Final Research Report

by Brasys (Bracing Africa's Health & Social Protection Systems for Sustainability), **on behalf of CAMFED, with funding from the Stone Family Foundation.**

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List of Acronyms

AGAS   Adolescent Girls Agency Survey
CAMFED   Campaign for Female Education
BRASYS   Bracing Africa's Health & Social Protection Systems for Sustainability
BTEC   Business and Technology Education Council
FGD   Focus Group Discussions
LG   Learner Guide
MBW   My Better World
SSI   Semi-Structured Interviews
DiD   Difference in Difference
G&C   Guidance and Counselling

Executive Summary

CAMFED Zambia initiated a life skills and mentoring program[1] aimed at improving girls' access to education and supporting their transition through and beyond school. In this program, young female graduates are trained and return to their local schools as volunteers to provide psychosocial support and deliver a life skills curriculum, called *My Better World*. Developed by CAMFED and Pearson, the life skills curriculum addresses the experiences of marginalized youth in sub-Saharan Africa, helping both boys and girls build self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-esteem, and resilience, while also discovering their talents, selecting role models, setting goals, and learning how to achieve them.

Brasys, a local non-profit technical services organization in Zambia, was contracted by CAMFED to conduct a life skills assessment of secondary school-aged girls in targeted districts, communities, and schools in rural Zambia to explore the impact of social support, through the life skills and mentoring program, on girls' self-esteem and agency. The 24-month research project aimed to develop an understanding of changes in key life skills, specifically agency, self-belief, self-governance, leadership skills, and environmental beliefs, as a result of its life skills and mentorship program and life skills curriculum implementation, using the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS). The study hypothesized that life skills taught, and social support provided effectively to learners by young female graduates and role models from the community would result in increased levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency; higher attendance, retention, and completion rates for marginalized girls; and meaningful and secure futures for young women post-secondary school. A statistician, Dr. Jose Liht, was engaged by CAMFED to conduct data analysis on learners' results. This involved analyzing survey responses to assess the level of agency of individual learners and performing confirmatory factor analysis to ensure the validity of the measurement tool, confirming its ability to measure a broad range of factors.

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection. A quasi-experimental design was implemented, with intervention and comparison groups established based on the implementation of the life skills and mentoring program. It included five intervention districts that were already implementing the program and two comparison districts with similar contexts and characteristics as the intervention districts, that were not implementing the program but are future program locations.

The AGAS was adapted for the Zambian context to measure changes in self-belief, self-governance, leadership, and environmental beliefs among the participants. Key terms were defined and clarified for their local context. Additionally, the AGAS was mapped to the life skills curriculum, revealing alignment between all questions in the tool and various sections of the curriculum. The language within the tool was also reviewed and revised for appropriateness and clarity in the local context. Data was collected over two phases: baseline in May 2023 and endline in June 2024. The study included surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs) with learners, the young female graduates leading the life skills sessions, teachers, and other key stakeholders.

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[1] CAMFED's life skills and mentoring program, the Learner Guide program, is an integrated, holistic model that improves girls' access and learning while providing a structure for school transition and post school transition. CAMFED trains young female graduates as Learner Guides and they return to their local schools as volunteers to deliver psychosocial support and the *My Better World* life skills program to both boys and girls.

The study involved a total of 6,939 interviews across baseline and endline data collection phases. This was composed of 5,042 learners with 1,869 (37%) learners participating in both baseline and endline, 1,474 (29%) participating in only the baseline, and 1,699 (34%) participating only at the endline as the replacement sample for baseline participants that were no longer available. Seventy-five schools participated in the study with 1,314 (26%) of the learners being in comparison schools and 3,728 (74%) in intervention schools. Females constituted 55% of learners while males were 45%. The mean age was 16 years of age, the majority of the respondents (learners) were in Grade 9 (42%), and 20% of the respondents reported having a disability.

The AGAS measure conceptualizes agentic capacity as being comprised of four key indicators:
1. Self-Belief – a girl's self-worth combined with her belief in her own abilities.
2. Self-Governance Skills – a girl's ability to organize and coordinate her own abilities into action.
3. Leadership Skills – a girl's ability to influence others.
4. Environmental Belief – a girl's belief in the malleability of her environment combined with her attitudes towards gender and gender norms.

After just one year of participating in the intervention group, both female and male learners showed statistically significant improvements in their scores across all scales (self-belief, self-governance, leadership, and environmental beliefs), as well as in their overall agency scores, compared to the comparison group as follows:

1. **Self-Belief**: The program led to a statistically significant change in learners' self-belief, with 57% of learners in intervention schools reporting improved self-belief, compared to 45% in comparison schools. Female learners in intervention schools also reported a greater improvement in self-belief scores (57% higher) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43% higher). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-belief scores was higher in intervention (42%) than comparison schools (31%).[2] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in leadership skills scores was also higher in intervention schools (42%) than in comparison schools (28%). The mean self-belief score in intervention schools increased from 2.28 at baseline to 2.37 at endline, while in comparison schools, the score rose from 2.34 to 2.37, giving a difference-in-difference score of 0.06. The increase was higher among female learners, with their mean scores rising from 2.27 to 2.39, compared to male learners. Among learners with disability, those in intervention schools had a higher increase in mean scores, than those in comparison schools. Qualitative interviews showed that these improvements were reflected in the learner's increased self-confidence and assertiveness as well as improvement in their social skills and behavior.
A District Guidance and Counselling Coordinator stated:
"Learners are becoming more ambitious, expressing great future aspirations. Learners have improved in terms of their academic performance. Learners pay more attention in class."

2. **Self-Governance**: Learners in intervention schools demonstrated improvements in self-governance, with 47% reporting enhanced self-governance compared to 39% in

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[2] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

comparison schools, a difference that was statistically significant. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in self-governance scores (51%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (37%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-governance scores was higher in intervention (37%) than comparison schools (28%).[3] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in leadership skills scores was also higher in intervention schools (40%) than in comparison schools (24%). The mean self-governance score in intervention schools increased from 2.35 to 2.38, while in comparison schools, it decreased from 2.35 to 2.33, representing a difference-in-difference score of 0.05. Female learners in intervention schools showed a higher increase in self-governance scores, from 2.35 to 2.37, compared to male learners. Furthermore, improvements among learners with a disability were only noted in intervention schools. Respondents from the qualitative interviews observed the following because of the program: improved decision making both in individual and group settings; better time management linked to increased academic performance; the pursuit of entrepreneurial and extracurricular activities; and broader ecosystem effects including reports of learners transferring their knowledge and sharing experiences on self-governance with other learners, as well as wider-school and community impacts such as reduced school-based violence and reduced pregnancy rates.

One of the Guidance and Counselling Teachers stated:

"Many learners that attend/attended My Better World [life skills] curriculum are now able to choose career pathways. Learners do not need much oversight to get work done, they are self-directed and understand time management."

3. **Leadership Skills**: There was a statistically significant change in leadership skills among learners, with 50% of learners in intervention schools reporting improved leadership abilities compared to 39% in comparison schools. The same trend was observed when the data was disaggregated by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in leadership scores (52%) as compared to those in comparison schools (36%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their leadership skills scores was higher in intervention (38%) than comparison schools (30%).[4] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in leadership skills scores was also higher in intervention schools (40%) than in comparison schools (24%). The mean leadership score in intervention schools increased from 2.33 to 2.41, while in comparison schools, it decreased from 2.4 to 2.36, representing a difference-in-difference score of 0.12. Female learners exhibited a higher increase in leadership skills, with their mean scores rising from 2.32 to 2.37, compared to male learners. In intervention schools, both learners with and without a disability showed improvements, while both learners with and without a disability experienced a decrease in scores in comparison schools. From the qualitative interviews, these improvements were reflected in the learners' increased willingness to take on leadership roles and the positive influence they had on their peers.

A Head Teacher mentioned:

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[3] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size
[4] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

"After several interactions with boys and girls in the prefectorial board, it was noticed that most of the learners that stand boldly before their fellow learners consistently attend [the life skills] sessions."

4. **Environmental Beliefs**: The evaluation found a statistically significant change in environmental beliefs, with 54% of learners in intervention schools reporting improved environmental beliefs compared to 49% in comparison schools. Also, more female learners in intervention schools experienced an improvement in environmental beliefs scores (57%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (50%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their environmental beliefs scores was also higher in intervention (40%) than comparison schools (35%).[5] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in environmental beliefs scores was similarly higher in intervention schools (43%) than in comparison schools (34%). The mean environmental belief score in intervention schools increased from 2.06 to 2.10, while in comparison schools, the increase was higher, from 2.07 to 2.13, representing a difference-in-difference score of -0.02. Female learners showed a higher increase in their environmental belief scores, with their mean scores rising from 2.07 to 2.2, compared to male learners. Furthermore, both learners with and without a disability showed greater improvements in mean scores in intervention schools compared to comparison schools. These overall improvements were corroborated by qualitative interviews with respondents highlighting improved confidence in reporting issues and seeking support as well as empowerment and rights awareness to combat environmental pressures, and an enhanced ability to resist negative peer influences. Despite the positive changes observed, qualitative interviews showed that traditional gender norms continue to exert a strong influence on learners.
A District Guidance and Counselling Coordinator mentioned:
"They are able to refuse to get married, and they want to finish their studies. Able to report or share their problems with their teacher mentor and she's able to advise."

5. **Global Agency**: There was a statistically significant change in global agency, with 64% of learners in intervention schools reporting improved global agency compared to 48% in comparison schools. The same trend was observed when the data was disaggregated by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in global agency scores (67%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their global agency scores was higher in intervention (44%) than comparison schools (33%)[6]. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in global agency scores was also higher in intervention schools (48%) than in comparison schools (29%). The mean global agency score in intervention schools increased from 2.26 to 2.32, while in comparison schools, the score increased from 2.29 to 2.30, giving a difference-in-difference score of 0.06. Female learners experienced a notable increase in their global agency scores, with their scores rising from 2.25 to 2.33, compared to male learners. Among learners with disability, those in intervention schools had a higher increase in mean scores than those in comparison schools. The program's impact was further underscored in the qualitative interviews by post-secondary lifestyle changes, with many graduates starting small

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[5] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

[6] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

businesses or pursuing further education, applying the life skills and financial literacy they acquired through the program.

One of the Teacher Mentors in the intervention schools mentioned:

"There has been a significant improvement in the learners' attendance and retention rates. Completion rates, especially amongst the girls, have increased due to CAMFED financial support. A number of learners return to the school for recommendations for scholarships, job opportunities as well as further education."

The additional qualitative analysis also highlighted the positive impact of the sessions in fostering learners' life skills, particularly through structured mentorship, relatable role models, and collaborative group activities. These sessions helped build self-confidence, personal reflection, and resilience. However, barriers such as peer pressure, economic constraints, and entrenched cultural and gender norms hindered some learners' full participation, with boys often feeling excluded and girls facing pressures related to early marriage and societal expectations. Language barriers, limited exposure to broader perspectives, and inconsistent leadership performance were also noted. Additionally, challenges in reporting sensitive issues and accessing support emerged, particularly regarding abuse and personal struggles. Recommendations included increasing parental and community involvement, addressing language and exposure barriers, offering public speaking training, providing continuous mentorship, and building capacity for the young female graduates to support a diverse range of learners, particularly those with academic or personal difficulties.

Several constraints were encountered during the evaluation, which impacted the program's implementation and outcomes. High rates of absenteeism due to early marriages, school transfers, and seasonal farming activities reduced the participation of some learners. Cultural and social barriers, including parental restrictions and traditional gender norms, whereby society's belief systems discourage girls' education as well as their ambitions, also limited some girls' engagement with the program. Language barriers in districts with multiple dialects, such as Bemba in Mpika and Lozi in Kaoma, along with the limited experience of some CAMDFED Association enumerators during the endline, added complexity to the data collection process. However, these challenges were addressed by providing additional language support and training for the enumerators after hours, ensuring more accurate and effective data gathering.

Based on the evaluation findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the program's effectiveness and ensure its sustainability:

1. **Scale and Replicate Successful Components:** Given the positive outcomes associated with young female graduates providing psychosocial support and delivering a life skills curriculum, consider expanding the model to similar rural Zambian schools or replicating it in different contexts in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Tailor the replication process to local needs and conditions, ensuring that the core elements of the program—such as mentorship, life skills training, and psychosocial support—are maintained. Expanding the program supports the outputs of the program by increasing its reach and ensuring more learners benefit from the life skills education. This will further

contribute to the medium-term and long-term outcomes of improved educational outcomes and securing meaningful futures for young women.

2. **Enhance Parental and Community Engagement to Address Harmful Gender Norms:** CAMFED Zambia and child protection community forums should engage parents and guardians as local influencers and role models to advocate for education over early marriage and traditional practices. Develop targeted interventions, including community outreach and education initiatives, to promote gender equality and encourage the broader acceptance of girls' education and leadership. Engage local communities in discussions and activities that foster a more supportive environment for girls' empowerment. This supports the short-term outcomes of increasing self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency among marginalized girls by involving the community, which is essential for creating a supportive environment. This also contributes to medium-term outcomes by enhancing psychosocial readiness and improving educational outcomes.

3. **Strengthen Support for Learners with Disabilities and Language Barriers:** CAMFED Zambia should provide specialized training for young female graduates on inclusive teaching methods and develop accessible learning resources tailored to the needs of these learners. Introduce peer support systems to enhance social inclusion and mutual assistance among learners. Providing specialized training and resources for young female graduates directly contributes to the outputs and activities of improving knowledge and skills around agency, self-esteem, and confidence. This is crucial for ensuring that all learners, including those with disabilities or language barriers, can achieve the short-term outcomes of increased self-esteem and agency.

4. **Increase Support for Guidance and Counselling Teachers and District Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, and young female graduates who provide psychosocial support and deliver the life skills curriculum:** CAMFED Zambia and the Ministry of Education should provide regular workshops, training sessions, and capacity-building opportunities for Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, and young female graduates delivering the program. Recognize their efforts with certificates or allowances to keep them motivated and engaged. Additionally, ensure they have the necessary logistical support, such as transport allowances and resources, to perform their duties effectively. This will build on the current support framework and address both their professional development needs and logistical challenges of distance to schools.

5. **Integrate Leadership Development into Life Skills Education:** CAMFED Zambia should strengthen the life skills curriculum delivered by young female graduates by incorporating leadership training tailored for girls. This could include modules on public speaking, conflict resolution, and balancing leadership roles with academic responsibilities. Establish safe spaces within schools where female learners can practice these skills, receive mentorship, and discuss gender-specific challenges such as biases and peer pressure. This approach will empower girls to take on leadership roles confidently while continuing their academic and personal development.

6. **Monitor and Address Gender-Specific Challenges:** Establish regular monitoring of gender-specific challenges within schools, such as gender biases, peer pressure, and

balancing leadership roles with academic responsibilities. Develop targeted interventions, such as leadership workshops specifically for girls, and create safe spaces for female learners to discuss and address these challenges.

These recommendations are aimed at building on the program's successes, addressing challenges, and ensuring that marginalized girls in Zambia continue to benefit from the support and empowerment provided by the program.

1. Introduction

Zambia, a landlocked country in Southern Africa, is marked by significant socio-economic disparities, particularly affecting marginalized populations such as girls in rural districts. These disparities are deeply rooted in historical, cultural, and structural factors that perpetuate inequity and limit opportunities for many[7]. The country faces numerous challenges in providing equitable access to education, promoting gender equality, and ensuring social inclusion, especially for girls in rural areas[8].

Education is a fundamental human right and a critical driver of development. However, in Zambia, access to quality education remains a significant challenge, particularly for girls in rural districts. The education system is characterized by inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, and limited resources, which are more pronounced in remote areas[9]. The primary obstacle to girls' education is poverty, with 64% of the population living on less than $1.25 a day[10]. In rural areas, 27% of females have no education[11]. Other factors affecting girls' education include long distances to school, inadequate menstrual resources and ablution facilities at schools, the low importance some communities place on secondary education for girls, early marriages, child labor and teenage pregnancies[12]. Girls are more likely to marry young, have children early, and remain at home to take care of the home's needs[13]. Boys are more likely to be sent to school than girls because they are thought to be more beneficial to a household[14]. The female literacy rate in Zambia is currently 7% lower than the male literacy rate; Female literacy measures at 84%, while male literacy measures at 91%[15].

The lack of accessible female role models and gender-sensitive teaching practices also contribute to the low retention and achievement rates among girls[16]. Social inclusion remains a critical issue in Zambia, particularly for marginalized girls. Traditional gender roles and social norms often limit girls' participation in education and other public spheres. Additionally, girls with disabilities face even greater exclusion due to stigma and a lack of inclusive education facilities[17]. Efforts to promote social inclusion must address these deeply entrenched barriers and work towards creating an environment where all girls have equal opportunities to thrive[18].

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[7] Central Statistical Office (CSO) Zambia, "Living Conditions Monitoring Survey," 2022.
[8] UNICEF, "Education in Zambia: Current State and Challenges," 2023.
[9] World Bank, "Zambia Education Sector Report," 2023.
[10] Central Statistical Office (CSO) Zambia, "Living Conditions Monitoring Survey," 2022.
[11] UNICEF, "Education in Zambia: Current State and Challenges," 2023.
[12] World Bank, "Zambia Education Sector Report," 2023.
[13] UNICEF, "Child Marriage in Zambia," 2023.
[14] UNESCO, "Global Education Monitoring Report," 2022.
[15] World Bank, "Zambia Education Sector Report," 2023.
[16] World Bank, "Zambia Education Sector Report," 2023.
[17] UNICEF, "Education in Zambia: Current State and Challenges," 2023.
[18] UNESCO, "Global Education Monitoring Report," 2022.

CAMFED

The Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1993, dedicated to eradicating poverty in Africa through the education of girls and the empowerment of young women. CAMFED's mission is to support marginalized girls to go to school, succeed, and lead, creating a ripple effect that benefits their families, communities, and nations. CAMFED operates in five African countries: Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe[19].

CAMFED Zambia, established in 2001, is a key part of CAMFED's network, working to break the cycle of poverty and inequality for girls in Zambia. The organization collaborates closely with the Zambian government, especially the Ministry of Education and local communities, to improve educational outcomes for girls, particularly in rural areas where barriers to education are most pronounced. The impact of CAMFED's work in Zambia has been significant. The organization has supported over half a million girls to complete their education, with many beneficiaries going on to become leaders and change-makers in their communities.

CAMFED Zambia's efforts are vital in addressing the educational and social challenges faced by marginalized girls in the country. By providing financial support, promoting community engagement, training teachers, and advocating for policy change, CAMFED in partnership with the government is helping to create a more just and inclusive society where all girls can access quality education and realize their potential. CAMFED programs give rural, marginalized girls a comprehensive and tailored support package to help them combat the various obstacles they face in completing secondary education. This all-encompassing support is tailored to the needs of each individual girl and consists of (1) monetary and material help and/or (2) social support, which includes exposure to female role models, mentoring on an individual basis, academic support, and psycho-social support[20].

One of the programs CAMFED Zambia initiated is the Learner Guide program, which is an integrated, holistic model that improves girls' access and learning while providing a structure for the school transition and post-school transition. CAMFED trains young female graduates as Learner Guides, and they return to their local schools as volunteers to deliver psychosocial support and the life skills curriculum to both boys and girls. The life skills curriculum called *My Better World* (MBW), was developed by CAMFED and Pearson with young people in Africa, speaking directly to the experience of marginalized youth, benefitting both boys and girls. The curriculum and workbook help learners to build self-knowledge; develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy; discover their talents; build resilience; select role models; set goals and learn how to achieve them[21].

A vital component of CAMFED's support for Learner Guides is access to capital. Among the business finance options that CAMFED offers rural women entrepreneurs is a uniquely designed social interest loan – collateral-free, interest-free, and free of processing charges and with tailored repayment arrangements[22]. CAMFED secures donor funding to cover the administrative costs of these loans so that they can be issued without financial interest to borrowers. These loans are provided through two avenues; Kiva loans provided in partnership

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[19] CAMFED, "About CAMFED," 2023.
[20] CAMFED, "CAMFED Programs Overview," 2023.
[21] Inception Meeting Presentation. Stone Family Foundation Research: Development of a Life Skills Assessment Tool for measuring agency in girls and young women. 2023
[22] CAMFED Zambia, "Learner Guide Program," 2023.

with Kiva[23] and CAMFED-funded loans through the Revolving Investment Fund. Many borrowers pay 'social interest' whereby they volunteer their time and expertise including through structured and defined Guide roles - such as CAMFED Learner Guides - to help others in their community.

Learner Guides are also able to undertake the bespoke Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualification which has the potential to provide them with an internationally recognized qualification enabling them to apply for jobs such as teaching and enroll into teacher training colleges.

Brasys

Bracing Africa's Health & Social Protection Systems for Sustainability (Brasys) is a local non-profit technical services organization in Zambia, committed to enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of these systems through innovative solutions and strategic interventions. Brasys deploys performance monitoring and evaluation services, organizational development initiatives, quality improvement processes and innovative sustainability approaches, in partnership with donors and NGOs, to strengthen public sector institutions, community-based and grassroots organizations in Zambia. Brasys was contracted by CAMFED to conduct this life skills assessment of secondary school-aged girls in targeted districts, communities, and schools in rural Zambia to explore the impact of social support on girls' self-esteem and agency.

Project Overview

CAMFED sought to understand the impact of CAMFED's flagship Learner Guide program and the life skills curriculum the Learner Guides (LGs) provide – and its potential connection to measurable changes in self-esteem and agency among students with whom they work, especially marginalized girls. Funded by the Stone Family Foundation, the 24-month research project was designed to develop an understanding of the girls' self-esteem and agency, through a tool that assesses changes in key life skills. The project aimed to develop an understanding of changes in agency, self-belief, self-governance, leadership skills, and environmental beliefs, as a result of its Learner Guide program and life skills curriculum implementation, using the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS). The study hypothesized that Life-skills taught effectively to learners by young female role models (Learner Guides) from the community will result in increased levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency; higher attendance, retention, and completion rates for marginalized girls; and meaningful and secure futures for young women post-secondary school.

The life skills assessment tool, adopted for this assessment, was developed by AMPLIFY Girls, an organization focused on amplifying the voices, efforts, and impacts of community-driven groups dedicated to fostering girls' agency. The AGAS measure conceptualizes agentic capacity as being comprised of four key indicators:

1. Self-Belief - a girl's self-worth combined with her belief in her own abilities.
2. Self-Governance Skills—a girl's ability to organize and coordinate her own abilities into action.

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[23] Kiva is a digital marketplace where individuals can lend as little as $25. CAMFED has partnered with Kiva since September 2015

3. Leadership Skills—a girl's ability to influence others.
4. Environmental Belief - a girl's belief in the malleability of her environment combined with her attitudes towards gender and gender norms.

The tool was designed to contribute to the growing theory that non-cognitive abilities like self-esteem and self-efficacy are linked to better learning and long-term life outcomes and should be considered as an additional and complementary measure, related to girls' attendance and, more importantly, learning. An important lesson learned from earlier studies in East Africa where the tool was utilized, is that there is evidence to support a theory of change that connects learning with self-esteem. There seems to be a softer middle layer of change between concrete initiatives to boost girls' self-esteem and the more obvious results of attendance and learning. Changes in attitudes, a desire to attend and succeed, the capacity to make choices that will impact one's education, and an aspiration to perform better are indicators of this.[24]
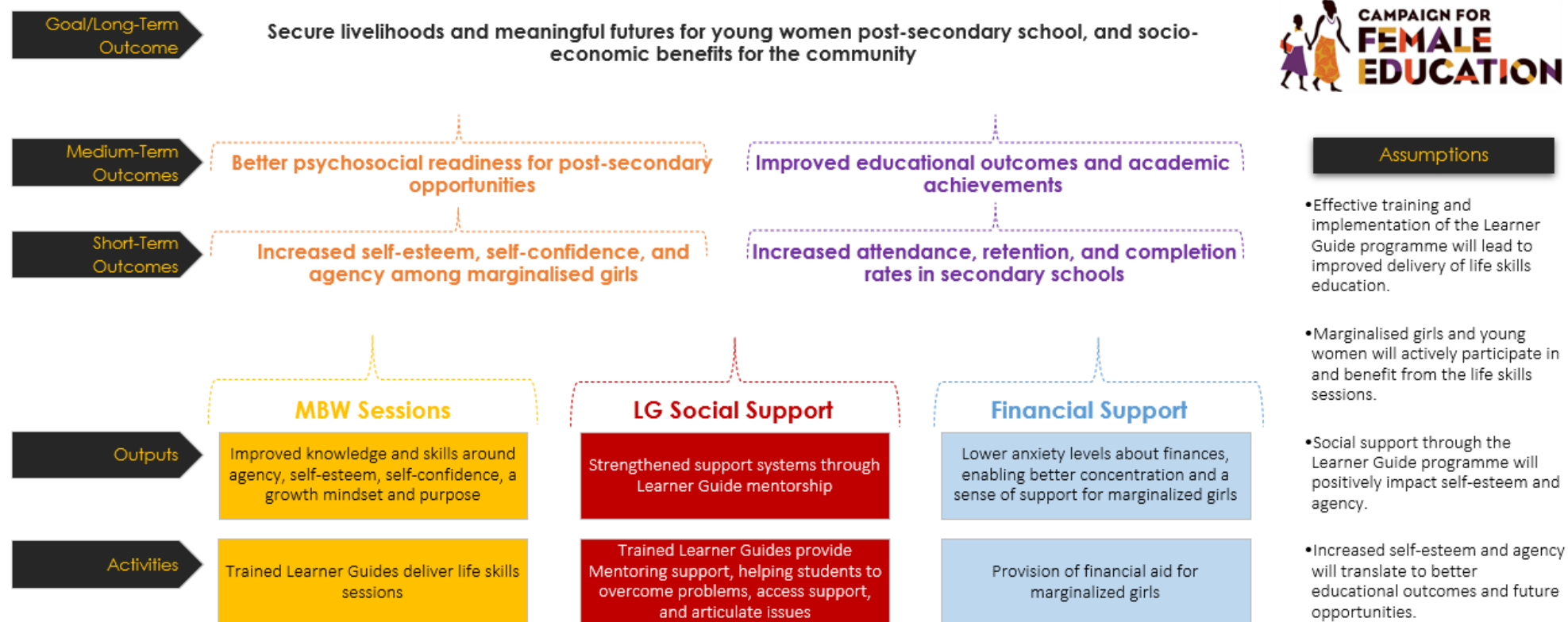
Theory of Change

The primary goal of this research was to assess life skills, focusing on self-esteem and agency, among marginalized girls and young women in selected rural districts, communities, and schools in Zambia. The research sought to adapt a life skills assessment tool that CAMFED and a wider audience can use to measure agency in secondary-aged, marginalized girls and young women.

The Theory of Change (ToC) is structured around several key components as highlighted in the diagram overleaf. By following this Theory of Change, the research systematically tested these assumptions and hypotheses, providing valuable insights into the impact of life skills education on marginalized girls and young women in Zambia.

[24] Inception Meeting Presentation. Stone Family Foundation Research: Development of a Life Skills Assessment Tool for measuring agency in girls and young women. 2023

Theory of Change

Goal/Long-Term Outcome

Secure livelihoods and meaningful futures for young women post-secondary school, and socio-economic benefits for the community

CAMPAIGN FOR **FEMALE EDUCATION**

Medium-Term Outcomes

Better psychosocial readiness for post-secondary opportunities

Improved educational outcomes and academic achievements

Assumptions

Short-Term Outcomes

Increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency among marginalised girls

Increased attendance, retention, and completion rates in secondary schools

- Effective training and implementation of the Learner Guide programme will lead to improved delivery of life skills education.

- Marginalised girls and young women will actively participate in and benefit from the life skills sessions.

MBW Sessions

LG Social Support

Financial Support

Outputs

Improved knowledge and skills around agency, self-esteem, self-confidence, a growth mindset and purpose

Strengthened support systems through Learner Guide mentorship

Lower anxiety levels about finances, enabling better concentration and a sense of support for marginalized girls

- Social support through the Learner Guide programme will positively impact self-esteem and agency.

- Increased self-esteem and agency will translate to better educational outcomes and future opportunities.

Activities

Trained Learner Guides deliver life skills sessions

Trained Learner Guides provide Mentoring support, helping students to overcome problems, access support, and articulate issues

Provision of financial aid for marginalized girls

2. Purpose

The purpose of this research project was to conduct a life skills assessment of secondary aged, marginalized girls and young women from disadvantaged backgrounds in selected rural districts, communities, and schools in Zambia. Specific objectives included:

1. To adapt a life skills assessment tool to measure agency in secondary-aged, marginalized girls and young women, through:

- Ascertaining clear definitions for terms such as life skills, self-esteem, agency and related themes.
- Determining how these skills are expressed through knowledge, attitudes and behaviors at the secondary school level, and
- Clarifying how different elements of the Learner Guide program will be measured through the tool.

2. To examine the extent to which social support provided through the Learner Guide program translates into an increase in girl's self-esteem and agency.

- Measure the proportion of marginalized girls reporting an increase in self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-confidence after completing the MBW sessions led by LGs.

The study hypothesized that Life-skills taught effectively to learners by young female role models (Learner Guide program) from the community would result in:

- Increased levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency.
- Higher attendance, retention, and completion rates for marginalized girls.
- Meaningful and secure futures for young women post-secondary school.

3. Methodology

Tool Adaptation

The life skills assessment process commenced with a tool adaptation workshop, to adapt the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS) to the Zambian context. Specifically, adapting the AGAS to the CAMFED Learner Guide program; as well as developing a common understanding of key terms and ensuring that the language and content of the survey instrument were acceptable and would be well understood by the target demographic in Zambia. The workshop employed cognitive interviewing, allowing the understanding of each question to be assessed in multiple ways (using a variety of verbal probes, including comprehension/interpretation, paraphrasing, recall and other general probes) till the best framing was agreed. The workshop was conducted over 3 days and was attended by 51 participants, including recent school graduates (CAMFED Association members who attended MBW sessions), LGs, Teacher Mentors, Head teachers, CAMFED staff, and Ministry of Education staff (specifically Guidance and Counselling coordinators), and the assessment team from Brasys. Participants represented Mansa, Kabwe, Kaoma, Mpika and Mbala and Lusaka districts. The workshop successfully:

- Introduced the AGAS Methodology and Measures (Agency, Self-Belief, Environmental Beliefs, Self-Governance Skills and Leadership Skills).
- Defined key terms and clarified their local expression.
- Mapped the AGAS to the life skills curriculum. The final mapping matrix revealed that all questions in the Amplify girls' tool aligned with various sections of the life skills curriculum.
- Reviewed and revised the language within the tool for local context appropriateness and understanding.

Through the workshop, the life skill assessment tool has been adapted to the Zambian context, enabling the tool to be used by CAMFED and potentially other stakeholders in the country. The adaptation process may also be replicated in other CAMFED countries.

Study Design

The study design was quasi-experimental with intervention and comparison groups defined based on the implementation of CAMFED's Learner Guide program. Intervention districts are already implementing the program, whereas comparison districts are future project locations with similar contexts and characteristics as the intervention districts. The study assessed and measured self-esteem and agency over a multiphase, two-year process with the tool administered at two intervals: baseline in May 2023 and endline in May 2024. learners self-administered the tool using tablets with the guidance of the data collectors at baseline while at endline the tool was administered by enumerators one on one with the learners. The project also planned to validate the AGAS in the Zambia context through this assessment.

In addition to life skills indicators, the survey also collected:[25]

- Demographic data (e.g., gender and socio-economic status, age group, Grade, district, disability status and self-reported health) to enable disaggregated analysis.
- Additional objective well-being measures.
- Data on attendance, progression and retention.

The assessment was gender and culturally responsive, followed ethical and safeguarding procedures and protocols, and represented marginalized girls and program key stakeholders.

Quantitative Methods

The endline study utilized the AGAS that was adopted during the baseline for this assessment. A multilevel regression analysis was employed, incorporating an interaction between baseline and endline data with the intervention and comparison groups, while accounting for intra-cluster correlations at the school level. The analysis controlled for gender and age, with a separate regression conducted specifically for female pupils. Effect sizes were calculated using Hedge's g, and a sensitivity check was performed to ensure consistency in the regressions that included learners participating in both waves. Additionally, a longitudinal analysis assessed changes in scores from baseline to endline, categorizing the results as regressed, maintained, or improved, and comparing individual standardized differences to the overall sample's standard deviation to account for variation in the spread between groups.

Qualitative Methods

The endline study included 5 FGDs with 10 Learner Guides in each of the intervention districts as well as 15 SSIs with key informants, including Teacher Mentors, Guidance and Counselling teachers, Head Teachers, and District Guidance and Counselling coordinators. The interviews aimed to gather qualitative insights into participants' experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding self-esteem, agency, and the impact of the Learner Guide program. A thematic analysis was conducted, using a systematic coding process to identify and organize recurring patterns and themes within the data. Key themes were identified and refined

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[25] *These were collected for the intervention and comparison cohort only (i.e. not school level)*

through iterative review, capturing the program's influence on self-esteem, agency, and community engagement among learners. To aid interpretation, a table summarizing the key themes and their descriptions is included at the end of the findings section.

Scope and Target Population

The study was conducted in 7 districts spread across 5 provinces of Zambia. It included 5 intervention districts and 2 comparison districts. The intervention group consisted of five districts already implementing the program, while the comparison group included two CAMFED partner districts that had not started implementing the LG Program with similar contexts. CAMFED randomly pre-selected 25 comparison schools without the LG program in Kasama and Luwingu Districts and 50 intervention schools with the LG program from Mbala District, Mansa District, Mpika District, Kabwe District and Kaoma District. The respondents that were assessed within the schools were Grade 8-12 learners, who are the target audience for the CAMFED LG program. The tool was administered to learners both (female and male) from schools which received social support from the Learner Guides, and which also attended the MBW sessions (Intervention arm); and also, to learners (female and male) from schools matched to the intervention schools, but which do not have the Learner Guide program and the life skills curriculum (Comparison arm).

Fig 1. Map showing study districts

Powered by
© GeoNames, Open Places, OpenStreet
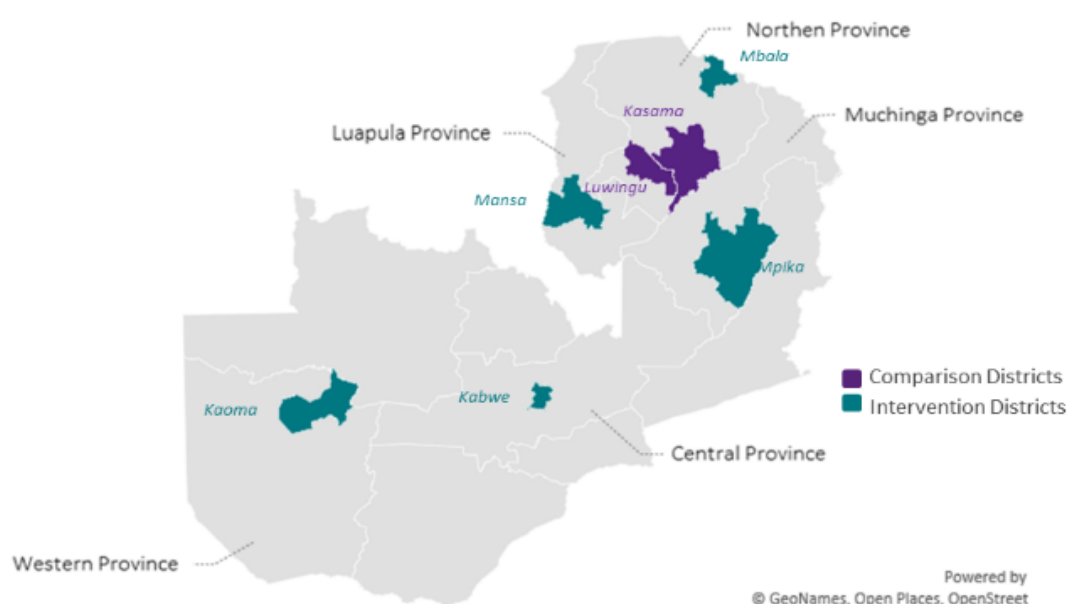
4. Sampling Strategy

The endline study adopted the sampled learners from baseline and made replacements where learners could not be traced due to seasonal activities and social disruptions such as sports activities and ploughing season. Many learners missed school to assist with farming, leading to low attendance and difficulty in finding participants.

During the baseline the two key objectives of the sampling process were as follows:

1) To ensure adequate data collection and analysis for the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS) to be validated in Zambia.

2) To enable the measurement of the difference in impact between intervention districts and comparison districts.

To achieve these objectives, the assessment utilized a **multi-stage cluster sampling approach**, which included:

● Purposive selection of a number of implementation districts to serve as intervention districts and another group earmarked for future implementation as comparison districts. This was restricted to districts where CAMFED had already established a relationship. Previous studies indicated that levels of empowerment within communities were not significantly different across districts (as shown by a low intraclass correlation coefficient, or ICC). This suggested that the districts would be similar in other important ways, making it fair to compare the intervention and comparison groups.
● Simple random sampling to select 50 schools from a list of schools within intervention districts, and 25 schools from a list of schools within comparison districts.
● Each selected school served as a cluster.
● The sample size was proportionally allocated to each cluster (school) using the Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) method.
● Proportionally allocating the sample based on the gender distribution in each school.

The survey sample size was calculated using Taro-Yamane's formula: $n = N/(1 + N*ME2)$
Where:
● n=Sample size
● N=Population. The sampling frame is the total number of Grade 8 students in the selected schools, obtained from the school information systems by CAMFED.
● ME=Margin of Error (5%)
● Yamane's formula utilizes a confidence level of 95% and a population proportion of 50%.

Sample sizes were estimated separately for the intervention and comparison groups and were representative of the Grade 8 population of the sampled schools within each group, as well as within each district. Due to the need to fulfil the requirement to validate the tool, the sample size was scaled up to reflect the validation requirements per CAMFED specifications (1,500 female participants). A 5% buffer was also added to the resulting sample to account for potential data quality challenges and follow up losses that may occur. Table 1 below outlines the sample sizes including the initial sample, baseline achievement and endline achievement.

Table 1. Sample Size

Districts	Initial Sample			Baseline Achievement			Endline Achievement		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Kaoma	198	197	395	123	289	412	165	266	431
Mbala	238	224	462	278	263	542	279	318	597
Mansa	211	227	438	242	203	446	217	253	470
Kabwe	213	268	481	168	312	480	188	303	491
Mpika	246	229	475	280	348	635	282	345	627
Kasama	260	248	508	266	276	542	271	320	591
Luwingu	201	182	383	188	124	314	151	210	361
Total	1567	1575	3142	1545	1815	3371	1553	2015	3568

5. Findings

Demographics

The study involved a total number of 6,939 interviews across baseline and endline data collection phases. This composed of 5,042 learners across 7 districts in Zambia; 1,869 (37%) learners participated in both baseline and endline, 1,474 (29%) participated in only the baseline and 1,699 (34%) participated only at the endline as the replacement sample for baseline participants that were no longer available. Seventy-five schools participated in the study with 1,314 (26%) of the learners being in comparison schools and 3,728 (74%) in intervention schools. Females constituted 55% of learners while males were 45%. The mean age was 16 years of age, the majority of the respondents (learners) were in Grade 9 (42%), and 20% of the respondents reported having a disability.

Fig 1. Participants Distribution by Condition and Wave

Intervention: Baseline only 1112, Endline only 1216, Baseline and endline 1400
Comparison: Baseline only 362, Endline only 483, Baseline and endline 469

Legend: Baseline only, Endline only, Baseline and endline
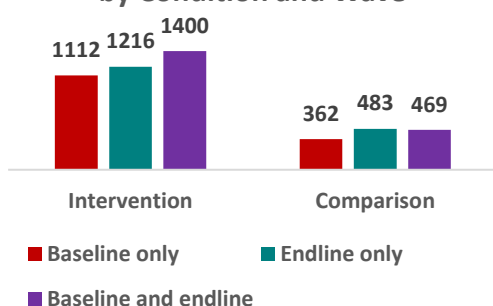
Fig 2. Participants Distribution by District

Mpika: Endline 627, Baseline 635
Mbala: Endline 597, Baseline 542
Mansa: Endline 470, Baseline 446
Luwingu: Endline 361, Baseline 314
Kasama: Endline 591, Baseline 542
Kaoma: Endline 431, Baseline 412
Kabwe: Endline 491, Baseline 480

Legend: Endline, Baseline
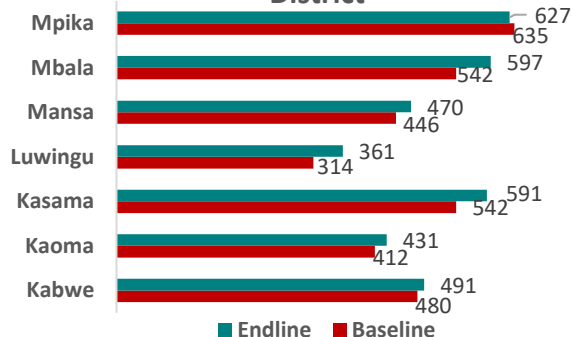
Fig 3. Participants Distribution by Gender

Female: Baseline 1813, Endline 2015
Male: Baseline 1545, Endline 1553

Legend: Baseline, Endline
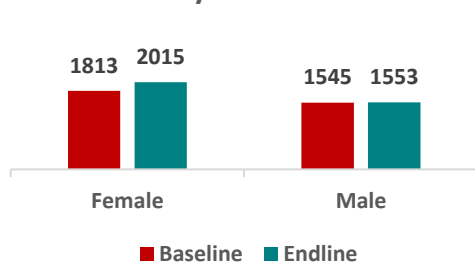
Fig 4. Participants Distribution by Age Group

≤14: Baseline 1014, Endline 289
15 - 16: Baseline 1350, Endline 1582
17 - 18: Baseline 757, Endline 1168
19 - 24: Baseline 246, Endline 528

Legend: Baseline, Endline
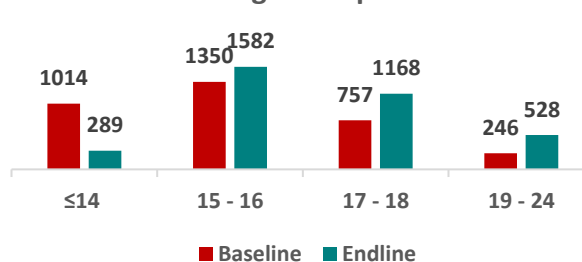
Fig 5. Participants Distribution by Disability Status

Yes: Baseline 1017, Endline 348
No: Baseline 2314, Endline 3217

Legend: Baseline, Endline
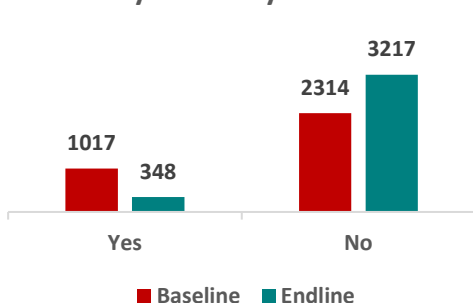
Fig 6. Participants Distribution by Grade

8: Baseline 2312, Endline 370
9: Baseline 544, Endline 2346
10: Baseline 29, Endline 243
11: Baseline 406, Endline 170
12: Baseline 28, Endline 431

Legend: Baseline, Endline
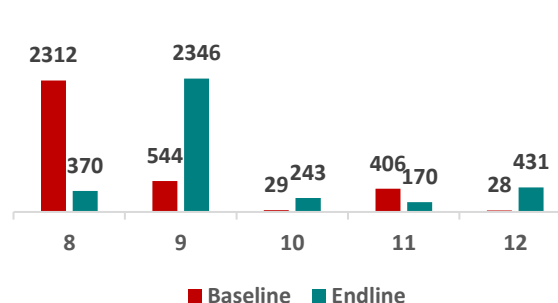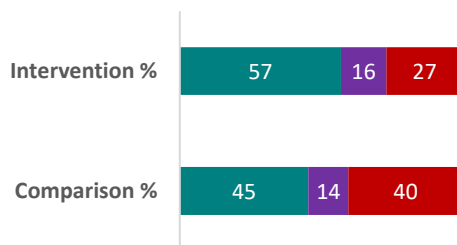
Improvement in Self-Belief

There was a statistically significant difference in the proportion of learners who reported improved self-belief from baseline to endline, among intervention schools than comparison schools.[26] 57% of learners in intervention schools reported improved self-belief scores as compared to 45% in comparison schools. Also, a lower proportion of learners reported a decrease in their self-belief scores in intervention schools (27%) than in comparison schools (40%). See Fig 7. Female learners in intervention schools also reported a higher improvement in self-belief scores (57%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43%). Also, a lower proportion of female learners in intervention schools (26%) reported a decrease in their self-belief scores as compared to female learners in comparison schools (42%). See Fig 8. The same trend was seen among male learners.

Fig 7. % of Learners by Change in Self-Belief Scores

Fig 8. % of Learners by Change in Self-Belief Scores and Gender
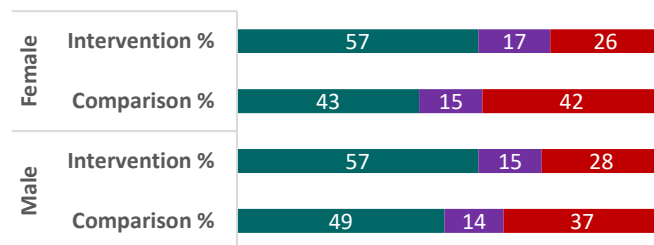
A Meaningful Increase

In addition to the overall improvements observed in Fig. 7 and 8 which refer to the proportion of learners that reported any change at all, the study also analyzed the proportion of learners that reported a meaningful increase; defined as endline scores that are at least a 0.5 standard deviation improvement from baseline scores. The 0.5 standard deviation improvement is equivalent to a medium effect size per statistical standards. The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-belief scores was higher in intervention (42%) than comparison schools (31%).[27] See Fig 9. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in self-belief scores was higher in intervention (42%) than in comparison schools (28%). A similar picture was seen with males too. See Fig 10.

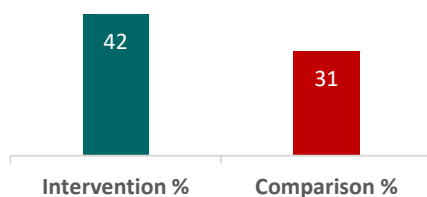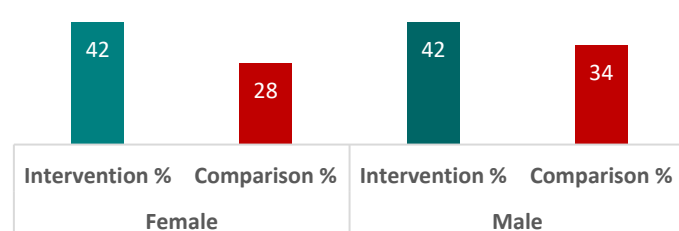**Fig 9. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD Increase in Self-Belief Scores**

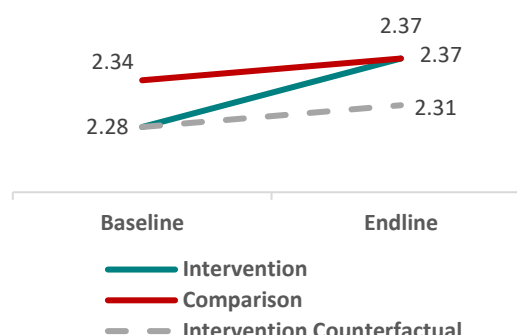**Fig 10. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD-Increase in Self-Belief Scores- by Gender**

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[26] At a p-value of <0.001

[27] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

Self-Belief Mean Scores

Analysis of self-belief mean scores from baseline to endline revealed a greater increase among intervention than comparison schools. The mean score increased from 2.28 to 2.37 in intervention schools and from 2.34 to 2.37 in comparison schools. The intervention counterfactual (dashed line) illustrates the potential change in the mean score of learners in the intervention schools, without receiving the intervention. Instead of increasing from 2.28 to 2.37, the mean score would have only increased to 2.31[28]. See Fig 11.

Self-Belief Mean Scores by Gender

These improvements cut across both male and female learners in intervention schools. Fig 12. disaggregates these results by gender and shows that female learners in intervention schools reported a higher increase in mean scores (2.27-2.39) than males (2.3-2.39). There was a converse picture in comparison schools with males experiencing a higher increase than females.
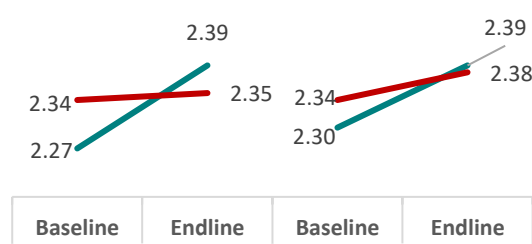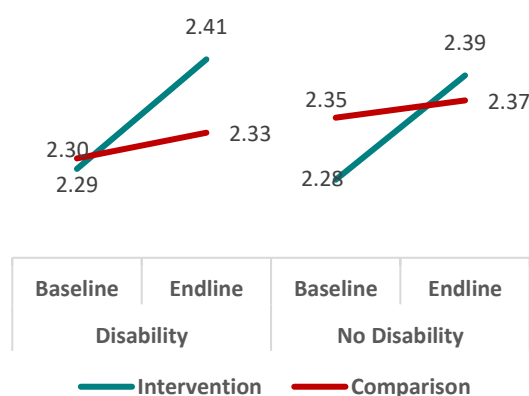
Self-Belief Mean Scores by Disability Status

Lastly, improvements cut across learners with and without a disability in intervention schools, with both groups experiencing improvements in their self-belief mean scores. However, learners in comparison schools had lower increases in mean scores irrespective of disability status. See Fig 13.

Observed Improvements in Self-Belief

The improvements in self-belief in the intervention schools per the survey results presented above were complemented by qualitative interview responses. Findings from these interviews include:

Fig 11. Change in Self-Belief Mean Scores by Condition

Fig 12. Change in Self-Belief Mean Scores by Gender, Wave and Condition

Fig 13. Change in Self-Belief Mean Scores by Disability, Wave and Condition

- **Increased Self-Confidence and Assertiveness**: Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, Guidance and Counselling (G&C) Teachers, Head Teachers, and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators reported that many learners had a boost in self-confidence, had a greater sense of self-worth and now express themselves better. Learners are said to be more interactive in class, readily participating in discussions, and were no longer as shy.

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[28] DiD of 0.06

They were comfortable asking questions, raising their hands, and even speaking in front of peers.

● **Improvement in Social Skills and Behavior:** Teacher Mentors, Learner Guides, Head Teachers and G&C Teachers described changes in social behavior, respect and cooperation among learners. They reported that learners are more considerate of each other, demonstrated respect for their peers and were also handling peer pressure better.

> *"Most of the learners were very closed up but after the Learner Guides speak to them and after consistently attending the Learner Program, they are able to stand up for themselves and are able to do things without being ashamed of themselves. The program has helped learners to believe in themselves and have gained high confidence levels. They can now give a clearer description of themselves and are able to discover inner abilities."*
>
> **Head Teacher**

Improvement in Self-Governance

There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of learners who reported improved self-governance from baseline to endline, among intervention schools than comparison schools[29]. 47% of learners in intervention schools reported improved self-governance scores as compared to 39% in comparison schools. Also, a lower proportion of learners reported a decrease in their self-governance scores in intervention schools (42%) than in comparison schools (49%). See Fig 14. The same trend was observed when data was disaggregated by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in self-governance scores (51%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (37%). Also, a lower proportion of female learners in intervention schools (39%) reported a decrease in their self-governance scores as compared to female learners in comparison schools (49%). There was no difference in the proportion of males who improved their scores between intervention and comparison schools. See Fig 15.

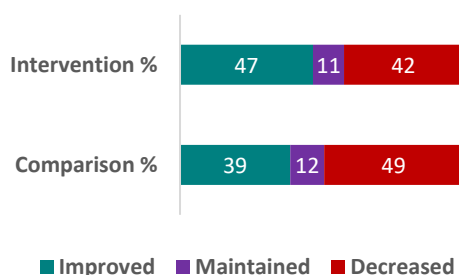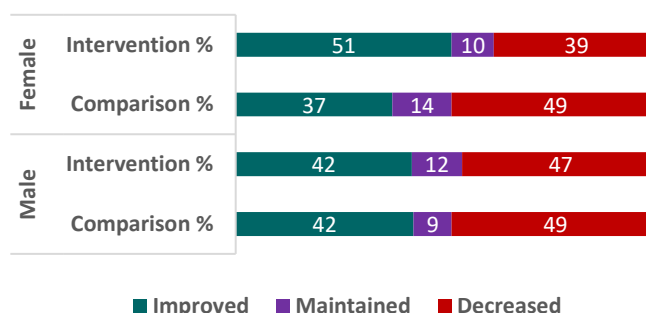**Fig 14. % of Learners by Change in Self-Governance Scores**

■ Improved ■ Maintained ■ Decreased

Fig 15. % of Learners by Change in Self-Governance Scores- by Gender

■ Improved ■ Maintained ■ Decreased

A Meaningful Increase

In addition to the overall improvements observed in Fig. 14 and 15 which refer to the proportion of learners that reported any change at all, the proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-governance scores was higher in intervention (37%) than comparison schools (28%).[30] See Fig 16. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in self-governance scores was also higher in intervention

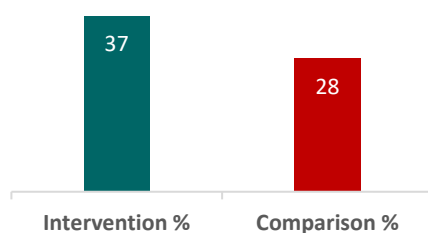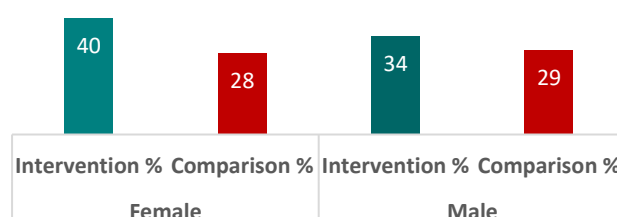**Fig 16. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD Increase in Self-Governance Scores**

Fig 17. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD-Increase in Self-Governance Scores- by Gender

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[29] At a p-value of <0.001

[30] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

schools (40%) than in comparison schools (28%), with similar results among males, but with a smaller difference between males in intervention and comparison schools. See Fig 17.

Self-Governance Mean Scores

Analysis of self-governance mean scores from baseline to endline revealed an increase in mean scores among intervention schools a decrease in these scores in comparison schools. The mean score increased from 2.35 to 2.38 in intervention schools, while among comparison schools there was a decrease from 2.35 to 2.33. In the intervention counterfactual scenario, the mean scores of learners in the intervention schools would have decreased from 2.35 to 2.33 without the learner guide program[31]. See Fig 18.

Self-Governance Mean Scores by Gender

Among female learners in the intervention schools, there was an increase in mean scores from 2.35 to 2.37, while male learners maintained their mean scores (2.37). In comparison schools, both female and male learner's mean scores decreased, from 2.35 to 2.32 and from 2.36 to 2.34 respectively. See Fig 19.

Self-Governance Mean Scores by Disability Status

Lastly, improvements among both learners with and without a disability were only noted in intervention schools. In comparison schools, both learners with and without a disability reported decreased mean scores. See Fig 20.

Observed Improvements in Self-Governance

The improvements in self-governance in the intervention schools per the survey results presented above were complemented by qualitative interview responses. Findings from these interviews include:

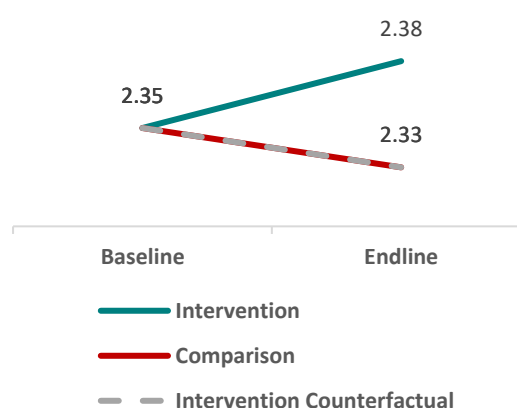**Fig 18. Change in Self-Governance Mean Scores by Condition**

Fig 19. Change in Self-Governance Mean Scores by Gender, Wave and Condition
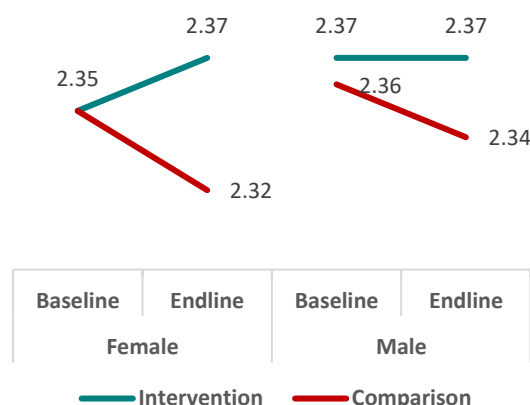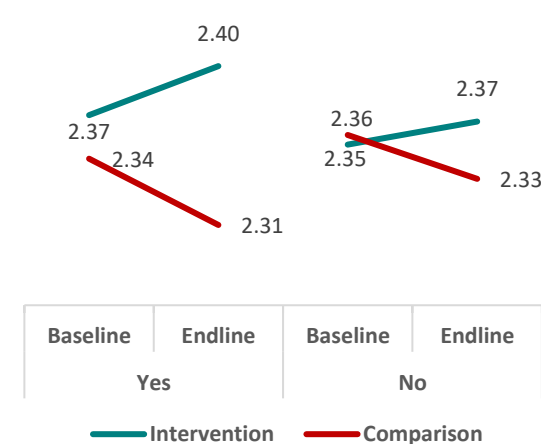

Fig 20. Change in Self-Governance Mean Scores by Disability, Wave and Condition

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[31] DiD of 0.05

- **Improved decision making in individual and group settings:** Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, G&C Teachers, Head Teachers, and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators stated that learners' decision making has improved. They described these decisions as not only related to current school activities but also to learners' future plans. As individuals, learners are applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills and identifying solutions to their problems as they arise. In groups, they are coordinating themselves in preparation for classes/LG sessions, as well as deciding how to navigate challenges with their homework, instead of waiting for LGs to coordinate/support them. Further, learners are increasingly making decisions about their future careers. There are also reports of improved negotiation skills related to sexual activity with girls being able to say no.

- **Better time management linked to increased academic performance**: Head Teachers and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators stated that learners are managing their time better. They described the learner's appreciation for time and positive changes in how learners plan and allocate their time, both in school and at home. This is said to contribute to improvements in academic performance. They also reported that less oversight is required from teachers/LGs to support learners, as learners are increasing their ability to self-direct by for example

> *"Most of the learners who attend these sessions are able to make decisions on their own such as making study timetables, starting up small businesses while in school such as selling vegetables and opening up small saloons for their upkeep and are able to control themselves without external interference."*
>
> **Teacher Mentor**

finishing their work without being monitored or helped, and continuing to study in the class in the absence of teachers.

- **Pursuit of entrepreneurial and extracurricular activities:** LGs, Teacher Mentors and G&C Teachers, report an increase in entrepreneurial pursuits or related extracurricular activities among learners. Examples of activities cited include small businesses selling vegetables and gardening.

- **Broader ecosystem effects:** Beyond the improvements observed at the individual level, there are also broader ecosystem effects reported by G&C Teachers and Head Teachers, including reports of learners transferring their knowledge and sharing experiences on self-governance with other learners, as well as wider-school and community impacts such as reduced school-based violence and reduced pregnancy rates.

Improvement in Leadership Skills

There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of learners who reported improved leadership skills from baseline to endline, among intervention schools than comparison schools.[32] 50% of learners in intervention schools reported improved leadership skills as compared to 39% in comparison schools. Also, a lower proportion (37%) of learners reported a decrease in their leadership skills in intervention schools than in comparison schools (48%). See Fig 21. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in leadership scores (52%) as compared to those in comparison schools (36%). Also, a lower proportion of female learners in intervention schools (35%) reported a decrease in their leadership skills mean scores as compared to those in comparison schools (51%). There was a small difference in the proportion of males that improved in intervention (46%) than comparison schools (42%). See Fig 22.

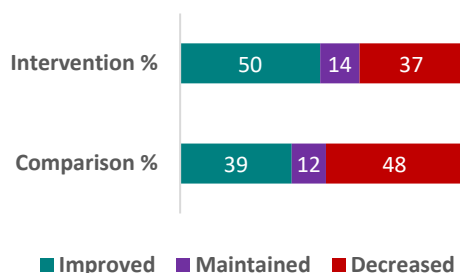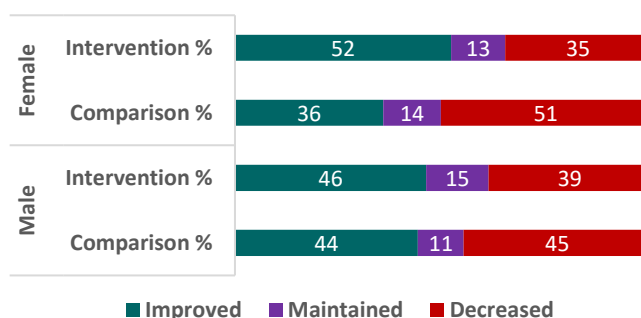**Fig 21. % of Learners by Change in Leadership Skills Scores**

Fig 22. % of Learners by Change in Leadership Skills Scores- by Gender

A Meaningful Increase

In addition to the overall improvements observed in Fig. 21 and 22 which refer to the proportion of learners that reported any change at all, the proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their leadership skills scores was higher in intervention (38%) than comparison schools (30%).[33] See Fig 23. The proportion of female

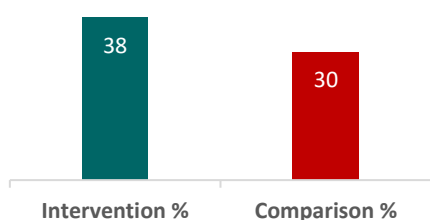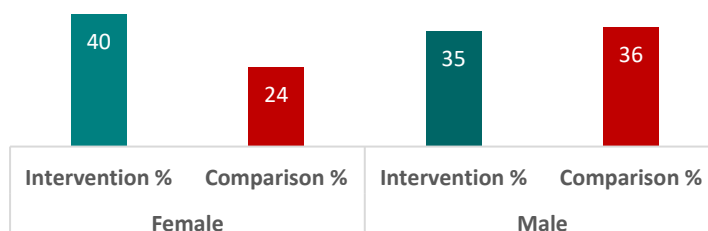**Fig 23. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD Increase in Leadership Skills Scores**

Fig 24. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD- Increase in Leadership Skills Scores- by Gender

---

[32] At a p-value of < 0.001.

[33] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

learners with a meaningful increase in leadership skills scores was also higher in intervention schools (40%) than in comparison schools (24%). The proportion of males with meaningful improvements was however similar in both intervention and comparison schools. See Fig 24.

Leadership Skills Mean Scores

Analysis of Leadership Skills mean scores from baseline to endline revealed an increase among intervention schools from 2.33 to 2.41, while among comparison schools there was a decrease from 2.4 to 2.36. In the intervention counterfactual scenario, the mean scores of learners in intervention schools would have decreased from 2.33 to 2.29 without the life skills intervention.[34] See Fig 25.

Leadership Skills Mean Scores by Gender

For both female and male learners, there was an increase in mean scores in the intervention schools while in the comparison schools there was a decrease in mean scores. However, female learners exhibited a greater increase in mean scores from 2.32 to 2.37 as compared to male learners (2.34 to 2.37). See Fig 26.

Fig 25. Change in Leadership Skills Mean Scores by Condition

Fig 26. Change in Leadership Skills Mean Scores by Gender, Wave and Condition

Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Female		Male	

Intervention — Comparison

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[34] Did of 0.12

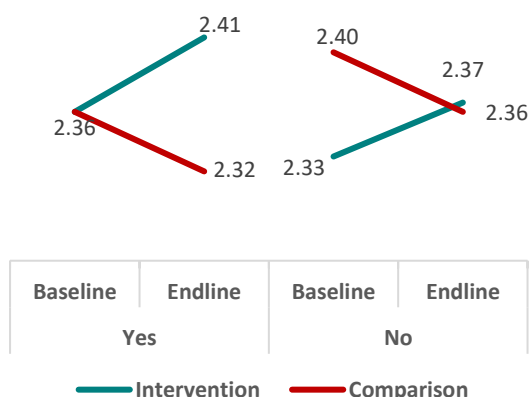**Leadership Skills Mean Scores by Disability Status**

Lastly, improvements among both learners with and without a disability, were only noted in intervention schools. In comparison schools, both learners with and without a disability reported a decline in mean scores. See Fig 27.

Observed Improvements in Leadership Skills

The improvements in leadership skills in the intervention schools per the quantitative survey results were complemented by qualitative interview responses. These include:

Fig 27. Change in Leadership Skills Mean Scores by Disability Status, Wave and Condition

Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Yes		No	

— Intervention   — Comparison

- **Increased Willingness to Take on Leadership Roles**: Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, G&C Teachers, and Head Teachers reported that learners were increasingly taking up and volunteering for leadership roles such as class monitors, prefects, and club leaders, demonstrating accountability by managing classroom activities, organizing clean-ups, and participating in school events without teacher oversight, as well as increased engagement in public speaking during assemblies and speaking up in discussions.

- **Positive Peer Influence:** G&C Teachers, Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, and Head Teachers stated that learners' leadership growth extends beyond individual achievements, positively influencing the school environment. Learners resolve conflicts among their peers, lead the formation of study groups and proactively organize events. They are inspiring their peers and reinforcing a supportive atmosphere.

> *"They have shown improvement in taking leadership roles and in managing conflicts, leading to fewer arguments in school."*
> **G&C Teacher**

Improvement in Environmental Beliefs

There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of learners who reported improved environmental beliefs from baseline to endline, among intervention schools than comparison schools. A total of 54% of learners in intervention schools reported improved environmental beliefs as compared to 49% in comparison schools. Also, a lower proportion of learners reported a decrease in their environmental beliefs in intervention schools (25%) than in comparison schools (31%). See Fig 28. The same trend was observed when the data was disaggregated by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools experiencing an improvement in environmental beliefs scores (57%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (50%). Also, a lower proportion of female learners in intervention schools (23%) reported a decrease in their environmental beliefs scores as compared to female learners in comparison schools (33%). There was no difference in the proportion of males who improved their scores in both intervention and comparison schools. See Fig 29.

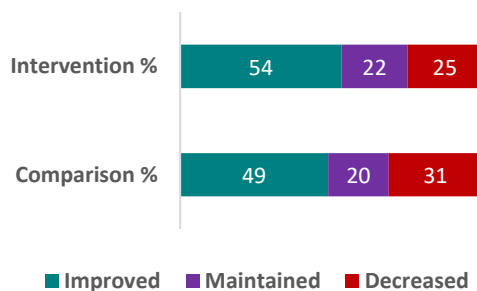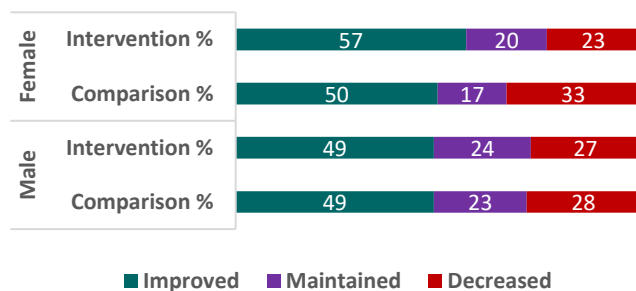**Fig 28. % of Learners by Change in Environmental Beliefs Scores**

	Improved	Maintained	Decreased
Intervention %	54	22	25
Comparison %	49	20	31

Fig 29. % of Learners by Change in Environmental Beliefs Scores and Gender

		Improved	Maintained	Decreased
Female	Intervention %	57	20	23
	Comparison %	50	17	33
Male	Intervention %	49	24	27
	Comparison %	49	23	28

A Meaningful Increase

In addition to the overall improvements observed in Fig. 31 and 32 which refer to the proportion of learners that reported any change at all, the proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their environmental beliefs scores was also higher in intervention (40%) than comparison schools (35%).[35] See Fig 30. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in environmental beliefs scores was similarly higher in intervention schools (43%) than in comparison schools (34%). The proportion of males with meaningful improvements was however the same in both intervention and comparison schools. See Fig 31.

Fig 30. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD Increase Enviromental Beliefs Scores

Intervention %	Comparison %
40	35
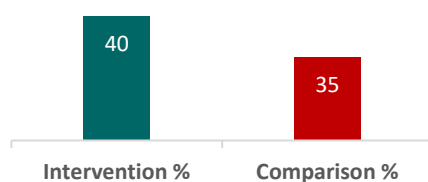
Fig 31. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD-Increase in Environmental Beliefs Scores-by Gender

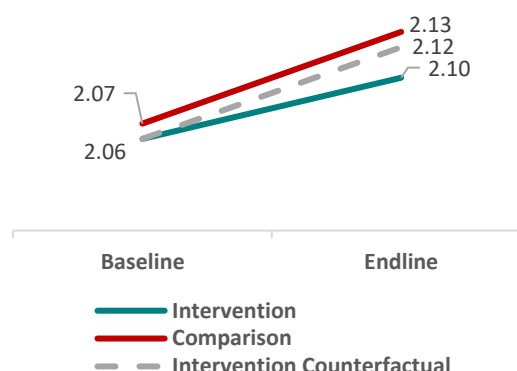| Intervention %	Comparison %	Intervention %	Comparison %
43	34	35	35
Female		Male	

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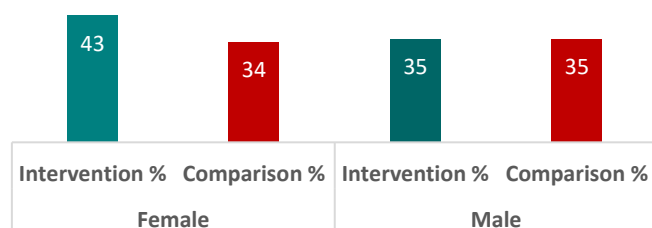
[35] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

Environmental Beliefs Mean Scores

Analysis of environmental beliefs mean scores revealed an increase in mean score from baseline to endline, with a higher increase among comparison schools than intervention schools. The mean score increased from 2.07 to 2.13 in comparison schools, and from 2.06 to 2.1 in intervention schools. In the intervention counterfactual scenario, the mean scores of learners in the intervention schools would have increased more, from 2.06 to 2.12.[36] See Fig 32. This is the only scale where the increase in comparison schools is higher than the increase in intervention schools.
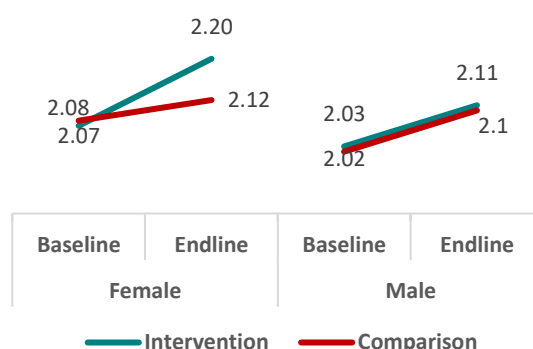
Fig 32. Change in Environmental Beliefs Mean Scores by Condition

Environmental Beliefs Mean Scores by Gender

Mean scores increased across both male and female learners in both intervention and comparison schools, with females reporting a higher increase than males. Female learners in intervention schools also reported a higher increase in mean scores (2.07 to 2.2) than those in comparison schools (2.07 to 2.12). The improvement in mean scores of males in both intervention and comparison schools was almost identical. See Fig 33.

Fig 33. Change in Environmental Belief Mean Scores by Gender, Wave and Condition

Environmental Beliefs Mean Scores by Disability Status

Lastly, there were improvements in mean scores among both learners with and without a disability, in intervention and comparison schools. However, the improvements in intervention schools were higher. See Fig 34.
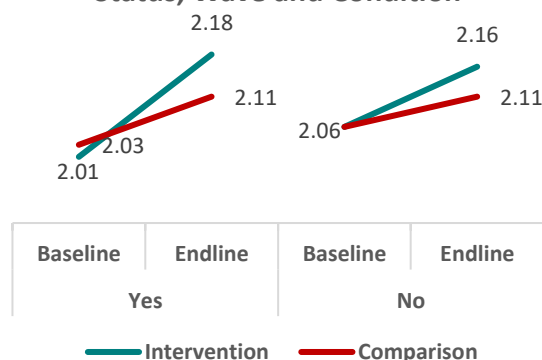
Observed Improvements in Environmental Beliefs

The improvements in Environmental Beliefs in the intervention schools per the survey results presented above were complemented by qualitative interview responses. Findings from these interviews include:

Fig 34. Change in Environmental Belief Mean Scores by Disability Status, Wave and Condition

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[36] DiD of -0.02

- **Confidence in Reporting Issues and Seeking Support:** District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Head Teachers, Teacher Mentors, Guidance and Counselling Teachers, and Learner Guides state that learners are demonstrating improved confidence in reporting issues affecting them, including sensitive issues such as abuse, bullying, sexual harassment, and challenges in their personal lives. Through supportive structures, learners are now able to communicate openly with mentors, guidance staff, and Learner Guides, addressing problems that impact their well-being and school life.

- **Empowerment and Rights Awareness to Combat Environmental Pressures:** District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, and Learner Guides state that learners, particularly girls, are empowered to make independent life choices in response to environmental pressures, as observed by their ability to resist early marriage and make informed decisions regarding early pregnancy, prioritizing their education and long-term aspirations. Learners are more assertive and standing up for their rights. There is also increased awareness of re-entry policies, and learners who previously dropped out due to pregnancy are returning to school with a stronger appreciation for the benefits of continuing their education.

- **Peer Pressure Resistance:** Learner Guides and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators also state that learners are showing an enhanced ability to resist negative peer influences. This includes making conscious choices to avoid harmful social groups and focusing on their studies. Some girls who previously engaged in conflict, are now seeking guidance and counselling, demonstrating increased resilience and independence from peer pressure.

> *"Learners are able to stand up for themselves and are able to report violence cases to the Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors and the guidance office. They are able to share abuse cases with learner guides and other problems they face in their homes."*
> **Learner Guides**

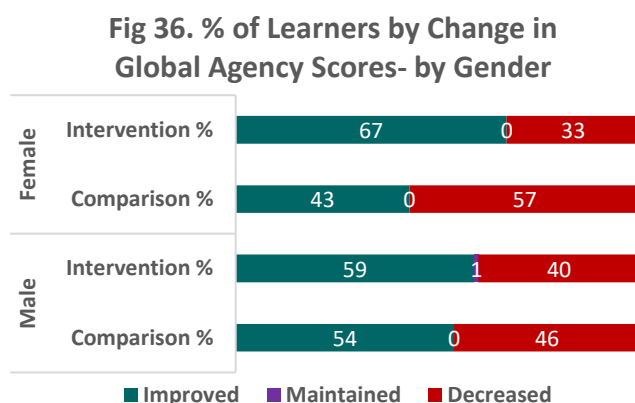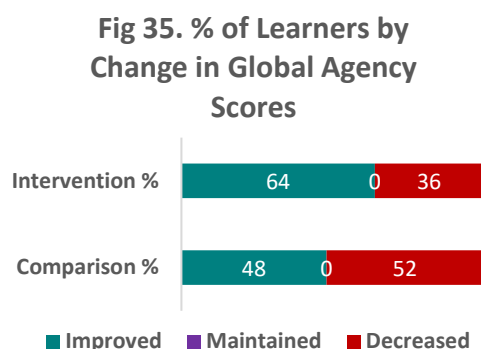> *"They are struggling with early marriages because the most important thing for people here is to involve young ones in marriage. With the program, learners are now able to say no because of the information they are getting. However, they are still struggling because of obstacles from their parents and thus their ability to make decisions is limited and largely influenced by their parents."*
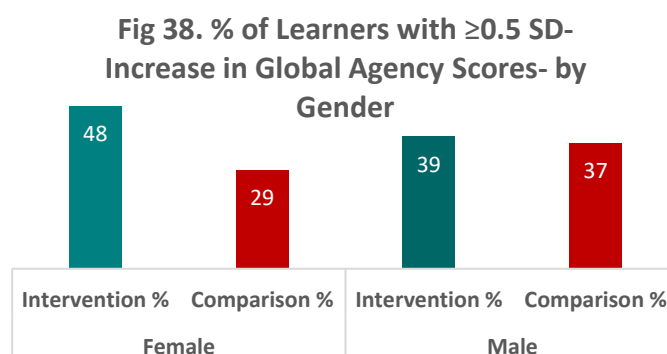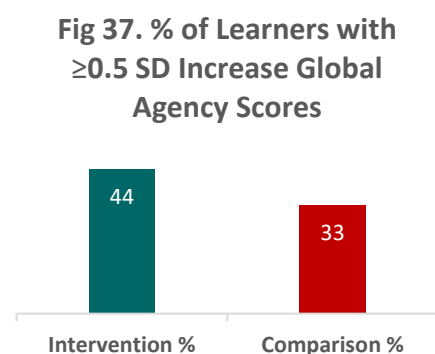> **Head Teacher**

Improvement in Global Agency

There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of learners who reported improvement in all scales from baseline to endline, among intervention schools than comparison schools[37]. 64% of learners in intervention schools reported improved global agency as compared to 48% in comparison schools. Also, a lower proportion of learners reported a decrease in their global agency scores in intervention schools (36%) than in comparison schools (52%). See Fig 35. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in global agency scores (67%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43%). Also, a lower proportion of female learners in intervention schools (33%) reported a decrease in their global agency scores as compared to female learners in comparison schools (57%). There was a small difference in the proportion of males that improved in intervention (59%) than comparison schools (54%). See Fig 36.

Fig 35. % of Learners by Change in Global Agency Scores

	Improved	Maintained	Decreased
Intervention %	64	0	36
Comparison %	48	0	52

Fig 36. % of Learners by Change in Global Agency Scores- by Gender

		Improved	Maintained	Decreased
Female	Intervention %	67	0	33
Female	Comparison %	43	0	57
Male	Intervention %	59	1	40
Male	Comparison %	54	0	46

A Meaningful Increase

In addition to the overall improvements observed in Fig. 39 and 40 which refer to the proportion of learners that reported any change at all, the proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their global agency scores was higher in intervention (44%) than comparison schools (33%)[38]. See Fig 37. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in global agency scores was also higher in intervention schools (48%) than in comparison schools (29%). The proportion of males with meaningful improvements was slightly higher in intervention (39%) than comparison (37%) schools. See Fig 38.

Fig 37. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD Increase Global Agency Scores

Intervention %	Comparison %
44	33

Fig 38. % of Learners with ≥0.5 SD-Increase in Global Agency Scores- by Gender

Female		Male	
Intervention %	Comparison %	Intervention %	Comparison %
48	29	39	37

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[37] At a p-value of <0.001

[38] Using 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

Global Agency Mean Scores

Analysis of global agency mean scores revealed an increase in mean score from baseline to endline among intervention schools (2.26 to 2.32), whereas comparison schools increased their score slightly from 2.29 to 2.30. In the intervention counterfactual scenario, the mean score of learners in intervention schools would have been maintained without the life skills program (2.26)[39]. See Fig 39.

Global Agency Mean Scores by Gender

These improvements cut across both male and female learners in intervention schools; however female learners reported a higher increase in mean scores (2.25-2.33) than males (2.26-2.31). In the comparison schools there was a mixed picture, female learners mean scores decreased while male learners mean scores increased. See Fig 40.

Global Agency Mean Scores by Disability Status

Lastly, improvements among both learners with and without a disability were seen in intervention schools. However, in comparison schools, both learners with and without a disability somewhat maintained their mean scores. Among learners with disability, those in intervention schools had a higher increase in mean scores, from 2.26 to 2.35, than those in comparison schools (from 2.26 to 2.27). See Fig 41.

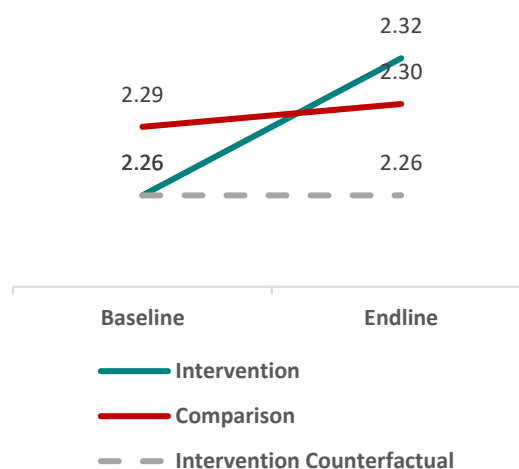**Fig 39. Change in Global Agency Mean Scores by Condition**

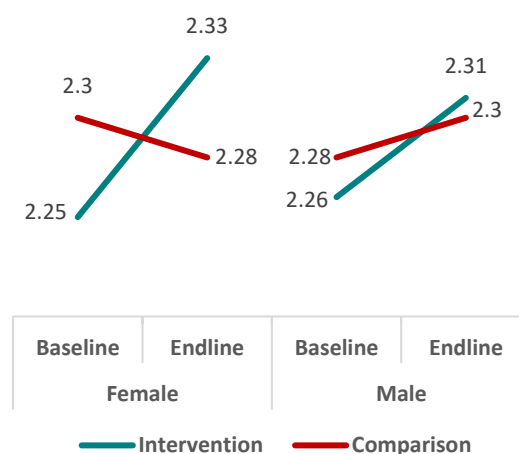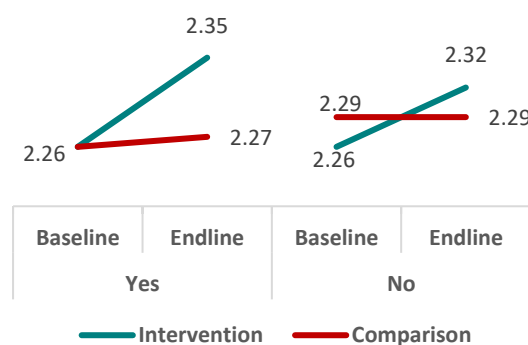**Fig 40. Change in Global Agency Mean Scores by Gender, Wave and Condition**

Fig 41. Change in Global Agency Mean Scores by Disability Status, Wave and Condition

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[39] DiD of 0.06

The table below summarizes the Difference in Differences as well as p values across all the scales.

Table 2. DID and P-values Summary

Scale	All			
	DiD	Direction	Significance	Effect size
Self-Belief	0.06	+	p < 0.001	Small
Self-Governance	0.05	+	p = 0.002	Small
Leadership Skills	0.12	+	p < 0.001	Small
Environmental Beliefs	-0.02	+	p < 0.001	Small
Global Score	0.06	+	p < 0.001	Small

Observed improvements in Global Agency

- **School attendance, retention, completion rates, and post-secondary lifestyles:** In addition to improvements reported across the four scales (self-belief, self-governance, leadership skills and environmental beliefs) presented earlier, the qualitative interviews also reported that the Learner Guide program has had an impact on learners' school attendance, retention, completion rates, and post-secondary lifestyles. Many respondents observed improvements in school attendance, with learners showing eagerness to attend *My Better World* (MBW) (CAMFED's life skills and learning curriculum) sessions and regular classes. Several respondents highlighted reduced dropout rates, particularly among girls who had dropped out due to pregnancy but were encouraged by Learner Guides to successfully return to school. Completion rates have also improved, with learners receiving support to continue their education. Post-secondary lifestyle changes were also noted, with graduates starting small businesses or pursuing further education, applying the financial literacy and life skills they gained from the program.

- **Learner Guides personal improvement:** During the FGDs, the Learner Guides also expressed ways in which the program has benefited them. Many of them reported improvements in their own self-confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to stand in front of large groups and facilitate sessions without fear. The experience has also helped them develop public speaking and communication skills, allowing them to engage more effectively with learners and community members. They highlighted

"With the coming of this program, the dropout rate has reduced. School dropouts have reduced, and even early marriages have reduced. Many learners who were involved in early marriages have come back to school. We have produced five learners who left their marriages and are about to complete their education. Most of the boys who were involved in smoking and drinking have also changed. The attendance has improved. This year, we have 570 students, whereas last year we had 429. This increase is partly due to the program. Learners are gaining information from the program and sharing it with others, which has led to an increase in school attendance."
Head Teacher

that the program has fostered leadership and teaching abilities, with some even considering careers in teaching due to their positive experiences. They have also become better role models, gaining respect from their peers and communities by demonstrating responsible behavior and dedication. Additionally, the program has enhanced their problem-solving enabling them to handle various challenges during sessions.

Program Contributions to Life Skills Improvement

From the qualitative interviews, respondents described ways in which specific aspects of the program positively influenced learners' life skills:

- **Learning and Growth through MBW Sessions:** Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, Head Teachers, G&C Teachers, and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators reported that MBW sessions provide a foundation in self-confidence, personal reflection, and resilience. Many respondents indicated that topics within the MBW book encourage self-esteem and reinforce the importance of personal growth, motivating learners to participate and engage confidently.
- **Role Modelling and Mentorship by both Teacher Mentors and Learner Guides:** Teacher Mentors, Learner Guides, G&C Teachers report that the program's use of relatable role models, especially Learner Guides and Teacher Mentors is key, as these mentors serve as examples and support systems. They are relatable to learners.
- **Collaborative Group Activities:** Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, G&C Teachers stated that group activities encourage learners to collaborate and share knowledge, helping shy or reserved learners participate. Group discussions and teamwork tasks within MBW sessions allow learners to build self-confidence and assert themselves with the support of their peers.
- **Supportive Peer Interactions:** Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, Head Teachers also stated that peer-to-peer engagement within the MBW sessions has had a substantial impact on learners' self-belief, as they are encouraged to share their ideas and interact freely. This environment nurtures self-assurance and a sense of community among learners.

Current Challenges

Despite the positive progress made in terms of global agency, challenges still exist, and this is highlighted below:

- **Impact of Peer Pressure and Societal Influences:** Learner Guides G&C Teachers, Teacher Mentors, and Head Teachers stated that some learners who face negative peer pressure and family influences struggle more with self-belief. These external pressures make learners hesitant to express themselves, despite the support offered by MBW sessions.
- **Lack of Parental Support:** G&C Teachers and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators stated that some learners struggle with self-belief due to a lack of parental support. In cases where parents do not value the MBW program or prioritize traditional views over education, learners struggle to feel validated in their efforts, impacting their self-worth.
- **Limited Exposure and Language Barrier:** Teacher Mentors, Learner Guides, and G&C Teachers stated that in rural areas, language barriers and limited exposure to broader perspectives hinder learners' self-belief. Lessons are often delivered in English, which some learners find difficult to follow, affecting their ability to engage fully in discussions

and feel confident. These learners are often hesitant to participate fully in class, needing extra encouragement to build their self-confidence.

- **Inconsistencies in Leadership Performance:** Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors and Head Teachers reported that some learners show initial enthusiasm for leadership roles but struggle to maintain consistency without reinforcement. Continuous motivation and support are needed for sustained engagement.
- **Barriers to Reporting and Seeking Support:** Despite the program's efforts, some learners still face significant barriers to reporting abuse and seeking support, as noted by the District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Head Teachers, Learner Guides, and Teacher Mentors. Learners often hesitate to report abuse cases, particularly when family members are involved, due to fears of embarrassment, family pressure, and societal stigma. Cultural beliefs and norms surrounding abuse further discourage openness, creating challenges in addressing these sensitive issues. Additionally, some learners continue to struggle with confiding in others about personal challenges.
- **Challenges in Countering Early Marriage Influences:** Early marriage remains a significant challenge for learners, as highlighted by the G&C Teacher and Learner Guides. Despite efforts to emphasize the importance of education and independence, some learners, particularly girls, feel pressured by family expectations and societal norms to marry early, even at the expense of continuing their studies. Many struggle to report forced marriages, fearing repercussions such as being ostracized or expelled from their homes. This pressure underscores the need for stronger advocacy around the long-term benefits of education and personal autonomy to counteract early marriage influences**.**
- **Attendance Challenges and Perceptions of Gender Support:** Inconsistent attendance remains a challenge for some learners, particularly boys, as noted by the G&C Teacher. Infrastructure limitations affect regular lesson attendance, and boys often feel excluded, believing that CAMFED's support is primarily directed toward girls.

Recommendations to Improve Life Skills among Learners

The interviewees made the following recommendations towards enhancing program activities and improving life skills:

- **Enhanced Confidence-Building and Public Speaking Training:** Teacher Mentors, Learner Guides, and G&C Teachers suggested that adding more activities focused on public speaking and self-assertion, such as role-playing and storytelling, could help learners become more confident. Encouraging learners to express themselves through structured public speaking exercises would reinforce their self-belief.
- **Focused Sessions on Resilience Against Peer Pressure:** G&C Teachers, Learner Guides, and Teacher Mentors suggested the introduction of sessions dedicated to handling peer pressure and understanding personal values, would benefit learners facing external societal influences.
- **Addressing Language and Exposure Barriers:** Teacher Mentors, and G&C Teachers suggested incorporating bilingual sessions and providing additional resources in local languages would help learners better understand the content. Increased exposure to educational trips or interactive online sessions could expand learners' worldview, encouraging their self-belief.
- **Parental and Community Involvement in MBW Sessions:** District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators and G&C Teachers recommended involving parents and community leaders in sessions could bridge gaps in support. Encouraging parental

involvement in MBW activities and sharing success stories could shift attitudes and reinforce the program's value.

- **Consistent Mentorship and Role-modelling Activities:** Learner Guides, and Teacher Mentors suggested that structured mentorship sessions, where learners engage regularly with Learner Guides, could provide continuous motivation. Highlighting alumni stories or community role models may further inspire learners to build self-belief despite external challenges.

- **Capacity building for LGs including differentiated support for learners:** Several respondents simply suggested continuing to provide MBW sessions, reinforcing the information and learning provided here as this is expected to effect the desired changes over time. However, several improvements have been suggested towards enhancing self-governance skills, by Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, Head Teachers, and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators. These are also applicable to other life skills. They include providing additional capacity building for Learner Guides, including how to provide differentiated support to learners (slower learners vs. fast learners or shy vs confident learners). Some LGs owned up to not being able to effectively support slower learners.

- **Increased involvement of other teachers in schools:** Respondents also suggested involvement of other teachers' by training them to understand the MBW program so they can have the same mindset and support learners as needed. The program is currently limited to Teacher Mentors (teachers in the schools), however learners are influenced by other teachers in the school. Learner Guides also described their perceived inadequacies with supporting learners in their academics and would like to establish stronger linkages with teachers toward ensuring the learners' needs are better addressed.

- **Additional sessions and motivation to enrich the MBW sessions:** There were also suggestions by Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, G&C Teachers, Head Teachers and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, to include additional content, activities or rewards that may help enrich the MBW program and motivate learners. These include the inclusion of internships or career assessments to help in career identification, financial literacy skills, integrating music and support with the MBW curriculum, and providing refreshments during sessions and books as rewards. Other more systemic suggestions include making MBW sessions an integral part of the school curriculum and compulsory for all learners, also ensuring that grade 12's receive these sessions despite being an exam class, as they are closest to needing these life skills as they graduate.

- **Incentivizing Leadership Participation:** Teacher Mentors and G&C Teachers recommended small rewards or recognition for milestones could motivate learners to remain engaged. Such incentives would reinforce the importance of continued participation in leadership development.

- **Accessible Counselling:** The Learner Guide program should continue to provide free and private counselling sessions for learners, particularly those who may struggle with reporting serious issues, as noted by the Learner Guides.

6. Constraints

Despite the significant successes observed in the CAMFED Learner Guide program, several constraints were encountered during the evaluation process that impacted the program's implementation and outcomes:

1. **High Rates of Absenteeism:** Many learners who were interviewed at baseline were absent from schools due to various reasons, including early marriages and school transfers. Replacements were made in order to achieve the desired threshold of learners in the endline evaluation.
2. **Seasonal and Social Disruptions:** The data collection process faced multiple challenges due to seasonal activities, cultural norms, and social expectations. During the ploughing season, many learners missed school to assist with farming, leading to low attendance and difficulty in finding participants. Additionally, ongoing sports activities in some schools made it challenging to locate learners. Parental restrictions also played a significant role, as some parents prohibited their children from participating in the survey due to cultural norms and social expectations. The evaluation team was flexible and interviewed learners as per their availability. However, despite the disruptions the number of learners surveyed and reached at Endline was sufficient to give meaningful results.
3. **Language Barriers:** The Lozi and Bemba languages have many dialects, which created difficulties in understanding the languages used in the assessment tool in some areas, such as Kaoma and Mpika respectively. Additional enumerators with the required language capabilities were provided to cater for areas where language barriers were a challenge.
4. **Less experienced CAMFED Association Enumerators**: There is need for on-going support to CAMFED Association enumerators as they struggled with maintaining consistency, managing diverse participant responses, and handling sensitive issues effectively. Daily briefing and debriefing sessions were conducted to ensure the enumerators were equipped with adequate knowledge of the data collection processes.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The evaluation of self-belief showed statistically significant improvements, particularly in intervention schools, where 57% of learners reported increased self-belief compared to 45% in comparison schools. Female learners in intervention schools also reported a higher improvement in self-belief scores (57%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-belief scores was higher in intervention (42%) than comparison schools (31%).[40] Additionally, the proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in self-belief scores was higher in intervention (42%) than in comparison schools (28%). These findings were further supported by qualitative interviews, which highlighted notable increases in self-confidence, participation in class, and proactive engagement in both academic and personal development activities. Notably, female learners experienced a higher increase in mean self-belief scores compared to their male counterparts. Improvements were also higher in intervention schools among learners both with and without a disability. The persistence of social norms, limited parental support, and challenges such as inconsistent attendance and language barriers were identified as factors contributing to the decrease in self-belief for some learners. Despite these challenges, the overall positive impact of the Learner Guide program on developing self-belief among marginalized girls is evident, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in empowering learners to build the confidence and self-esteem necessary for their academic and personal success.

With regards to self-governance, learners showed statistically significant improvements, particularly in intervention schools, where 47% of learners reported enhanced self-governance compared to 39% in comparison schools. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in self-governance scores (51%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (37%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their self-governance scores was higher in intervention (37%) than comparison schools (28%).[41] Additionally, the proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in self-governance scores was also higher in intervention schools (40%) than in comparison schools (28%). This improvement was reflected in the increased ability of learners to organize their activities, make decisions, and engage in personal projects without external prompting. Female learners in intervention schools demonstrated a modest increase in their mean self-governance scores, while male learners maintained their scores. Furthermore, improvements among both learners with and without a disability, were only noted in intervention schools. Despite these positive outcomes, challenges such as lack of parental support, particularly for girls, inconsistent attendance, and lingering gender biases were noted as obstacles that hindered some learners from fully developing self-governance skills. Generally, the Learner Guide program has been effective in the development of self-governance among marginalized learners, equipping them with the skills necessary to take initiative and make informed decisions.

The assessment of leadership skills showed statistically significant advancements, particularly in intervention schools, where 50% of learners reported improvements in their

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[40] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

[41] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

leadership abilities compared to 39% in comparison schools. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in leadership scores (52%) as compared to those in comparison schools (36%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their leadership skills scores was higher in intervention (38%) than comparison schools (30%).[42] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in leadership skills scores was also higher in intervention schools (40%) than in comparison schools (24%). These improvements were demonstrated through increased willingness among learners to take on leadership roles, such as class monitors and leaders in school clubs, and their growing confidence in organizing activities and managing group discussions. Female learners in intervention schools exhibited a higher increase in their mean leadership scores as compared to male learners. Moreover, improvements among both learners with and without a disability, were only noted in intervention schools. Some challenges persisted, including the difficulty learners faced in balancing leadership responsibilities with academic demands, decision-making challenges, and language barriers that affected their ability to lead effectively. Regardless of these challenges, the Learner Guide program has successfully enhanced the leadership skills of marginalized learners, empowering them to take on leadership roles confidently and contribute positively to their schools and communities.

The evaluation of environmental beliefs among learners revealed statistically significant progress, particularly in intervention schools, where 54% of learners reported improved environmental beliefs compared to 49% in comparison schools. Also, more female learners in intervention schools experienced an improvement in environmental beliefs scores (57%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (50%). The proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their environmental beliefs scores was also higher in intervention (40%) than comparison schools (35%).[43] The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in environmental beliefs scores was similarly higher in intervention schools (43%) than in comparison schools (34%). Underscored by the qualitative interviews with Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors, and Guidance and Counselling Teachers, these improvements were reflected in the increased awareness and belief among learners that they have the ability to influence their environment, as well as a slight shift in attitudes towards gender roles and norms. Female learners in intervention schools showed a higher increase in their mean environmental belief scores, compared to male learners. Furthermore, there were higher improvements in mean scores among both learners with and without a disability in intervention schools. Despite these positive changes, traditional gender norms and economic constraints continued to pose challenges, with some learners still adhering to beliefs that prioritize male education and decision-making within the household. Nonetheless, as highlighted in the qualitative interviews, the Learner Guide program has been effective in promoting more progressive environmental beliefs among marginalized learners, encouraging them to challenge traditional norms and advocate for gender equality and social change within their communities.

Overall learners in intervention schools reported higher improvements in their global agency, 64%, compared to 48% in comparison schools. The same trend was observed by gender, with more female learners in intervention schools reporting an improvement in

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[42] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

[43] Using a 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

global agency scores (67%) as compared to female learners in comparison schools (43%). proportion of learners who reported a meaningful improvement in their global agency scores was higher in intervention (44%) than comparison schools (33%)[44]. The proportion of female learners with a meaningful increase in global agency scores was also higher in intervention schools (48%) than in comparison schools (29%). **These statistically significant improvements were evident in the learners' enhanced ability to navigate their social and academic environments, increased school attendance, and higher retention and completion rates. Female learners in intervention schools experienced a notable increase in their mean global agency scores, compared to male learners. Among learners with disability, those in intervention schools had a higher increase in mean scores, from 2.26 to 2.35, than those in comparison schools.** The program's impact was further underscored during the qualitative interviews with Learner Guides, Teacher Mentors and District Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, by post-secondary lifestyle changes, with many graduates starting small businesses or pursuing further education, applying the life skills and financial literacy they acquired. Overall, the Learner Guide program has successfully empowered marginalized learners to take control of their futures, demonstrating that the development of global agency can lead to meaningful and sustainable changes in their lives and communities.

Lastly, the qualitative interviews also highlighted the positive impact of MBW sessions in fostering learners' life skills, particularly through structured mentorship, relatable role models, and collaborative group activities. These sessions helped build self-confidence, personal reflection, and resilience. However, barriers such as peer pressure, economic constraints, and entrenched cultural and gender norms hindered some learners' full participation, with boys often feeling excluded from support and girls facing pressures related to early marriage and societal expectations. Language barriers, limited exposure to broader perspectives, and inconsistent leadership performance were also noted. Additionally, challenges in reporting sensitive issues and accessing support emerged, particularly regarding abuse and personal struggles. Recommendations included increasing parental and community involvement, addressing language and exposure barriers, offering public speaking training, providing continuous mentorship, and building capacity for Learner Guides to support a diverse range of learners, particularly those with academic or personal difficulties.

Recommendations

Building on the successes of the CAMFED Learner Guide program, these recommendations are designed to enhance the program's effectiveness, address emerging challenges, and ensure its long-term sustainability. By focusing on continuous improvement, community engagement, and targeted interventions, CAMFED can further empower marginalized girls and young women to achieve their full potential.

1. **Scale and Replicate Successful Components:** Given the positive outcomes associated with the Learner Guide program, consider expanding the model to similar rural Zambian schools or replicating it in different contexts in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Tailor the replication process to local needs and conditions, ensuring that the core elements of the program—such as mentorship, life skills training, and psychosocial support—are maintained. Expanding the Learner Guide

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[44] Using 0.5 standard deviation improvement = medium effect size

program supports the outputs of the program by increasing its reach and ensuring more learners benefit from the life skills education. This will further contribute to the medium-term and long-term outcomes of improved educational outcomes and securing meaningful futures for young women.

2. **Enhance Parental and Community Engagement to Address Harmful Gender Norms:** CAMFED Zambia and child protection community forums should (i) engage parents and guardians as local influencers and role models to advocate for education over early marriage and traditional practices (ii)develop targeted interventions, including community outreach and education initiatives, to promote gender equality and encourage the broader acceptance of girls' education and leadership and (iii) engage local communities in discussions and activities that foster a more supportive environment for girls' empowerment. This will support the short-term outcomes of increasing self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency among marginalized girls by involving the community, which is essential for creating a supportive environment. This also contributes to medium-term outcomes by enhancing psychosocial readiness and improving educational outcomes.

3. **Strengthen Support for Learners with Disabilities and Language Barriers:** CAMFED Zambia should provide specialized training for Learner Guides on inclusive teaching methods and develop accessible learning resources tailored to the needs of these learners. Introduce peer support systems to enhance social inclusion and mutual assistance among learners. Providing specialized training and resources for Learner Guides directly contributes to the outputs and activities of improving knowledge and skills around agency, self-esteem, and confidence. This is crucial for ensuring that all learners, including those with disabilities or language barriers, can achieve the short-term outcomes of increased self-esteem and agency.

4. **Increase Support for Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, and Learner Guides:** CAMFED Zambia and the Ministry of Education should provide regular workshops, training sessions, and capacity-building opportunities for Guidance and Counselling Coordinators, Teacher Mentors, and Learner Guides. There is a need to also recognize their efforts with certificates or allowances to keep them motivated and engaged. Additionally, ensure they have the necessary logistical support, such as transport allowances and resources, to perform their duties effectively. This will build on the current support framework and address both their professional development needs and logistical challenges.

5. **Integrate Leadership Development into Life Skills Education:** CAMFED Zambia should strengthen the life skills curriculum delivered by Learner Guides (LGs) by incorporating leadership training tailored for girls. This could include modules on decision-making, public speaking, conflict resolution, and balancing leadership roles with academic responsibilities. Establish safe spaces within schools where female learners can practice these skills, receive mentorship, and discuss gender-specific challenges such as biases and peer pressure. This approach will empower girls to take on leadership roles confidently while continuing their academic and personal development.

6. **Monitor and Address Gender-Specific Challenges:** Establish regular monitoring of gender-specific challenges within schools, such as gender biases, peer pressure, and balancing leadership roles with academic responsibilities. Develop targeted interventions, such as leadership workshops specifically for girls, and create safe spaces for female learners to discuss and address these challenges.

Annexes

Annex A: Qualitative Word Mapping

Annex B: Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS)

1	Please enter learner study ID number
	Please enter the enumerator's name
	Hello, my name is (your name). I am here to evaluate how the Learner Guide program has contributed to the development of your life skills, on behalf of CAMFED. Last year, we conducted a baseline study at the beginning of the program, and now we are here for the endline assessment at the end of the program. Please be assured that all your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Could you please let me know if you have your consent form signed by your parents or guardians? The survey will take about 30 minutes to complete. Do you have any questions?
	This questionnaire will not affect the support you, or other family members are receiving or could receive from CAMFED in the future. We will not pass on any of this information in any way that you could be identified. Please therefore answer the questions as completely and accurately as possible.
	Note to the enumerator: Please now present and explain the Likert scale to the learners.
	Are you ready to start the questionnaire?
2	Today's date
3	District:
4	Select the school from the list below
5	What is your full name?
6	What is your date of birth (day / month / year)?
7	What is your gender?
8	What grade are you in?
9	Do you have a disability?
10	What is your parents highest educational level?
	Other, please specify:
11	Do you receive CAMFED support to attend school?
	The following set of questions will ask you to consider how you think about yourself, your environment, and your skills and abilities. You should answer as truthfully as you can.
	Section 1: Listen carefully to each statement and share the answer that best describes what you think about the statement.
12	I am satisfied with who I am (as a person)
13	I can do tasks that other people can do
14	I am a person of value
15	I can solve difficult problems if I work hard
16	I am sure of my abilities to deal with things I did not plan for
17	When faced with problems, I remain calm because I can deal with them

18	When faced with problems, I find different ways to solve the problem.
19	I can manage all the problems that come in my life
	Section 2: Listen carefully to each statement and share the answer that best reflects how often you think you do the task described. "Sometimes" means that you do this half the time.
20	I am good at planning for things I want to do
21	When I plan for things, I think about how long it might take to do it
22	When I solve a problem, I try to find out what caused the problem
23	When I solve a problem in my life, I think about different solutions to find the best one
24	When I face a new problem, I believe I can find a solution
25	When making a decision about something, I like to collect a lot of information
26	Before making a decision, I think about what might happen with each choice
	Listen to the statement and share the answer that best describes how much you agree or disagree with the statement
27	When making a new decision, I think about what happened when I made a similar decision in the past
28	It is sometimes hard for me to finish the work I start
29	I have overcome difficulties to conquer an important challenge
30	I have achieved a personal plan that required hard work to finish
31	I always think before I do something
32	I have a goal of where I want to be 2 years from now
33	After setting a personal plan, I break it down into steps so I can reach it in stages
	Section 3: Listen carefully to each statement and share the answer that best reflects how often you think you do the task described. "Sometimes" means that you do this half the time.
34	When I talk to someone, I try to understand what they mean
35	I think before talking
36	I make sure I understand what another person is saying before I answer
37	When I need something, I can tell people around me what I need
	Listen to the statement and share the answer that best describes how much you agree or disagree with the statement
38	I am a good listener
39	I am able to share what I think and know with others without any fear
40	When I work with other people, I usually lead the group
41	I actively look for leadership positions in my school or community
42	I often think about the needs and issues facing my community
43	Other girls look up to me in my community
44	Others look up to me in my community (Ask only females)
45	I am able to use what I know to advise others
46	I am not scared to speak in front of a big group of people
47	When I can't sort out a disagreement, I find other people to help sort it out in the best way possible
	Section 4: Listen to the statement and share the answer that best describes how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

	Please listen carefully to the next statements. Some of the statements are not positive.
48	I do not control most things in my life
49	No one listens to what I say because they only listen to those who have power
50	What I do is not important to the people who are close to me
51	I do not have the freedom to do everything I want in my life
	Listen carefully to each statement and select the answer that best describes what you think about the statement.
52	A man should make most decisions in the home
53	When the family cannot afford to educate all children, only boys should go to school
54	A man should have more education than his wife
55	It is ok for a woman to earn more money than her husband
56	I always have the right to refuse to get married
57	I am able to report violence or abuse of any kind to an adult or to the authorities
58	Women can be engineers or scientists, just like men
	Additional notes/feedback from the enumerator
	Thank you so much for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire!

Annex C: Analysis Report (07/24/2024)

Sample description

The sample was composed of 5,042 pupils living in 7 districts in Zambia. Pupils that participated in both baseline and endline were 1,869 (37%), baseline only 1,474 (29%) and endline only 1,699 (34%). Seventy-five schools participated in the study with 1,314 (26%) of the pupils being in comparison schools and 3,728 (74%) in intervention schools. Females constituted 2,768 or 55% of pupils while males 2,267 or 45% (less than 0.3% selected others or preferred not to say). The mean age at the endline was 16.25 years of age with a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 24 years old (SD = 1.88). As can be seen in Table 1 below, 38% of intervention students participated in both baseline and endline compared to 36% of students in comparison schools.

Table 1: Participation by condition and wave

		Condition				
		Comparison		Intervention		
		Count	%	Count	%	
Status	Baseline and endline	469	36	1400	38	
	Baseline only	362	28	1112	30	
	Endline only	483	37	1216	32	
	Total	1314	100.0	3728	100.0	

Agency scale data management

As recommended in the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS) Symposium feedback, the Likert scale was recoded from 5 points to 3: responses 2-4 were recoded into the mid-point (score of 2), response 1 was maintained as a score of 1 and response 5 was recoded to a score of 3. Additionally, the following questions were omitted from the analysis as they were having a negative impact on the scale:

- Self-belief 3: Sometimes I feel useless
- Self-belief 5: I generally feel like a failure
- Leadership skills 1: In a conversation, I try to see the other person's point of view.

The scales for each of the 4 dimensions were summated and divided by the number of items in each of them in order to obtain a total score. A global score was also obtained by summating the four individual scales and dividing it by four. Consequently, each dimension scale as well as the global scale had a possible minimum of 1 point and a maximum of 3 points.

Method

In order to assess the hypothesis of improvement of the intervention group over the comparison group in all of the dimensions including the global dimension of agency, all available pupil data was used regardless of whether the respondents participated in just one or both waves of the study. A multilevel regression with an interaction of wave (baseline vs endline) by condition (comparison vs intervention) was used to evaluate the hypotheses of improvement of the intervention over the comparison and to account for school intracluster correlation. The significance of the interaction term in the regression tested for the difference-in-difference effect. Gender and age were included in the regression to control for these variables. Nevertheless, a regression was also conducted to evaluate the hypothesis in female pupils exclusively. This regression is controlled for age. Effect sizes for the regression coefficients were obtained by calculating Hedge's g. Moreover, a sensitivity check to verify that the regressions that included students that participated in both waves were not different was performed.

In addition to the hypotheses tests, change in scores from baseline to midline (longitudinal analysis) were calculated and presented in two ways: (a) By subtracting the baseline from the endline score and recoding this variable into regressed when the score was negative, maintained when the score was 0 and improved when the score was positive and (b) by subtracting the baseline from the endline score for each individual and dividing this by the average of the standard deviations of the baseline and midline groups. This was done separately for comparison and intervention students in order to account for differences in spread. This individual standardized difference was then compared to the standard deviation of the full sample and recorded into 0 if the difference was less than half the deviation for the sample or 1 if the difference was at least half of the standard deviation of the sample. This analysis only included students who participated in both baseline and midline waves.

When comparing a control and an experimental group, a difference of at least half a standard deviation in the mean scores of both groups is commonly used as an indicator that the change achieved in the study was moderate (a medium effect size) regardless of the metric in which the variable being measured is in. This is because with this magnitude of standardized difference, more than two-thirds of those in the experimental group will have measurements above the mean of those in the control group. Figure 1 below shows the overlap of two distributions when the difference in means is of half a standard deviation.

Figure 1: Distribution overlap with a mean difference of half a standard deviation
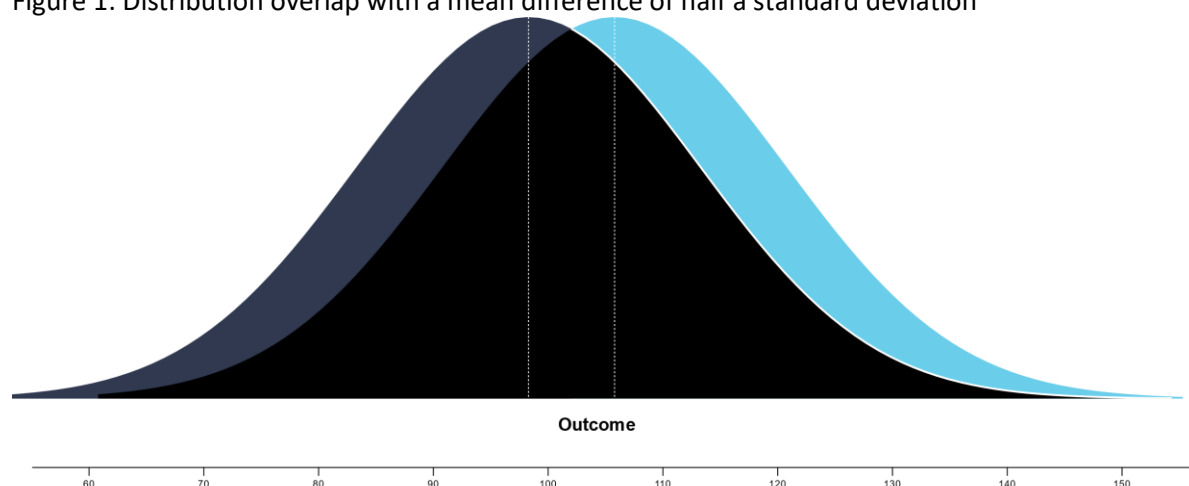
Results

Difference-in-difference

Results of the difference-in-difference regressions are presented in the Table 2 below and full estimates are included in the Appendix. As can be appreciated, pupils in the intervention condition obtained higher over and above scores than those of pupils in the comparison schools for global agency and for all subdimensions of agency. The interaction terms Hedge's g was below 0.2 for all difference-in-differences (see Appendix) and thus can be interpreted as a small effect size. The sensitivity check for students with both waves of the study did not change the significance or direction of the difference-in-difference interactions.

Table 2: Difference-in-difference interaction term results

	All			Females only		
	Direction	Significance	Effect size	Direction	Significance	Effect size
Self-belief	+	p < 0.001	Small	+	p < 0.001	Small
Self-guidance	+	p = 0.002	Small	+	p = 0.001	Small
Leadership skills	+	p < 0.001	Small	+	p < 0.001	Small
Environmental beliefs	+	p < 0.001	Small	+	p < 0.001	Small

Global score	+	p < 0.001	Small	+	p < 0.001	Small

Longitudinal results

The proportion of pupils who improved their scores from baseline to endline is presented in Table 3 below. As can be seen, at least 5% and up to 16% more students in the intervention group managed to increase their scores than those in the comparison group for different dimensions of agency. Conversely, for all dimensions of agency including the global scale, the percentage of students in the intervention group that regressed in scores was consistently smaller than that of the students in the comparison group.

Table 3: Baseline to endline change in score

		Condition			
		Comparison		Intervention	
		Count	%	Count	%
Self-belief change	Improved	213	45	794	58
	Maintained	68	15	230	16
	Regressed	188	40	376	27
Self-guidance change	Improved	185	39	657	47
	Maintained	54	12	152	11
	Regressed	230	49	591	42
Leadership skills change	Improved	184	39	693	50
	Maintained	58	12	196	14
	Regressed	227	48	511	37
Environmental beliefs change	Improved	231	49	749	54
	Maintained	93	20	306	22
	Regressed	145	31	345	25
Global scale change	Improved	224	48	894	64
	Maintained	0	0	4	0.3
	Regressed	245	52	502	36

The proportion of pupils who improved a minimum of 0.5 standard deviations from baseline to endline are presented in Table 4 below. As can be seen, at least 5% and up to 11% more students in the intervention group managed to increase their scores for more than half a standard deviation than those in the comparison group depending on the dimension of agency, including the global score. Additional tables for all agency dimensions and global mean scores across wave, condition, age and gender can be found in the Appendix.

Table 4: Endline change of at least 0.5 standard deviations above the baseline

	Condition			
	Comparison		Intervention	
	Count	%	Count	%
Self-belief change	144	31	587	42
Self-guidance change	133	28	521	37
Leadership skills change	139	30	530	38
Environmental beliefs change	162	35	553	40
Global scale change	154	33	620	44

	Wave Baseline Condition				Endline Condition			
	Comparison		Intervention		Comparison		Intervention	
	Total N	Mean	Total N	Mean	Total N	Mean	Total N	Mean
Self-belief scale	831	2.34	2512	2.28	952	2.36	2616	2.39
Self-guidance scale	831	2.36	2512	2.36	952	2.33	2616	2.37
Leadership skills scale	831	2.40	2512	2.33	952	2.35	2616	2.37
Environmental beliefs scale	831	2.05	2512	2.05	952	2.11	2616	2.16
Global scale	831	2.29	2512	2.26	952	2.29	2616	2.32

Appendix

Table A1: Self-belief MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; all pupils)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.339	4965	87404.68	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.058	73	0.62	0.434	-0.13
Wave: Endline	0.027	1867	162.53	0.000	0.06
Age	0.007	4965	9.67	0.002	0.02
Gender: Male	0.006	4965	0.71	0.400	0.01
Condition by wave	0.085	1867	28.83	0.000	0.19

Table A2: Self-belief MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; females)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.346	2692	87984.05	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.073	73	0.78	0.381	-0.13
Wave: Endline	0.010	1073	95.97	0.000	0.06
Age	0.006	2692	3.02	0.082	0.02
Condition by wave	0.111	1073	25.95	0.000	0.12

Table A3: Self-guidance MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; all)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.354	4965	104456.66	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.007	73	0.72	0.399	-0.02
Wave: Endline	-0.022	1867	0.84	0.359	-0.05
Age	0.003	4965	4.21	0.040	0.01
Gender: Male	0.009	4965	2.42	0.120	0.02
Condition by wave	0.037	1867	10.01	0.002	0.08

Table A4: Self-guidance MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; females)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.352	2692	111585.27	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.014	73	1.13	0.291	-0.02
Wave: Endline	-0.026	1073	3.59	0.059	-0.05

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
Age	0.004	2692	1.96	0.162	0.01
Condition by wave	0.054	1073	11.12	0.001	0.08

Table A5: Leadership skills MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; all)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.397	4965	112974.76	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.068	73	2.40	0.126	-0.15
Wave: Endline	-0.040	1867	9.23	0.002	-0.09
Age	0.006	4965	10.19	0.001	0.01
Gender: Male	0.003	4965	0.25	0.621	0.01
Condition by wave	0.080	1867	34.38	0.000	0.12

Table A6: Leadership skills MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; females)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.413	2692	95219.80	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.091	73	2.63	0.109	-0.15
Wave: Endline	-0.066	1073	5.75	0.017	-0.09
Age	0.005	2692	2.97	0.085	0.01
Condition by wave	0.115	1073	38.51	0.000	0.18

Table A7: Environmental beliefs MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; all)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.073	4965	41336.73	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.012	73	0.10	0.754	-0.03
Wave: Endline	0.061	1867	426.38	0.000	0.13
Age	-0.007	4965	25.56	0.000	-0.01
Gender: Male	-0.046	4965	68.22	0.000	-0.10
Condition by wave	0.043	1867	16.78	0.000	0.09

Table A8: Environmental beliefs MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; females)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.076	2692	34822.54	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.023	73	0.19	0.664	-0.02
Wave: Endline	0.045	1073	275.82	0.000	0.14
Age	-0.007	2692	8.70	0.003	-0.02
Condition by wave	0.077	1073	27.52	0.000	0.09

Table A9: Global agency MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; all)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.291	4965	125155.22	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.036	73	0.10	0.756	-0.08
Wave: Endline	0.006	1867	163.25	0.000	0.01
Age	0.002	4965	1.77	0.183	0.00
Gender: Male	-0.007	4965	1.95	0.162	-0.02
Condition by wave	0.062	1867	44.03	0.000	0.13

Table A10: Global agency MLM Regression (difference-in-difference; females)

	Estimate	DF	F-value	p-value	Hedge's G
(Intercept)	2.297	2692	130009.25	0.000	
Condition: Intervention	-0.050	73	0.07	0.785	-0.08
Wave: Endline	-0.009	1073	109.37	0.000	0.01
Age	0.001	2692	0.47	0.491	0.00
Condition by wave	0.089	1073	48.22	0.000	0.13

Table A11: Self-belief across gender, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
Female	424	2.34	530	2.35	1404	2.27	1485	2.39
Male	406	2.34	422	2.38	1102	2.30	1131	2.39
Other	1	1.75	0	.	3	2.33	0	.
Prefer not to say	0	.	0	.	3	2.63	0	.

Table A12: Self-belief across age, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
9-11	0	.	0	.	5	2.05	3	1.88
12	0	.	2	2.38	12	2.22	14	2.35
13	16	2.34	30	2.35	76	2.21	109	2.33
14	95	2.29	129	2.38	349	2.22	405	2.40
15	194	2.33	252	2.34	459	2.25	549	2.37
16-17	369	2.35	400	2.36	939	2.31	945	2.40
18-19	136	2.38	120	2.39	507	2.33	448	2.41
20-24	21	2.26	19	2.48	165	2.29	143	2.43

Table A13: Self-guidance across gender, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
Female	424	2.35	530	2.32	1404	2.35	1485	2.37
Male	406	2.36	422	2.34	1102	2.37	1131	2.37
Other	1	2.14	0	.	3	2.26	0	.
Prefer not to say	0	.	0	.	3	2.45	0	.

Table A14: Self-guidance across age, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
9-11	0	.	0	.	5	2.13	3	2.17
12	0	.	2	2.18	12	2.29	14	2.34
13	16	2.38	30	2.31	76	2.31	109	2.33
14	95	2.35	129	2.37	349	2.33	405	2.37
15	194	2.33	252	2.32	459	2.31	549	2.36
16-17	369	2.36	400	2.32	939	2.37	945	2.37

	Comparison Baseline Valid N	Mean	Endline Valid N	Mean	Intervention Baseline Valid N	Mean	Endline Valid N	Mean
18-19	136	2.39	120	2.35	507	2.38	448	2.38
20-24	21	2.33	19	2.35	165	2.40	143	2.42

Table A15: Leadership skills across gender, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
Female	424	2.41	530	2.34	1404	2.32	1485	2.37
Male	406	2.38	422	2.37	1102	2.34	1131	2.37
Other	1	2.08	0	.	3	2.28	0	.
Prefer not to say	0	.	0	.	3	2.78	0	.

Table A16: Leadership skills across age, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
9-11	0	.	0	.	5	2.13	3	2.17
12	0	.	2	2.33	12	2.27	14	2.36
13	16	2.36	30	2.30	76	2.30	109	2.36
14	95	2.37	129	2.39	349	2.29	405	2.36
15	194	2.37	252	2.33	459	2.30	549	2.35
16-17	369	2.41	400	2.35	939	2.34	945	2.37
18-19	136	2.44	120	2.38	507	2.38	448	2.39
20-24	21	2.31	19	2.36	165	2.37	143	2.41

Table A17: Environmental beliefs across gender, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
Female	424	2.08	530	2.12	1404	2.07	1485	2.20
Male	406	2.02	422	2.10	1102	2.03	1131	2.11
Other	1	1.91	0	.	3	2.30	0	.
Prefer not to say	0	.	0	.	3	1.76	0	.

Table A18: Environmental beliefs across age, wave and condition

	Comparison				Intervention			
	Baseline		Endline		Baseline		Endline	
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
9-11	0	.	0	.	5	1.93	3	2.00
12	0	.	2	2.14	12	2.01	14	2.31
13	16	2.04	30	2.14	76	2.12	109	2.22
14	95	2.10	129	2.17	349	2.06	405	2.16
15	194	2.07	252	2.13	459	2.04	549	2.13
16-17	369	2.04	400	2.09	939	2.04	945	2.16
18-19	136	2.02	120	2.09	507	2.07	448	2.17
20-24	21	2.01	19	2.04	165	2.03	143	2.13

Table A19: Global agency across gender, wave and condition

| | Comparison | | | | Intervention | | | |
| | Baseline | | Endline | | Baseline | | Endline | |
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
Female	424	2.30	530	2.28	1404	2.25	1485	2.33
Male	406	2.28	422	2.30	1102	2.26	1131	2.31
Other	1	1.97	0	.	3	2.29	0	.
Prefer not to say	0	.	0	.	3	2.40	0	.

Table A20: Global agency across age, wave and condition

| | Comparison | | | | Intervention | | | |
| | Baseline | | Endline | | Baseline | | Endline | |
	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	Mean
9-11	0	.	0	.	5	2.06	3	2.05
12	0	.	2	2.26	12	2.20	14	2.34
13	16	2.28	30	2.28	76	2.24	109	2.31
14	95	2.28	129	2.33	349	2.23	405	2.32
15	194	2.27	252	2.28	459	2.22	549	2.30
16-17	369	2.29	400	2.28	939	2.26	945	2.32
18-19	136	2.31	120	2.30	507	2.29	448	2.34
20-24	21	2.23	19	2.31	165	2.27	143	2.35

Annex D: My Better World Steps and Topics

Step	Topic
1	You and Your World
2	Your future - Our future
3	Your Better World
4	Your Basic Human Needs
5	Health
6	Safety and security
7	Calm and comfort
8	Autonomy and competence
9	Self-esteem
10	Achievement and growth
11	Purpose and meaning
12	Hope and optimism
13	Understanding
14	Interest
15	Play
16	Caring
17	Love
18	Belonging and respect
19	Fairness
20	Appreciation and wonder
21	Happiness
	Pause and reflect
22	The world you live in
23	The natural world
24	Family, friends, and community
25	Public services
26	Money and work
27	Rights, laws and social norms
28	Problems, threats, and opportunities
	Pause and reflect
29	Being well and doing well
30	You have powers
31	Emotion, moods and feelings
32	Being in control of your emotions
33	About deciding and choosing
34	Being in control of your actions
35	About consciousness
36	Being attentive - paying attention
37	Being conscious of the present - being mindful
38	Being conscious of the past - using your memory
39	Being conscious of the future
40	Being conscious of yourself - being self-aware

41	Being conscious of others - and us together
	Pause and reflect
42	Being empathic - being compassionate
43	Being helpful - being kind
44	Being selfless - being generous
45	Being open-minded
46	Beliefs and values
47	Being flexibly-minded - taking different perspectives
48	Being fair-minded
	Pause and reflect
49	Being collaborative
50	About communicating
51	Being communicative
52	Being assertive
53	Being civil
	Pause and reflect
54	Being tolerant
55	Being forgiving
56	Being brave - managing fear and risk
57	Being resilient
58	Being realistic
	Pause and reflect
59	Being conscientious - doing things well
60	Being efficient - being organized
61	Being goal-directed
62	Being proactive - taking the initiative
63	Being responsible
	Pause and reflect
64	Being sincere - being honest
65	Being adaptable - learning
66	Being curious
67	Being imaginative
68	Being creative - being resourceful
	Pause and reflect
69	Common problems about thinking
70	Being reasonable - Being logical
71	Being critical - thinking critically
72	Being thoughtful
73	Being wise

Annex E: My Better World Excerpt

My Better World

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU...

MAKE YOUR LIFE A BETTER LIFE

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU THINK CLEARLY ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT YOUR LIFE TO BE LIKE

AND GIVE YOU TOOLS TO HELP YOU CREATE THAT LIFE

DEAL WITH YOUR CHALLENGES

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU RECOGNISE, UNDERSTAND AND OVERCOME YOUR DAY-TO-DAY CHALLENGES

REACH YOUR GOALS

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU BECOME CLEARER ABOUT WHAT SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU

AND HELP YOU BECOME SUCCESSFUL

BE A LEADER

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU BECOME A ROLE MODEL IN YOUR COMMUNITY

AND BECOME SOMEONE THAT OTHER PEOPLE LOOK TO FOR GUIDANCE

EARN A LIVING

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE INNER STRENGTHS THAT HELP PEOPLE RUN BUSINESSES

AND HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT THEIR EMPLOYEES TO BE LIKE

BE MORE POWERFUL

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOURSELF BETTER

AND HELP YOU FIND YOUR OWN INNER STRENGTHS

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU MAKE BETTER CHOICES

BE HAPPIER

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU BECOME CLEARER ABOUT WHAT HAPPINESS MEANS

AND HELP YOU MAKE CHOICES THAT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPIER

BE WELL

THIS BOOK COULD TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT BEING WELL (WELLBEING) MEANS TO YOU

AND HELP YOU MAKE CHOICES THAT WILL IMRPROVE YOUR WELLBEING

DO WELL

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT BEING WELL (WELLBEING) MEANS TO OTHER PEOPLE

AND HELP YOU MAKE CHOICES THAT WILL IMPROVE THEIR WELLBEING

MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

THIS BOOK COULD HELP YOU BECOME CLEARER ABOUT WHAT OUR WORLD COULD BE LIKE,

UNDERSTAND YOUR INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD

AND HELP YOU MAKE CHOICES THAT WILL HELP US ALL

THIS IS YOUR BOOK

YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT WITH IT

WRITE IN IT - DRAW IN IT – SCRIBBLE IN IT - DOODLE IN IT

MAKE IT YOURS

SHARE IT - COPY IT - SHOW IT TO YOUR FRIENDS

READ IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS

APPLY IT IN YOUR DAILY LIFE

YOU DECIDE HOW TO USE IT

THIS IS THE START OF A JOURNEY…

A journey in which you will:

explore and discover things about
yourself,
other people
and the world around you.

Think of this book as a guidebook to help you on your journey.

!   Like all good journeys

you might find some of what lies ahead quite challenging.
But don't worry, when you feel challenged it means you're learning!
If there are parts that you don't fully understand:
Take your time
Re-read it.
Use the useful words at the back of the book
(words that are <u>underlined</u> in the book are included in the list
of useful words).

And like all good journeys…

it's good to share your experience…

Talk about it with your friends and family!

The first part of your journey is all about…

Understanding what you most need to be well…

Understanding wellbeing…

Picturing a life you want to live…

Understanding wellbeing…

Picturing a world you want to live in…

The second part of your journey is all about finding your powers.

Using your powers to improve the quality of life...

Using your powers to make a life you want to live...

Using your powers to
create a world you want
to live in...

Using your powers to
create your Better
World...

TO HELP YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY...

There are stories provided throughout this guidebook,
(all of which are *based on true stories and real people*
who live in rural communities in Zimbabwe and Tanzania).

When you read these stories,
try to think about your own life,
and the lives of your family, friends
and people around you.

WHY NOT USE THIS SPACE TO DRAW PICTURES (OR WRITE STORIES OR POEMS) ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS?

Now, if you're ready, let's start your journey...
with a story about someone who changed their life...

The World You Live In
RIGHTS, LAWS AND SOCIAL NORMS

Imagine your *Better World...*

Think about how important rights, laws and social norms are...

(For you and for other people...)

Rights are entitlements you have...

★ When you have a *right* to something, you are <u>entitled</u> to it... (This means that no-one has the right to take it away from you.)

★ When you have a right to something, you are entitled to ask that your right *be respected* and take necessary action to protect your right...

★ If someone takes something you own without your permission, for example, you have the right to claim it *back...*

Sometimes people break (<u>violate</u>) other people's rights in a very serious way...

★ Rape, for example, is a very serious violation of a person's basic human rights...

Human rights are the rights that **everybody** is entitled to (simply because they are human)…

Here are some examples of your human rights…

☆ The right to life

☆ The right to freedom

☆ The right to freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

☆ The right to an education

☆ The right to healthcare, including family planning

☆ The right to marry a person of your choice

☆ The right to freedom of thought and belief

☆ The right to freedom from discrimination

All human rights are:

☆ *Universal* (It doesn't matter who you are or where you live… and regardless of your gender, race, colour, language, national origin, age, class or religious or political beliefs… you are *equally entitled* to enjoy your human rights.)

☆ *Equally important* (No right is of more or less value than any other right.)

☆ *Protected by law* (You can take legal action if someone breaks your human rights.)

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Your human rights are included in the *laws* and *constitution* that are used to govern your country...

☆ Written laws are often put in place to protect your human rights:

   ☆ by punishing people who *break* people's rights

   ☆ by stopping people from *breaking* people's rights because of the fear of punishment

Knowing your rights and laws helps you improve your wellbeing...

☆ Being aware of your human rights gives you the power to speak out and stand up for yourself so that you are not cheated or abused by anyone.

☆ Being aware of your rights helps you promote and protect your own rights... and the rights of other people.

With every right comes a <u>responsibility</u> (an <u>obligation</u> or duty)...

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You have rights AND responsibilities...

⭐ You have a responsibility to *Know your rights.*

⭐ You have a responsibility to *defend your rights.*

⭐ You have a responsibility to *respect and protect the rights of others.*

⭐ You have a responsibility to *respect and uphold the laws of your country.*

⭐ You have a responsibility to *ensure that you only follow* <u>*social norms*</u> *that do not violate other people's rights...*

Social norms are unwritten rules:

⭐ *Social norms* are the ways in which you are *normally expected to behave in a community.*

⭐ They are the things people *allow* each other to do without punishment.

⭐ Social norms can *be good* for people's wellbeing... (For example, in most communities, it is common that people are expected to *be* polite to each other.)

⭐ But social norms can also *be bad* for people's wellbeing... (In some communities, it is accepted to use girls to appease spirits, for example.)

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It is important to look at the normal behaviours and unwritten rules in your community:

☆ If people in your community allow each other to do things that *violate* other people's rights… or if the social norms in your community are *bad* for people's wellbeing… then you should:

　　☆ think hard about whether to follow the norms or not.

　　☆ think about engaging with your community to change the norms.

Everyone has a duty to promote and protect each other's rights…

☆ You do.

☆ Your family and friends do.

☆ Everyone in your community does.

☆ Everyone in government does.

☆ Everyone in the police and in the law courts does.

☆ Everyone in business and in NGOs does.

*If you are worried about your rights being violated… If you need more information and support about your rights… There is a list of organisations on page 461 that can help you.

Knowing your rights can improve your quality of life…
Knowing your responsibilities improves the wellbeing of others….
There is no good justification for violating other people's rights…

? What social norms in your community are good for people's wellbeing?

? What social norms in your community are not good for people's wellbeing?

Imagine your life *if you had no rights at all…*

Talk to your friends about it…

? What would happen?

? How would you *feel*?

? What would your *quality of life* be like?

Now go to page 154 and in section 23 write and draw something about the importance of rights, laws and social norms.

And when you're ready… move on to think about
problems, threats and opportunities…

The World You Live In
PROBLEMS, THREATS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

> 💭 Imagine your *Better World…*

> 💭 Think about **some of the things that make it difficult for you to be well…**
>
> 💭 Think about **some of the things that work against you… and your wellbeing**.
>
> 💭 Think about **some of the ways you could turn threats** into **opportunities**.

There will **always** be times in your life when you will be unwell or unhappy…

- ☆ everyone experiences *death, loss, illness* and *disease*.
- ☆ everyone feels *unhappy* at times.
- ☆ everyone has to deal with *challenging situations*.
- ☆ everyone has to deal with *obstacles, problems* and *difficulties*.
- ☆ everyone has to deal with *changes* in their lives.
- ☆ everyone has to deal with *uncertainty*.

Everyone has times in their life when they are faced with **problems…**

A problem is a situation, experience, person or thing that:

⭐ is making you *FEEL BAD.*

⭐ is making you *BE UNWELL.*

⭐ is an <u>obstacle</u> to you improving your wellbeing.

Everyone has times in their life when they are faced with **threats to their wellbeing…**

A threat is a situation, person or thing that:

⭐ could make you FEEL BAD.

⭐ could make you BE UNWELL.

⭐ could make you DO BAD THINGS (things that are bad for your wellbeing… or bad for the wellbeing of others… or bad for the wellbeing of the natural world).

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To **get well, stay well, get better,** or **flourish…** it is important for you to:

- ☆ recover from bad experiences.
- ☆ get through unhappy times.
- ☆ overcome challenges.
- ☆ solve problems, overcome obstacles, and deal with difficulties.
- ☆ accept that things will always change.
- ☆ accept that difficult times often become less difficult.
- ☆ accept that you can never know exactly what lies ahead.
- ☆ remember that tomorrow is always different from today.

It's important to solve problems and deal with threats to your wellbeing…

- ☆ To protect your wellbeing (and the wellbeing of others), it is a good idea to:
  - ☆ identify problems and threats *before* they affect your wellbeing.
  - ☆ do something about problems and threats before they get worse.
  - ☆ never paint a situation entirely black.
  - ☆ look for a light at the end of the tunnel.
  - ☆ remember that when something turns bad, another thing usually gets better.
  - ☆ look for *good things* in bad situations.
  - ☆ be creative about solving problems.
  - ☆ use your strength, skills, and brain power to solve problems.

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The second half of this book is all about the powers you have that can help you deal with threats.

Some people have **more opportunity than others** to improve their wellbeing... but everyone has times in their life when they are faced with **opportunities** to improve their wellbeing...

An **opportunity** is a situation, experience, person or thing that could:

☆ improve your *WELLBEING*.

☆ make you *FEEL GOOD*.

☆ make you *BE WELL*.

☆ make you *DO GOOD THINGS* (things that are *good* for your wellbeing... or *good* for the wellbeing of others... or good for the wellbeing of the natural world.

You **take** opportunities...

You **act** on opportunities...

You can **make** opportunities

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To improve your wellbeing (and the wellbeing of others):

☆ *Be ready* to spot opportunities when they arise

☆ *Look for* opportunities

☆ *Take* opportunities

☆ *Create* opportunities when you can

☆ Make the *best* from challenging situations

☆ Turn *threats* into opportunities…

The second half of this book is all about the powers you have that can help you do all this…

? What are the main challenges you need to overcome in order to make your world a better world?

💬 Talk to your friends about it…

✏ Now go to page 154 and in section 24 complete the sentence "Problems and threats to my wellbeing are…"

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? Can you think of any ways that you can turn threats into opportunities?

💬 Talk to your friends about it...

🖊 Now go to page 154 and in section 25 complete the sentence "Opportunities to improve my wellbeing are..."

WELL DONE!

You're now well in to your journey…
You've just finished another seven chapters…
These chapters were all about:

The *world you live in*

The *natural world you live in*

The *people you live with*

The *things you use and own*

The *things you have access to*

The *problems and difficulties you face*

The *opportunities you have to make the world a better place…*

When you read and talked about these chapters,
you were thinking and talking about:

What wellbeing is

How the world works

What your world is like

What you want your world to be like

What the world could be like…

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BEING CONSCIOUS OF THE PAST — USING YOUR MEMORY

My first day at school (Kadua's story)

"I remember exactly how I felt on my first day at school. I got picked on all day because of my old clothes. I just felt more and more <u>ashamed</u> as the day went on and I was dreading having to go back the next day. Now that I'm a teacher, I always try to remember those horrible feelings I had when new children arrive at school. It helps me spot the children who are being bullied."

? Do you know anyone like Kadua who uses their memories to guide them in the present? What makes you think they're good with their memory? What are they like as a person?

Being conscious of the past is a **power** that can be useful in many situations. To **find it** in **yourself**, first think about what it is.

You are being **conscious of the past** when you are:

Remembering what has happened before – Staying grounded in the present moment is vital to your wellbeing - but being conscious of the past is also essential. How you use your memory strongly influences how well you feel, the decisions you make and how you behave.

The way your brain remembers things is very complicated but it is useful to understand some of the facts about your memory:

There are two major kinds of memory:

⭐ **Short-term memory** – When you experience something, there is a chance that your brain will record an <u>impression</u> of that thing in your memory. Many things are stored as *short term memories* • Short-term memories are held in your brain for less than 1 minute and then forgotten forever. When you read this sentence, for example, your brain has to remember the words that came at the start of the sentence just long enough for you to make sense of the sentence.

⭐ **Long-term memory** – Some memories are stored in your brain for more than 1 minute. Your brain is likely to register an experience as a long-term memory when you really pay <u>attention</u> to the experience, if you think it's important, or if there are strong emotions associated with it. Long term memories help you remember facts about the world, people's names, what happened yesterday, what you have planned for the future, events you have experienced in your life, and who you are. These kinds of memory can be consciously recalled. Other long-term memories include things like remembering how to walk and talk, and so on. These kinds of memory go into your <u>subconscious</u> and can't be recalled consciously.
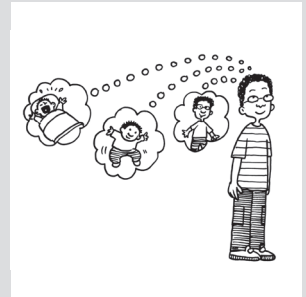
Paying close attention to things improves the accuracy of your memory

– When you don't pay attention to things, you don't remember things well. Pay attention to using as many *senses* as you can if you want to remember a moment in your life. To remember what is in a *book*, read out loud to yourself (so you can hear the words) -or explain what is in the *book* to someone else.

Your feelings and your memory are closely tied

– Most of your memories are 'tagged' so that when you call up a memory, it triggers an emotional response similar to the one you experienced when you first registered the memory – it triggers a feeling in you similar to the one you felt before. If you want to remember something in the future, pay attention to how you are feeling *now*.

Your memories of the past influence your feelings in the present and future – Remembering good or bad experiences can make you feel good or bad. And recalling memories of when you were happy prepares your mind to notice similar opportunities for happiness in future. Try to remember happy experiences often.

Your memories determine how you think about yourself – People who remember an old person, for example, will often begin to move more slowly... If you remember your failures, you may well think of yourself as a *failure*. It's good to remember your successes.

Your memories define who you think you are – You create your life story and personal identity from memories of past experiences. If you remembered different experiences and events from your life, you could feel like a different person. Try to remember *good* things you have done in your past.

History is made up of shared, collective memories – There is usually truth in what people think of as *History* - but there are also often many things that are inaccurate or not true. It is often useful to question what people say is true about the past.

Memory is essential to learning – When you remember something you did before (a decision or action you took) and remember what happened as a result of what you did, then you can learn what to do next time • You can improve how and what you learn by improving your memory. When you are trying to remember facts, review what you have learned on the same day that you learn it. Then review it every day (or at short, regular intervals) afterwards - this is better than cramming your revision into a single amount of time.

Your memories influence almost everything you do – Memory is essential to almost everything you do – to talking, walking, finding your way home, knowing your family, knowing what things are, to knowing everything and everyone you know.

Memories start fading almost immediately – What you did yesterday is much less clear to you than what you did one hour ago. If you don't call up memories, then they become more and more faint and less and less accurate. If you don't use your memory then you will lose it.

You can improve your memory – Like all of your powers, how much you sleep and exercise affects your memory – so does what you eat (alcohol and drugs can be very damaging). But by exercising your memory (by practicing using it) you can improve it.

Being conscious of the past is a **power**

✏ Use your memory now

Where were you at this time yesterday?

What were you doing?

Where were at this time last week?

What were you doing?

? What does it **feel** like to be conscious of the past?

? Can you **see** this power in yourself?

You have the **power** of being conscious of the past.

Use it with care

!   Memories are never perfectly accurate.

!   We remember only a tiny part of things we experience.

!   Memories start to fade almost as soon as they enter your long-term memory.

!   Bad news stays longer in memory than good news.

!   We create false memories (memories of things that never actually happened).

!   Ruminating (thinking too much about something that happened in the past) is strongly linked to depression and makes you lose sight of the future.

?   Can you think of any other reasons to be careful with your power?

Think about how important it is
(Remind yourself what's on page 154)

?   If you were *unable* to be conscious of the past, what would your life be like?

?   If you were *more* conscious of the past, how would it help you BE well and DO well?

?   If *everyone* was conscious of the past, what would the world be like?

How well do you use your power
of being conscious of the past ?

Not very well   Quite well   Very well   Extremely well

✔ Try these

Think of a time in your life when you upset someone and regret doing so. Now write a letter to that person asking for forgiveness and explaining why you did what you did. (You don't need to deliver this letter to the person.)

Write a short story describing what the best day of your life would be like. For inspiration, use the experiences you've had so far in your life that have made you really happy or excited. Read the story to someone and ask them what they think.

Find 20 different (small) objects. Don't show your friends. Put them on the floor and cover them with a cloth. Gather your friends around. Lift the cloth for 10 seconds then cover the objects again. See how many things your friends can remember seeing.

With some friends, start by saying "I went to the market and found... (You add a word here)." For example, you might say "I went to the market and found some tomatoes...." The next person then says "I went to the market and found some tomatoes – and some shoes..." The next person then says "I went to the market and found some tomatoes – and some shoes – and an umbrella..." See how many times you can do this before someone forgets the list.

Ask a friend:

★ What is your happiest childhood memory? How old were you? What makes it so special?

★ If you had the chance to go back in time for one day only, where and when would you go?

★ If you could travel back in time to meet *anyone* in your family's history, who would you most want to meet? And why?

🖊 **Now complete this sentence**

With my power of being conscious of the past, I am going to...

BEING CONSCIOUS OF THE FUTURE

Biscuits (Yuora's story)

"I once had a friend called Susan. Her mother gave the money for school fees but on the way to school she spent it all on biscuits. Later that day, she was chased away from class for not paying her fees and hid in the bushes because she was too ashamed to go home. She was chased away so often she eventually dropped out…"

? Do you know anyone who's not like Susan but who is always careful to think ahead? What are they like as a person?

Being conscious of the future is a *power* that can be useful in many situations. To **find it** in **yourself**, first think about what it is.

You are being CONSCIOUS of the future when you are:

Thinking actively about what lies ahead of you – Being <u>conscious</u> of *what might happen* in the future – while staying grounded in the present moment • Imagining or anticipating problems and opportunities that *might lie ahead so* you can plan and prepare effectively.

Imagining what might happen as a result of your actions – Being actively aware that everything you do affects your future • Imagining what *could* happen, what *should* happen, or what will happen if you do or don't do something • Knowing that the future is connected to the present • Being conscious of the probable results of your actions before you act.

You are being conscious of the future when you are:

Being aware of the more distant future as well as the near future – Your brain is automatically concerned about opportunities and threats that affect your survival and wellbeing now and in the immediate future - but it is also important to be conscious of your life (and the wellbeing of others) in the *longer* term - because decisions you make today (things you do today) could affect you and others for months or even years ahead.

Being realistic about the future - It is common for people to expect the worst to happen and to have a generally negative (pessimistic) feeling about the future. Other people are unrealistically optimistic (they always expect the very *best* to happen). Whether you see the future in a positive, negative or realistic light affects your feelings and your actions in the present moment.

Being conscious of the future is a **power**

Be conscious of the future now

What are you expecting to do tomorrow?

Where do you think you'll be this time next week?

What do you want to be when you're older?

? What does it **feel** like to be conscious of the future?

? Can you **see** this power in yourself?

You have the **power** of being conscious of the future.

Use it with care

! Some people can get carried away by the future, worry constantly about the future, or are always waiting for better things to come.

! Some people can lose touch with the present moment.

? Can you think of any other reasons to be careful with your power?

Think about how important it is
(Remind yourself what's on page 154)

? If you were **unable** to be conscious of the future, what would your life be like?

? If you were **more** conscious of the future, how would it help you BE well and DO well?

? If **everyone** was more conscious of the future, what would the world be like?

How well do you use your power of being conscious of the future?

Not very well   Quite well   Very well   Extremely well
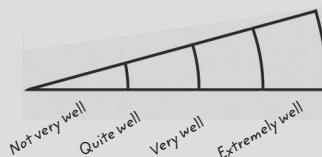
✔ Try these

Imagine yourself in 10 years' time. How old will you be? Think of three positive things about the life you hope to be leading then. Now write down three things you can do to help you get there.

Imagine life in 100 years' time. What will it *be* like? What will be different? What could you do today to affect life in 100 years' time?

Invent a proverb about being conscious of the future.

Ask a friend:

★ How far into the future are you able to imagine?

★ Can you ever be certain of what is going to happen in the future?

✎ Now complete this sentence

With my power of being conscious of the future, I am going to...

BEING ASSERTIVE

Leave me alone (Judith's story)

"Joseph would always find a way to irritate people. He came over to my desk once and started <u>bothering</u> me. It was study time and I had to concentrate on my work… so I looked him in the eye, told him that I had to finish my work… and asked him firmly but calmly to *please leave me alone*. Ever since then he leaves me alone when I'm working."

? Do you know anyone like Judith who is good at saying 'No'? What are they like as a person?

Being assertive is a **power** that can be useful in many situations. To **find it** in **yourself**, first think about what it is.

You are being *assertive* when you are:

Making yourself understood – Expressing yourself openly and honestly • Standing by your principles • Expressing your point of view clearly • Expressing your opinions, concerns, ideas or feelings accurately • Helping others to recognise your position and rights.

Making yourself understood – even when it feels very difficult for you to do so – Complaining • Delivering bad news • Communicating with people who <u>intimidate</u> you because they have authority.

Standing up for yourself – Standing your ground • Making yourself heard • Demanding that you are treated fairly and with respect • Saying 'No' when you mean 'No' (even when people are demanding things from you that you are uncomfortable with) • Saying 'Yes' when you mean 'Yes' (even when others are saying 'No').

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🧠 You are being *assertive* when you are:

Asking for what you want – Trying to <u>convince</u>, influence or persuade people, negotiating or arguing your case. This means you need to *know* what you want – you need to be sure of yourself.

Making peace – <u>Resolving conflicts</u> • <u>Reconciling differences</u> • Being <u>diplomatic</u> • Finding solutions that allow everyone to benefit

Most people lack assertiveness in certain situations – People who lack assertiveness are <u>passive</u>. This is often because people are <u>anxious</u> about what will happen if they say the wrong thing or if they are too assertive • People often worry about appearing selfish - or about the other person becoming <u>angry</u> - or about not being liked.

Being assertive requires you to be confident – You sometimes need to be <u>brave</u> to speak up and to be true to yourself.

Being assertive also requires you to <u>respect</u> the other person – and to be concerned about the consequences of what you say. When you are <u>self-aware</u> (and <u>empathic</u> with the other person) you can understand better how you are communicating. And when you have <u>self-control</u>, you can choose to communicate calmly - you can even choose *not* to assert yourself when you feel it would be better to say nothing.

By being assertive, people can take control over difficult situations – They can increase the respect they get from others, reduce their stress, increase their <u>self-esteem</u>, and build strong, honest relationships.

To get better at being assertive - All the techniques included on pages 284 to 287 are useful. Some additional techniques include:

⭐ Be as specific and as clear as you can be about what you want, think and feel.

⭐ Be as precise as you can be when you speak – use words like "I feel…", "I would like to…", "I don't' think that…", etc.

⭐ Make requests, not demands.

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☆ Avoid making sweeping statements. (A sweeping statement is a claim that is overly generalised or simplified – a statement like "*Everyone Knows* where I live.")

☆ Focus your language on the facts.

☆ When expressing opinions make it clear that they are *your* opinions – for example, say "*I* think…" not "*People* think…" or "*Others* say…".

☆ Avoid criticising other people.

☆ Ask for feedback – say things like "Am I being clear?" or "Does this make sense?"

☆ Don't allow yourself to be interrupted easily.

☆ Listen very carefully to the other person so that you are as clear as possible about how they are reacting to your assertiveness.

Being assertive is a **power**.

✏ **Draw or write about a time in your life when you were being assertive.**

Where were you?

Who were you with?

How were you being assertive?

How did it help you or other people?

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? What does it **feel** like to be assertive?

? Can you **see** this power in yourself?

You have the **power** of being assertive.

Use it with care

! Being too assertive can mean that you appear to be <u>aggressive</u>, <u>arrogant</u>, or <u>dogmatic</u> (someone is being dogmatic when they state their opinions as if they are facts and are closed to listening to other people's views).

! People are sometimes assertive in order to get their own way at the expense of someone else... It is sometimes better to compromise than to be assertive. (You are compromising when you settle for something less than you want so that everyone benefits.)

? Can you think of any other reasons to be careful with your power?
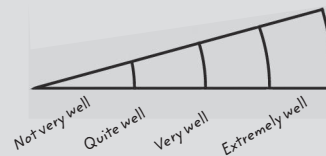
Think about how important it is
(Remind yourself what's on page 154)

? If you were **unable** to be assertive, what would your life be like?

? If you were **more** assertive, how would it help you BE well and DO well?

? If **everyone** was more assertive, what would the world be like?

How well do you use your power of being assertive?

Not very well   Quite well   Very well   Extremely well

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✔ **Try these**

You've been waiting for a long time in a queue and someone pushes in front of you. What would you do? What would you say? With a friend, act out this scene and practice being assertive (and remember not to be aggressive).

Who are the most assertive people you know? What methods do they use to be assertive without being aggressive? Next time you want to be assertive, try some of their techniques.

With a friend, have fun saying 'Yes' and 'No' in as many different ways as you can. Use different _facial expressions_, _tones of voice_ and _body language_, Talk about which are most assertive.

Ask a friend:

★ What would the world be like if nobody was assertive?

★ What are the most assertive words or phrases you know?

🖊 **Now complete this sentence**

With my power of assertive, I am going to...