partner schools in Zimbabwe, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia (CAMFED, 2019). CAMFED provides bursaries to secondary school girls from poor, rural communities. The bursary scheme targets girls selected by communities themselves, including orphans who are at the highest risk of dropping out of school. School fees, examination fees, school uniforms, books, school equipment, and sanitary protection are among the support given to girls who come from disadvantaged families (CAMFED, 2010a; Mwakyusa, 2012). In 1990, Ann Cotton looked into why girls' children are not sent to school and discovered that poverty, not culture, is the greatest barrier (CAMFED, 2016).

Literally, in Ghana CAMFED began in 1998 after observing that people living below the poverty level in Ghana's rural districts are unable to send their children to secondary schools (van de Waal et al., 2024). The prevalent issue affecting girls' education in Ghana is poverty, as well as a lack of parental and community support for girls' education due to social and cultural hurdles (UNICEF (2017; UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2011). CAMFED supports school tuition, uniforms, books, pens, boarding charges, and disability aids for students in Ghana (Akanbang et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2021). CAMFED Scholarships had helped 72,167 Ghanaian secondary school girls by 2012 (CAMFED, 2010; 2016;). In Zambia, CAMFED was launched in 2001, and it is reported that about 38,168 girls are supported with CAMFED scholarships which support girls to undergo studies in secondary schools, covering tuition fees, uniforms, books, pens, boarding costs and disability aids. Pregnancy, early marriage and poverty are intrinsically linked and are the main challenges Zambian girls face during schooling, particularly in rural schools (CAMFED, 2019; UNICEF, 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

CAMFED began collaborating with the Tanzanian government in 2005 to increase secondary school enrollment. It began in the Iringa Region, where many girls were unable to pay for secondary education due to running expenditures just as school fees, exam fees, school uniforms, books, and school equipment. As of 2023 CAMFED has expanded its work and operates in 33 districts supporting thousands of children through school (CAMFED, 2023). In 2020, the CAMFED supported 49,619 female secondary school students while in 2023 824,143 girls received economic support to go to primary and secondary school, with many more young people benefiting from mentoring and skills training. It is obvious that, based on the recently introduced 'fee-free education' policy in Tanzania, students do not pay school fees (URT, 2016). However, vulnerable secondary school girl students still face significant barriers to regular school attendance in some districts like Kilombero.

Kilombero district is among the districts in which CAMFED International has provided educational support since 2006. It started with a few schools, but it is now working with 20 schools out of 25 community secondary schools in the district. It provides school uniforms, sanitary wear, exercise books, mosquito nets, solar power, and bicycles to vulnerable girls (Girls' Education Challenge, 2021). Also, CAMFED provides different training to teachers, especially Mathematics and English language teachers. It further sponsors pre-final examinations for all Form Four students and provides rewards to students who perform well in their examinations (CAMFED, 2023).

Bearing that in mind, dropout, poor enrollment and poor performance of girls are among the challenges that Tanzania's education system faces (PMO-LARG, 2014). According to HakiEkimu (2016), in 2016, 30,268 secondary school girls dropped out of school, whereas 4,442 dropped out because of pregnancy. Jivani (2010) maintains that a major challenge that has yet to be addressed successively is inadequate access to secondary and tertiary education and the quality of education in general. It was estimated that there were 8,44,8531 children enrolled in primary schools and only 95,525 students in tertiary institutions as of August 2010. As such, following the effort made by CAMFED to vulnerable girl students' performance in various aspects related to learning, the impact needed to be investigated.

CAMFED covers 80 per cent (20 out of 25) of community secondary schools in Kilombero District. However, its social interest in terms of impact on the performance of vulnerable girls is not known and empirically evidenced. Studies conducted in Kilombero District focused more on academic performance linked to several issues including parents' role, learning environment, shortage of teachers and others. For example, Felician (2013) studied the influence of teacher's participation in decision-making on job performance in public secondary schools. The study found that participation in decision-making can influence performance because teachers who participate in decision-making appear to perform better than those who do not participate or participate less in decision-making in secondary schools. Similarly, Nyembeke (2016) studied parental involvement in students' academic activities in community secondary schools. The study revealed that the majority of parents with students in community schools are challenged

by limited formal education, poverty and distance from home to school that hindered parents from getting involved in their children's education. Also, Kihombo (2017) conducted a study to assess factors contributing to girls' school attendance and academic performance in form four national examinations. The study found that girls' attendance at school and academic performance were affected by pregnancies, school distances, cultural practices and family poverty.

The study suggested that better attendance and academic performance can be enhanced by building girls' hostels and cooperation among teachers, students and parents. None of these studies investigated the impact of NGOs such as CAMFED in promoting girls' education. In consideration of the fact that CAMFED has been in place since 2005 and its contribution to the performance of vulnerable girls in Tanzania community secondary schools is not known, this study conducted a systematic investigation for empirical evidence. This study focused on the contribution of CAMFED to performance of the vulnerable girls. More specifically, the study intended to answer the following research questions (i) What are the existing services offered by CAMFED to vulnerable girls in secondary school? (ii) What is the contribution of CAMFED to vulnerable girls' performance in secondary schools? (iii) What are the stakeholders' views on improving vulnerable girls' performance in secondary schools?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Human capital theory

Human capital theory was developed by Adam Smith in 1776. The OECD (2012) describes human capital as the expertise, talents, skills, and attributes embodied in individuals that promote personal, social and economic well-being. Portes (1998) asserts that human capital is what is inside people's heads. Similarly, Akinyemi (2013) looks at human capital as the stock of productive and technical knowledge embodied in human beings through education and training. Therefore, human capital is regarded as the knowledge, expertise, and productive capacities that a person acquires through educational training. Human capital can reproduce itself with time, it pays off after a long time, the building-up time is long and costly and lastly, it depreciates with time. Babalola (2006) supports NGO's involvement in education because it hinges on the human capital theory which states that education is an investment in human beings. Little levels of schooling enhance poverty and disparity, therefore education can increase productivity hence an increase in the recipient's earnings. CAMFED aims to invest in education for vulnerable girls to expose them to opportunities that will get them out of poverty as the human capital theory considers education and training to be the most important investments in human capital. Education increases the income of a person, even after net of direct and indirect costs of schooling, and after adjusting for better family backgrounds and higher skills of more educated people.

The earnings of more educated people are almost always well above average, although the gains are generally larger in less-developed countries (Becker, 1994). This is to say, education has a significant impact on social and human development, particularly on literacy, poverty, fertility, and maternal and child health. Education has recently been re-theorized under Human Capital Theory as primarily an economic device. Peers (2015), basing his treatise on human capital theory, observes that education is a serious part of total factor productivity. Boser (2014) adds that education is an investment "like any other" that generates externalities. The potential for education to provide a path out of poverty is tremendous. Education is a tool for employment and social, economic and political development. Also, Samir (2002) holds that economic development can be made if only people have education. Educating a girl is one of the most important investments that any country can make in its future (DFID, 2005). Literature indicates that education for marginalised and vulnerable groups enhances the quality of life and societal wellbeing (UNESCO, 2023; UNICEF, 2021; 2023; Ngonyani & Kamando, 2023). Therefore, the theory is linked to the study on the fact that education is an investment that its endeavor in

development. This is why CAMFED mobilizes funds to support education for vulnerable girls wellbeing and contribute to the broad national development vision and mission (CAMFED International, 2016).

2.2 CAMFED services provide to vulnerable girls

CAMFED is working perpendicularly with the government of Tanzania in implementing sustainable development goals (SDGs) number four of inclusive and equitable quality education. CAMFED provides scholarships such as school fees, the provision of uniforms, shoes, stationary, sanitary wear, and bicycle or safe boarding accommodation to reduce the distance between home and school, and guidance and counselling to vulnerable girls in secondary school. CAMFED believes that educating girls is the best investment the world can make to alleviate poverty and create a safe world (CAMFED annual review. 2018).

2.3 CAMFED contribution to vulnerable girls' performance

Literature shows that mostly supported vulnerable girls are doing well in regular attendance, routine and timely working and submission of assignments and homework, punctuality and other common like academic performance based on examinations. Nasimiyu (2016) studied the contribution of NGOs to academic performance and found that engagement with NGOs led to regular attendance and improved academic performance. Pupils do not perform well when they are out of school either because of sickness, or lack of school levies, uniforms, bags and necessary learning materials. Therefore, by NGOs providing physical facilities, scholarships, capacity building and health and nutrition services, they help improve attendance. For example, Muhsin (2015) indicates that most vulnerable children do better when they are supported; they become academically focused and passionate about learning as opposed to those with poor performance presumably caused by inadequate support received. The majority of vulnerable girls did not attend classes regularly due to sickness, lack of school uniforms, and inability to pay school levies (Mutiso & Muti, 2017).

2.4 Stakeholders view on improving vulnerable girls' performance

The education stakeholders such as the teachers, NGOs, parents and students suggest that to improve performance of the vulnerable girls in secondary school, students and teachers should be supplied with supportive teaching and learning environments so that many vulnerable girls in community secondary schools could join the next level of study (David, 2014). Nasimiyu (2016) reveals that education is not free of charge, parents and guardians have to pay little levies here and there and buy the necessary school necessities such as uniforms, shoes, bags and sanitary towels for girls. Therefore, there was a need for NGOs to come in and sponsor needy pupils so they to attend school regularly and complete secondary education. Also, the government should allocate adequate funds for school expenditures whereby to get all necessary school requirements such as physical facilities for students and teachers as well as the presence of enough quality teaching-learning materials like textbooks (Temrat, 2013). The study urged NGOs to cooperate with the government in helping the education sector move forward through material and moral support.

3. Method

This study employed a case study research design to study five selected secondary schools in the Kilombero district. The area was selected based on two major reasons: broad coverage of CAMFED (i.e., 20 schools out of 25 community secondary schools in the district); and poor enrollment of girls due to poverty. This study targeted students in community secondary schools, the heads of schools, teachers and parents or guardians. The heads of schools who are the leaders of the schools were selected because they have a lot of information about their students and CAMFED. Students were thought as composing a group of vulnerable girls who would have benefited from CAMFED as have testimonies to share. Teacher mentors are the

ones responsible for taking care of students who are sponsored by CAMFED. The teacher mentor is selected among the teachers teaching in community secondary schools and is also responsible for receiving and distributing all the materials and money to the CAMFED-sponsored students. Typically, the most preferable teacher mentor is a female teacher. However, male teachers may be selected as teacher mentors in the absence of any female teacher. Parents and guardians were engaged in this study as they know their children well and they could tell if there was any significant improvement or not in academic performance. The sample for this study was 120 respondents whose distribution is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Sampled Respondents

Respondents status	Sample number of respondents
Head of school	4
Teacher Mentors	4
Class teachers	8
Academic teachers	4
Vulnerable girls sponsored by CAMFED	40
Non-sponsored vulnerable girls	40
Parents of the sponsored vulnerable girls	20
Total number	120

This study used a purposive sampling technique to select vulnerable girl students who are sponsored by CAMFED, heads of schools, teacher mentors, academic teachers, and class teachers. The respondents were selected purposively by virtue of their position since vulnerable girl students who are sponsored by CAMFED, heads of schools, mentor teachers, academic teachers, and class teachers have required information concerning the objectives of the study. The study employed simple random sampling to select non-sponsored vulnerable girls, and parents/guardians on their views on the performance of the CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls in community secondary schools.

Primary data collection methods employed in this study were questionnaires and interviews while secondary data were collected through documentary reviews. Open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were used for students to provide information on how the contribution of CAMFED to vulnerable girls leads to performance. A semi-structured interview was used to collect data from heads of schools, teacher mentors and parents. The method assisted to explore deeply into a topic on the contribution of CAMFED to performance of the vulnerable girls. Twenty parents were interviewed to provide their individual experiences on the challenges facing their children in school life. The study reviewed annual examination result reports to get the academic performance of vulnerable girls both sponsored and non-sponsored. The study examined class attendance to realize the attendance of the sponsored vulnerable girls and non-sponsored vulnerable girls.

Furthermore, the reviewed CAMFED documents such as CAMFED Annual Review 2020, 2022 and 2023 respectively; CAMFED Impact Report 2010 and CAMFED International 2016 showed different services provided by CAMFED to sponsored vulnerable girls. These sources assisted the study to rationalise measures to be included in the study. The data collected from the interview were analysed through content analysis by formulating themes emerging from the transcripts. Quantitative data were analysed by descriptive statistics to describe services provided by CAMFED and stakeholders' views on improving vulnerable girls' performance in community secondary schools.

4. Findings

4.1 Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics

The respondents' age was deemed significant since it affects the amount to which such age groups are more affected socially and academically. The current study considered parents'

information to be crucial in assessing how that solicited information influences their children's performance in school, with the notion that the presence or absence of parents in the household usually has a detrimental effect on the children's performance. Furthermore, respondents' education was considered important because some information could be hidden by one group of education level because of their level of awareness concerning vulnerable girls. The respondents are categorized into five education levels namely standard seven, secondary education, diploma education, bachelor's degree and master's degree. In addition, the area of domicile specifically the administrative wards of the respondents was expected to help a researcher in making an analysis and conclusion based on each area with a smaller number of vulnerable girls who were sponsored by CAMFED for the aim of improving their performance. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondents' Characteristics and Locality (Comune)

S/N	Category	Subcategory	Number	%
1	Age(students)	13-16	40	33.3
		17-20	38	31.7
		21+	42	35
2	Parents information	Both are alive	6	15.0
		Father alive, mother dead	9	22.5
		Mother alive, father dead	14	35.0
		Both parents dead	11	27.5
3	Parents education level	Standard seven	10	8.4
		Secondary	90	75
		Diploma	00	00
		Degree	19	15.8
		Masters	01	0.8
4	Ward (commune)	Mgeta	17	14.2
		Msolwa	25	20.8
		Mang'ula	30	25
		Kidatu	24	20
		Mwaya	24	20

Given the nature of the respondents the majority were students, the result on the age group as illustrated in Table 2 indicates that the majority (65%) of the respondents were teenagers as opposed to 35% of respondents who were aged above 21 years old. Also, the results in Table 2 show that more vulnerable girls (35%) were raised by a single mother followed by 27.5% of the girls who had lost both parents. Only a few (15%) of the vulnerable girls had both parents. The study further established that the majority 90 (75%) of respondents had secondary education. The results in Table 2 show only Mgeta Ward had few (14.2%) respondents and Kidatu Ward had many (25%) respondents. However, all the wards had relatively equal representation.

4.2 The existing or real services offered by CAMFED

4.2.1 School uniforms

Our study aimed at identifying the existing or real services offered by CAMFED in community secondary schools in Kilombero District council. The respondents were asked to respond by saying Yes or No for the mentioned services denoting that respondents are beneficiaries of the service or not. The services under study includes: the provision of uniforms, provision of bicycles, provision of exercise books, provision of mattresses, training, provision of sanitary wear, and provision of solar power. They were asked to list any additional services they receive in addition to those that were already specified.

Table 3. Students' Response on Services Offered by CAMFED

S/N	Services offered (items)	Responses		
		YES (F/ %)	NO (F/ %)	Total
1	Provision of Uniform	36 (90)	4 (10)	100
2	Provision of Bicycles	31(77.5)	9(22.5)	100
3	Provision of Exercise Books	40(100)	-	100
4	Provision of Mosquito Nets	34 (85)	6(5)	100
5	Provision of Mattress	19(47.5)	21(52.5)	100
6	Provision of Training to Students	28(70)	12(30)	100
7	Provision of Sanitary Wear	40(100)	-	100
8	Provision of Solar Power			

Table 3 shows that the majority of the vulnerable girl students respondents were provided school uniforms by CAMFED as a service to all vulnerable girls sponsored by CAMFED when they started the new term of studies. However, 4(10%) of the respondents said “No” implying that CAMFED did not provide school uniforms to all vulnerable girls sponsored by CAMFED when they started a new term of studies. Based on the findings, it is clear that a large proportion of vulnerable girls (90%) sponsored CAMFED were provided school uniforms when they start a new term. Apart from students, parents through interview were also asked to comment on the provision of uniforms, through interview sessions. One of the interviewed parents remarked as follows:

"...CAMFED offers uniforms to our kids, but not in time. The provision of student uniforms is a little tardy...that implies that as parents, we should either seek out a different option or wait for CAMFED to do so..." (Parent A, School B, August 2022)

Another parent had the following to add:

"...I would like to tell you that my daughter is assisted by CAMFED, and she has been receiving school uniform and other services available under auspices of CAMFED for the second time as she is in the second year of her study (form two) ..." (Parent B, school B, August 2022)

From the excerpt, it is apparent that CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls are given uniforms, although it is not exactly at the beginning of a term. Yet, school uniforms are provided based on available funds. Another parent who has two children in different community secondary schools expressed that

"...I appreciate CAMFED's assistance in helping me provide uniforms for my children, as I do not have enough money to purchase uniforms every year..."(Parent D, School D, August 2022)

From an extract above, information provided by interviewees indicates that CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls are provided with school uniforms. Possibly, this is one of major factors for vulnerable girls retention to secondary schools and perhaps academic accomplishment.

4.2.2 Provision of bicycles, exercise books, mosquitos' nets, mattress, training

The following paragraphs presents data from interviews indicating several services offered by CAMFED in support of vulnerable girl students education and academic accomplishments. For the case of bicycles: Bicycles are one of the items seems to be provided to vulnerable girl students. The provision of bicycles perhaps implies that vulnerable students are challenged to be punctual and ensure regular attendance. It also implies that vulnerable girl students walk a long distance to school which perhaps impinge their academic accomplishment. Factual data provided in Table 3 indicate vulnerable girl students' acceptance of existing services offered to them by CAMFED; albeit discrepancies in their response per service offered (item), majority of vulnerable girl students agreed to be provided with bicycles, exercise books, mosquitos nets,

mattresses, training, sanitary wear, solar power and rewards of being best students. Moreover, during interview sessions with headmasters, the researcher managed to get information that matched with that obtained from students. The findings reflected the statement made by the teacher mentor:

"...Most of the bicycles which are provided to vulnerable girls help in improving attendance and coming to school on time, although the bicycles do not last for a long time..." (Teacher mentor B, School D, August 2022)

The statement above implies that CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls are given bicycles. The researcher realized that bicycles which are provided to vulnerable girls are also used by their parents or guardians in other social economic activities. From Table 3, both students and teacher mentors agreed that CAMFED sponsored vulnerable girls are provided exercise books. It implies that CAMFED sponsored vulnerable girls receive several educational supports including exercise books.

We wanted to know if mosquito nets were provided to the CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls. Respondents were asked to say *yes* if they were provided mosquito nets and *no* if they were not provided with mosquito nets. The findings are presented in Table 3. Table 3 shows that 34 (85%) respondents said "Yes" implying that they were provided with mosquito nets by CAMFED while 6 (15%) respondents said "No" implying that they were not given mosquito nets by CAMFED. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that a large proportion (85%) of students are given mosquito nets. In an interview with a mentor, the researcher realised that 15% of respondents who said no to the question were provided with cash for buying mosquito nets. The study thus holds that all CAMFED-sponsored students were provided with mosquito nets.

During the interview sessions with the teacher mentors, it was revealed that although students are issued with mosquito nets, they often misuse them. The findings are as per the sub-segment statement.

"...CAMFED supplies very effective treated mosquito nets to vulnerable girls in community secondary schools for the aim of fighting against malaria to students and their families to sleep under treated net....some families of vulnerable girls' community are provided with mosquito nets but after washing them they do not put again the medicines to treat nets against mosquitos..." (Teacher mentor A, August 2022)

The statement above implies that CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls are given mosquito nets. Also, the study wanted to know if mattresses are provided by CAMFED.

During the interview with the teacher mentors, we realised that mattresses are provided to sponsored vulnerable girls who are staying in hostels as it was difficult to monitor who use those mattresses if provided to vulnerable girl students while schooling from their homes. The study also interviewed heads of schools to find out if CAMFED provides training to sponsored vulnerable girls, their responses are presented in following sections. Through the interview, the findings were as presented in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4. Heads of Schools Responses (excerpts) Derived from Interview Transcriptions

Heads of schools	Excerpt
(Headmaster, School A, August 13, 2022, at 14:20pm)	"... Provision of the training to these girl students leads to increase of girl's performance academically and reduce the problem of drop out from school".
(Headmaster, School B, August 15, 2022, at 10:00am)	"...training on self-care, exams attempts and role of female students in the country development were provided to CAMFED-sponsored vulnerable girls
(Headmaster, School C, July 19, 2022, at 15:10pm)	"...safe use of available resources such as exercise books, mosquito nets and successful study habits."
(Headmaster, School D, August 18, 2022, at 09:30am)	"... almost all girls who were to graduate were provided by comprehensive training on girl-centered skills development to perform better in STEM..."

(Headmaster, School E, July 25, 2022, at 11:45am)

“...training on girls’ education and wellbeing provided by teacher mentor and school counselling stimulate vulnerable girls development of self-management skills ...”

From Table 4, it is possible that provision of training among vulnerable girls enable successful education accomplishment regardless their economics status since such training offer on enlightenment on self-management, gender centric skills, reduce bias and dropout, stimulate attendance and attract school accomplishment and retention. Moreover, the study intended to know if CAMFED provided sanitary wear to vulnerable girls in sponsored secondary schools. The data from the questionnaire obtained during fieldwork are shown in Table 3. Table 3 shows that 40(100%) students said "Yes", implying that CAMFED provided sanitary wear to vulnerable girl's students. Apart from students, parents were also asked about the provision of sanitary wear to their children. Through the interview, the findings are as per the remarks below:

"... Provision of sanitary wear helps us, as our economic condition is poor, we cannot afford to buy for our children"(Parents E, School E, July 13, 2022, at 10:15am)

A different parent whose children attend school A and are sponsored by CAMFED had the following to recount:

"...three of my girls are attending classes at this this secondary school, me and my wife struggle to feed the whole family, so buying sanitary pads isn't our priority as low-income earners...with thanks CAMFED for the supports..." (Parents A, School A, July 16, 2022, at 11:05am)

Interestingly, parents from school C claimed that for provisions of sanitary wear, CAMFED should go beyond and support all students instead of few schools they have engaged because sanitary wear is related to girls’ health and menstrual hygiene. Here is what he added:

"... though as parent, I am able to support my daughter for uniforms, travel costs, stationery and boos, however, as father I argue CAMFED to consider supporting all girls when it comes to sanitary wears...as, my daughter is no longer missing classes due to lack of sanitary towel...she is also improving academically..." (Parents C, School C, July 29, 2022, at 13:05pm)

Moreover, the following interview response comment by the headmaster was necessary to justify solar power provision:

"...The provision of solar power to vulnerable girls helps a lot of their families to have light and some of the families conduct their small business until night. However, the purpose of CAMFED was to support them to do their home assignment and make revisions during the night..." (Headmaster D, School D, August 2, 2022, at 14:45pm)

The statement above implies that a large proportion of parents acknowledge that CAMFED provides sanitary wear to sponsored vulnerable girls. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that vulnerable girls are provided with sanitary wear. Furthermore, in peri urban areas where this study was conducted, access to electricity is a blockade to limitless study hours among vulnerable students. Therefore, access to solar power was considered important because it helps vulnerable girls to do their schoolwork promptly. In such, our findings both from parents and headmasters (interviews) and students (in Table 3), implies that CAMFED provides solar power to majority of vulnerable girls.

4.2.3 Contribution of CAMFED on performance of vulnerable girls

In evaluating students’ performance, school regular attendance, timely working and submission of assignments and homework, timely class attendance and academic performance were considered important in determining one’s performance. To establish relevant findings,

the study employed a comparative approach between sponsored vulnerable girls and non-sponsored vulnerable girls.

4.2.3.1 Academic performance

We looked for differences in the academic achievement of sponsored vulnerable girls in local exams from non-sponsored vulnerable girls. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Academic Performance of Sponsored and Non-Sponsored Vulnerable Girls

Sponsored vulnerable girls			Non-sponsored vulnerable girls		
Division	Number	%	Division	Number	%
1	3	7.5	1	1	2.5
2	7	17.5	2	0	0
3	19	47.5	3	5	12.5
4	11	27.5	4	20	50
0	0	0	0	14	35
Total	40	100	-	40	100

Table 4 shows that 7.5% of the sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division One whereas 17.5% of sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Two, 47.5% of sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Three and 27.5% of sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Four in local examinations. It was also revealed that 3.3% of non-sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division One, 0% of non-sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Two, 16.7% of non-sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Three whereas, 63.7% of non-sponsored vulnerable girls scored Division Four and the rest 16.7% scored division zero. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that sponsored vulnerable girls performed well compared to non-sponsored vulnerable girls. The findings imply that CAMFED services contributed towards good performance among vulnerable girls.

4.2.3.2 School regular attendances

School regular attendances of sponsored against non-sponsored girls was a point of concern.

Researchers aimed to determine the difference in attendance between vulnerable girls who were sponsored and those who were not. The teacher mentors were interviewed to comment on the attendance of sponsored and non-sponsored vulnerable girls:

“...There is regular attendance of sponsored vulnerable girl students probably due to provision of bicycle and sanitary wear as compared to non-sponsored vulnerable girls probably due to challenges facing them including long distance from home to school...” (Teacher mentor D, School D, August 9, 2022, at 14:45pm)

These data implies that sponsored vulnerable girls attend school regularly while non-sponsored vulnerable girls do not attend regularly. Based on attendance, it can be argued that the performance of sponsored vulnerable girls is better as compared to the non-sponsored vulnerable girls. This implies that CAMFED services contribute towards the good performance of vulnerable girls in community secondary schools.

4.2.3.3 Punctuality

The researcher explored the punctuality of the sponsored vulnerable girls versus non-sponsored ones. In this context, punctuality includes timely arrival at school, timely class attendance, timely working and submission of assignments and homework. Through interviews with class teachers, the following statements were made:

“...Majority of sponsored vulnerable girls arrive lately to school regardless of the bicycle provided, as parents use those bicycles for other domestic activities. Similarly, non-sponsored students also arrive lately due to long distance from home to school...”(Class Teachers E, School E, August 7, 2022, at 14:45pm)

Another class teacher commented on the following:

“...The provision of solar power to sponsored girls helps averagely in working timely and submission of assignment due to the little time they get at home. Non-sponsored vulnerable girls are in challenge of solar power this hinders working timely and submission of assignment...”(Class Teacher D, School D, August 22, 2022, at 14:45pm)

The unfolding excerpts encourage researchers to consider what is unique to CAMFED and what is omnipresent in community secondary schools and vulnerable girls. It also implies that sponsored vulnerable girls work and submit their assignments and homework on time.

4.3 Stakeholders’ views on improving vulnerable girls’ performance

Vulnerable girls, parents/guardians and teachers are important stakeholders in their students education. In this study they were asked to provide their views on the improved performance of the vulnerable girls. The suggestions given are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Stakeholders' View on Improved Performance of Vulnerable Girls (n=120)

Respondents response	Frequency	Percentage
Hostel Construction	100	83.3
To act against negative traditional practices	40	33.3
Sponsorship services should be on time	80	66.7
More seminars for vulnerable girls	25	20.8
Establishment of laws and act	28	23.3
Provision of food	85	70.8
Making close follow with sponsored girls	30	25

Table 6 shows that 83.3% of respondents mentioned the construction of hostels; 33.3% of respondents said that the government and other stakeholders should act against negative traditional practices; 66.7% of respondents said that sponsorship services to vulnerable girls should be given on time. In addition, 25% mentioned the need for more seminars for vulnerable girls; 28% mentioned that the government should establish by-laws and act. Otherwise, 70.8% of respondents mentioned the need to provide food. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that stakeholders' views on improved performance of the vulnerable girls call for hostel construction, government action against negative traditional practices, timely sponsorship services, more seminars for vulnerable girls, establishment of laws and acts that limit improved performance of the vulnerable girls.

5. Discussion

5.1 Services offered to vulnerable girls by CAMFED

The study explored different services offered to vulnerable girls by CAMFED. The findings revealed that there are several existing services provided by CAMFED to vulnerable girls in community secondary schools that include, the provision of school uniforms, provision of bicycles, provision of exercise books, provision of mosquito nets, provision of mattresses, training for students and provision of sanitary wear. Others are the provision of solar power, provision of rewards to the best student, provision of pocket money, and advice and consultation services. Based on the findings, the study asserts that CAMFED performs well in the provision of the services mentioned in the guideline. However, the findings revealed that the services are given in instalments based on the budget available in a given year. The findings are similar to Temrat (2013) in Ghana on the contribution of NGOs in the promotion of girls' education which found that among the great jobs conducted by NGOs in Ghana are the provision of sanitary pads, pocket money and moral support among the secondary school girls. Also, Nasimiyu (2016) looked at the contribution of NGOs to academic performance and revealed that NGOs play a big role in providing services such as pens and exercise books to vulnerable girls in secondary school.

5.1 Contribution of CAMFED to the performance of vulnerable girls

The study assessed the contribution of CAMFED to girls' performance in aspects such as school attendance, punctuality and academic performance. The findings indicate that the majority of sponsored vulnerable girls performed well in terms of regular attendance, punctuality and academic performance compared to non-sponsored vulnerable girls. The study findings seem to be a result of the services provided by CAMFED including uniforms, bicycles, exercise books, mosquito nets, mattresses, training, sanitary wear, solar power, motivation to best students, pocket money for food, and advisory or consultation services. Our findings on services provided by CAMFED stimulate good learning progress and confirms the critical perspective of changing lives of vulnerable societies through provision of incentives and material resources which lead to quality education (Huzeru, 2012; GEC, 2021). Therefore, services provided by CAMFED to vulnerable girls should be taken as both economics and education empowerment which link girls to further level of education and success in working life after school.

5.2. Stakeholders' view on improving vulnerable girls' performance

It is likely that most of vulnerable girls are subject to many difficulties in attaining quality secondary education in most of developing countries where the majority lives in rural and marginalised areas. Stakeholders' views on improving vulnerable girls' performance due to CAMFED services provided is of significance in a way that CAMFED had successfully assisted girls to advance from basic secondary education to higher level with academic success. Secondary education stakeholders suggest several ways on improving the vulnerable girls' performance such as the construction of hostels, acting against anti-social behaviours and traditional practices that affect vulnerable girls' school attendance and academic performance. This is also supported by Adu-Baffoe & Bonney (2021), who found that infrastructure development, provision of teaching and learning materials, teacher professional development, meeting students' learning needs, and offering services which appear to contribute to improved quality teaching and learning are potential for improving vulnerable girls' performance in secondary education. Supporting orphans and vulnerable children through hostel construction is very important in improving vulnerable girls' general performance including academic performance; since hostels create a conducive environment for vulnerable girls to attain educational goals (Losioki, 2020; Ngonyani & Kamando, 2023). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that hostel construction, food services, and provision of other services are considered more potential to improve performance of the vulnerable girls.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that scholarship to students is an important factor to be considered in improving academic performance. The findings of the study have shown that sponsored vulnerable girl students' performance is good compared to non-sponsored girl students. However, the study revealed different challenges facing vulnerable girls such as discrimination, lack of life skill education, long distance from home to school, lack of library services, domestic activities, mob psychology and poverty. In addition, an unconducive environment for students influenced by parents or guardians' negative attitudes toward secondary education was identified as the major reasons that limit students' performance among students in the study area. The conclusion of this study highlights that parents' negative and bad traditional practices in secondary education have a significant contribution to students' performance in community secondary schools.

The results found that hostel construction and provision of food to students would help to improve students' performance. Moreover, the study sees the need for more scholarships to be provided to vulnerable children including the boys. The key findings of this study show that the majority of sponsored vulnerable girls perform well in academics, attendance, and punctuality. The study proposes the following policy implications to improve the performance of vulnerable

girls in Kilombero District Council and related areas: the government should provide scholarships to vulnerable girls to give them a chance to access education. The government also has to ensure that students are supplied with food at school by allocating enough budgets that will give heads of school authority to channel some amount into food provision. In addition, there should be strategies that will enable schools to provide sanitary pads to girl students in community secondary schools.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The author declares that he has no competing financial interests or known personal relationships that would influence the report presented in this article.

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