

**CIVIL SOCIETY ACTION FOR DISPLACED
CHILDREN AND YOUNG WOMEN
IN ZIMBABWE, 2008-2011**

**Project Evaluation Report to the
Baring and the John Ellerman Foundations**

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Lewis Ndhlovu, PhD

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E-Signed by Lewis Ndhlovu 
VERIFY authenticity with ApproveIt


Lewis Ndhlovu

4th November 2011

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
SDA	School Development Association
SNF	Safety Net Fund
CDC	Community Development Committee
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
SDC	School Development Committee
MSG	Mother Support Group
FSG	Father Support Group
TM	Teacher Mentor
SBC	School Based Committee
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
GEM	Girl Empowerment Movement
BEM	Boy Empowerment Movement
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CHT	Community Health Trainer
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
TB	Tuberculosis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This is an end of project evaluation report for a programme implemented by Camfed in Zimbabwe. The programme aims to reduce poverty in the rural areas that were affected by long term forced migration and resettlement resulting from the government's land reform programme of the mid-1990s. The resettlement areas resemble a melting pot of diversity in terms of demographic characteristics, historical backgrounds, personalities and temperament of the resettled farmers. In discussions, the new settlers were viewed as social misfits in the areas in which they were living before, and some of them were running away from problems in their original homes.

In these emerging settlements, social structures and relations are at nascent stages of development. Access to basic amenities is poor in the resettlement areas, which are inhabited by an emerging group of marginalised people, including children. Homesteads are sparsely distributed and the school children walk long distances to get to school, passing through isolated spots, which are risky areas for sexual assaults of school girls.

The evaluation of the programme was conducted by MASAZI Development Associates in September 2011. The programme had been implemented for three years between 2008 and 2011. The data was gathered using qualitative methods, including focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observations. The study covered districts, schools and communities in selected districts of Chikomba West and Wedza in Zimbabwe.

Findings

- The support provided by Camfed to different communities is effectively addressing their needs and it is contributing to Millennium Development Goals 1, 2 and 3, which seek to reduce poverty, contribute to achieving universal education and reduce gender inequalities, respectively.
- The assistance to enable children to go to school responded to a clear need and was valued within communities.
- The Camfed programme was effective in promoting knowledge of children's rights in communities. Children's rights were guarded by Child Protection Committees (which exist at ward, village and school levels), the newly established Student Councils and clubs. Most of the schools had child protection policies.
- The process of promoting and forming Parent Support Groups through the Mother Support Groups and Father Support Groups is an efficient way of supporting orphans and vulnerable children in the communities, especially the girl child.
- Camfed was well recognised in the communities. The support provided to children and schools by supplying textbooks and materials, the Safety Net Fund and bursaries for secondary school girls are recognised and lauded at all levels.

- The involvement of communities in school affairs is also building the confidence of resettlement communities, so that they can contribute meaningfully in the education and protection of their children's rights.
- The partnerships were found to be functioning effectively. The Community Development Committees (CDCs) consist of highly motivated individuals who were a great resource to the programme and also represent different government ministries at the district level. Democratic and open processes were cited as reasons for effective work by CDCs and SDCs. The extent of transparency in the programme was also noted and cited by stakeholders as "the secret of success".
- Nearly all discussants thought the way the project is structured allows for sustainability for its major components, namely, the MSGs, FSGs, Cama (the Camfed Association of young women graduates), CDCs and School Development Committees (SDCs). Most of these structures are still functioning, even with limited funding. The activism and volunteerism noted among all stakeholder groups involved in the programme was laudable. *"The project has taught us self reliance and taught communities how to do things for themselves. The community owns what is done, it belongs to them and there is emphasis on using local initiatives to address local problems."*

Recommendations

- **Demand Outstrips Supply:** All communities recognised that Camfed support through scholarships and the SNF was valuable, but it is just a small response in the context of the demand from the communities. The need for support to MSGs, FSGs and Cama members is equally big. Groups recommended an increase in the number of children supported by the programme. It is also recommended that a comprehensive database of MSGs, FSGs and Cama members be constructed and that increased financial support be awarded to these groups.
- **Support for Information, Education and Communications (IEC) materials:** IEC materials related to children's rights and health issues were very limited in the schools. The lack of resource materials was identified as a drawback to children learning about children's rights and health conditions that affect them and their families. An effort should be made by different groups (e.g. teachers, Cama members and TMs) in schools to gather IEC material and build a library for pupils.
- **Selection of beneficiaries:** There was an all-round call to review the ratio of girls to boys benefiting from the Safety Net Fund, with a view to increase the number of boys who benefit. Boys were viewed, in such communities, to be in the same precarious circumstances as girls. Secondly, communities recommended that the scholarship awards be extended to orphaned boys who get selected for secondary school.

- **Revisit the support package:** Schools and communities felt that the specification of the package sometimes restricted the level of assistance they could provide to the children. For girls, a more comprehensive package, which includes necessary underwear and sanitary wear was recommended. In some schools, beneficiaries recommended the purchases to include jerseys, school hats, socks, shoes and support for school excursions.
- **Strengthen community capacity building:** There was a general call for capacity building by all groups. While researchers recognised that individuals were interested in training for different reasons, they noted that requests presented were legitimate in the context of individual responsibilities.

It is recommended that training programmes be systematically conducted for community members in the following study areas: small scale business management, report writing, proposal writing, counselling skills, women empowerment and monitoring. For those with basic training, refresher courses are recommended.

Exchange visits to other sites should be considered as part of a learning experience for pupils and adults.

- **Monitoring, evaluation and reporting:** CDC staff felt that they are not able to conduct frequent monitoring and support visits to schools, due to distances and lack of transport. The schools also pointed out that the CDCs do not acknowledge receipt of their reports.

An orientation course on monitoring and reporting should be implemented by CDCs for schools. Refresher courses may be required where gaps exist.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Camfed programme directly addresses three of the eight Millennium Goals (MDGs), which were adopted by world leaders at the United Nations in the year 2000. Goal 1 seeks to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, Goal 2 seeks to achieve universal primary education and Goal 3 seeks to promote gender equality and empower women. Measureable indicators for the MDG goals were set to be achieved by 2015. Founded in 1993, the vision of Camfed (Campaign for Female Education) is a “world in which every child is educated, protected, respected and valued and grows up to turn the tide of poverty”¹. The organisation seeks to achieve its goal of putting the girl at the centre, supporting her through primary and secondary education and promoting her economic independence and giving her life choices as she leaves school.

II. CONTEXT OF CAMFED PROGRAMMES

1. *Environmental Context*

The Camfed programme operates in 24 districts in Zimbabwe. This evaluation focuses on communities in Zimbabwe, based on schools and communities in the rural areas of Chikomba West and Wedza. The types of settlements distinguishable are, namely, communities located in the communal areas, the farm areas with established farm schools, and the resettlement areas after the land reform. These different environments affect the attitudes of the community members towards implementation of the programme. In each of the districts of Chikomba West and Wedza, two types of communities coexist. That is, people who have been settled in the farming areas as workers for a long time and those in new resettlement areas, which are mostly a result of the land reform programme of the mid 1990s.

Of particular interest are the communities in the resettlement areas in the districts of Chikomba West and Wedza in Zimbabwe, which were the communities of focus for this evaluation. The resettlement areas resemble a melting pot of diversity in terms of demographic characteristics, historical backgrounds, personalities and temperament of the resettled farmers. In discussions, the new settlers were viewed as social misfits in the areas that they were living before and some of them were running away from problems in their original homes.

In these emerging settlements, social structures and relations are at nascent stages of development. For example, there are no symbols of traditional authority that are respected by the settlers. The headman in the resettlement areas is voted into office, unlike the traditional family entitlement in the typical rural areas.

¹ Camfed International. (2010). Camfed Governance Accounting to the Girl: working Towards a Standard for Governance in the international Development Sector

Access to basic amenities is poor in the resettlement areas, which contain an emerging group of marginalised people, especially children. There are political issues regarding land reform. Homesteads are sparsely distributed and the school children walk long distances to get to school. They pass through isolated spots, which are risky areas. There is a risk of sexual assaults of school girls by “*vakomana vanofudza mombe*” (*boys who herd cattle*).

In these areas there are no kinship ties to bind the inhabitants together; therefore, according to respondents, “*hatikwanisi kuchengeterana vana*” (we can’t look after each others’ children). There are no role models for children and the farmers do not respect teachers because “*havana mari*” (they don’t have money). Behavioural problems like challenging authority in discipline, bullying, fighting and absenteeism at school are prevalent. The children think that their “*teachers havadzidzise*” (teachers don’t teach).

In resettlement areas such as A2 farms, the core business is farming tobacco. Children are regarded as a source of labour for growing tobacco to such an extent that children are delayed in attending school or miss school due to farm commitments like crop guarding, herding cattle, and watering tobacco nurseries. The children of farm workers previously employed on commercial farms before the land reform programme are the worst affected, in comparison to new settlers. The farm labourers tend to move from one farm to the next, often deserting their families as they seek employment. They earn a meagre amount of \$60 per month, which is not enough to save for secondary school fees. When their children stop going to school, they easily become a source of cheap labour for the plot owners, who are only interested in their labour at the expense of them going to school.

There is a vicious cycle of poverty that the new A2 farmers perpetuate: “*kuvharidzira kuti vana vasaona zvirikuitika munyika*” (*protecting their children from what happens in the outside world*) in order for them to benefit from the cheap labour. They keep the children ignorant about the opportunities that are available by going to school. The farm labourers deliberately exploit the children working on the farms because they know that their parents have no knowledge of where to seek a resolution of their situation “*varimurima*” (*they lack adequate information*). The children often work for as long as one year without receiving payment and only occasionally receive food in exchange for labour.

2. The schools

The challenges faced by primary and secondary schools in the Zimbabwean context were well noted in a report by Chakanyuka, Chung and Stevenson (2009), such as the shortage of learning materials, payment of fees and school infrastructure. The situation seems to have improved, although some of the problems still persist. For instance, the quality of education has not risen to significant levels. The field visits to the schools corroborated some of the findings.

The greatest challenge facing the children in school is that parents are not paying school fees. This is mainly due to the collapse of the economy and introduction of the multiple currency system. Although the situation has generally stabilised, most non-urban communities have limited opportunities to earn a steady income in this economy through access to employment or the capacity to provide goods or services. The non-payment of school fees affects the delivery of quality education, especially the purchase of textbooks and recruitment of teaching staff. For instance, at Zana secondary school, the Form 2 agricultural science class had 34 pupils and there were only 4 textbooks for the class; 11 textbooks were shared between 39 pupils in Forms 3 and 4. Most schools face a critical shortage of classrooms and overcrowding, resulting in sharing of learning space during the rainy season. Some classes are conducted outside, under a tree and this affects reading material like textbooks. Nearly all schools visited had unfinished building projects.

In resettlement areas, parents are not very supportive of the school administration. Their relationship with the school is marred by conflict and tension over the management of school resources and poor pass rates. The parents have influenced their children to have negative attitudes about the school: *“vanoita kunge varimuhondo”* (they are in constant conflict). The resettled farmers migrated from well developed areas that had all the basic services, schools and clinics. They do not appreciate the fact that in the resettlement areas, they need to build the schools and clinics.

The quality of the teaching staff is also a cause for concern. Most teachers in the resettlement areas are young adults, mostly untrained and lack experience in terms of working with parents and school children. Some of the teachers were raised in the community and have demonstrated a lack of tact in the handling of community complaints, especially about the poor pass rates. They blame it on the parents, whom they accuse of not doing enough to supervise and motivate their children. The community has hit back derogatorily, saying *“vakadzidza nemari yenzungu tichiona”* (they were educated from the proceeds of selling peanuts), further creating barriers in communication between the two parties.

3. The communities

During the field work, different stakeholders representing pupils, teachers, mothers and fathers were asked what they saw as problems that women and girls, in particular, face in their communities. Specifically, the study had an interest to find out what prevented girls from accessing education. Nearly all stakeholder groups identified similar causes, though to varying degrees. They identified, for example, poverty, discrimination associated with gender disparities, early marriages, limited financial resources, a violation of children and women’s rights, and travelling long distance to services (schools or health). A brief discussion follows below.

4. Early Marriages

Respondents from the districts visited singled out early marriages as a historic obstacle to girl's education. Culturally, girls in these districts are not traditionally encouraged to go to school; consequently they are married off as soon as they attain puberty. In the resettlement areas of Wedza and Chikomba West, the tobacco farmers pursue relationships with girls once they have received their money after tobacco sales.

5. Child Abuse

Sexual and physical abuse were frequently cited in group and individual discussions. In some districts, it was pointed out that some religious sects are known to sanction early marriages of girls to older men who are too old to provide for them. These children often start to have children at an early age, some as early 14 years old, before their bodies are mature to take on reproductive functions.

The field investigators noted that sexual abuse and gender based violence (GBV) were not spontaneously cited as problems in the communities. These only came up after probing. It is not clear why this was the case but it could be that communities took sexual and SGBV as acceptable situations, or they just shied away from discussing the topic.

6. Child-headed households

Boys and girls are heading households after the death of parents and are growing up in an environment that lacks protection and parental guidance. In most cases, they are maternal and paternal orphans who are forced to live alone, or they are abandoned by their mothers or fathers when they remarry. The stepfathers or stepmothers are generally not willing to provide food, school fees or school uniforms for children from another marriage. Without any parental supervision, these children face extreme hardship and struggle with looking after their siblings. At times they are forced to drop out of school and seek employment in the community or do piece jobs, just to keep the family going.

7. Access to schools

In the rural areas children walk long distances to get to school. Some of the children walk 8 to 11 kilometres to school. This poses problems for girls who risk sexual abuse or engaging in sexual relationships during trips to and from school.

III. CAMFED INTERVENTIONS

Before Camfed programme interventions were introduced, there were several initiatives that were put in place in an attempt to combat the social and cultural challenges outlined above.

- Churches and other non-governmental organisations used to assist with material assistance (food, clothing and sanitary pads) for children.
- The Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), a government programme has supported children with fees, but some of the resettlement schools have not benefited from the BEAM because they are not registered with the Ministry of Education.
- BEAM was perceived to be fraught with problems and sometimes unable to deliver benefits to the target group. Certain legal instruments addressed issues of domestic violence, dispossession of inheritance and sexual abuse of minors through the Inheritance Act, Domestic Violence Act respectively.
- For children who travelled long distances to get to school, attempts were made to house them, especially girls, in informal boarding houses at schools. This was stopped due to problems of inappropriate sexual relationships with the teaching staff.
- At school, teachers referred the problems that the children were facing to the SDC, which in turn convened meetings with the community, especially on what children should have when they go to school.

The Camfed programme has been in implementation in Zimbabwe since 1993. The key interventions that were introduced by Camfed to empower women and the girl child are as outlined below.

- The girl child is central to the Camfed support programme. With the view to uphold the children's rights and their protection, Camfed has instituted a different mechanism to that end. The Safety Net Fund (SNF) is a cash transfer mechanism to schools to improve access to and retention in schools. The greatest numbers of beneficiaries are orphans and very vulnerable children.
- The School Development Committees represent community and school stakeholders. Typically, they consist of parents, teachers, and opinion leaders. The stakeholders administer the Safety Net Fund for primary school going boys and girls, and bursaries for secondary school girls.
- The Community Development Committees (CDCs) at the district level represent a wide range of stakeholder groups. Typically, representatives are drawn from the following: education officers, head teachers, teacher mentors, police, health workers, parents and Cama members.
- The Mother and Father Support Groups are usually associated with schools where support is rendered. The two groups engage in income generating projects to support these families and orphans and vulnerable children. Some of the projects involve poultry, trading, vegetable gardening and livestock rearing. In addition, the groups use the meetings for individual and group learning and training.
- The Camfed Association (Cama) brings together young women in the communities. New membership is for young women between the ages of 16 and 25 years, many of whom graduated on bursary support provided by Camfed. The association provides young women with business training and seed money to start their own businesses. Some of the members are

selected for training in basic community health, for example, sanitation, childcare and HIV-prevention and care for those infected.

At this time, it is important to find out if Camfed interventions have been effective in reaching the intended beneficiaries and whether the processes are robust enough or need review and improvement. It is in this context that this evaluation was commissioned in two selected districts of Zimbabwe.

The evaluation report outlines the objectives, the study design and methodology. Data and collection methods are discussed briefly. The findings are discussed in the context of the study effectiveness, relevance, equity, efficiency and impact, followed by recommendations and conclusions.

IV. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the project was *to reduce poverty in rural areas of Zimbabwe affected by long-term forced migration*. The programme duration was three years, lasting from October 2008 to September 2011 with a total programme budget of £233,104.

The specific objectives of the project, according to the proposal were:

1. To enable people in affected communities to claim their children's right to education and actively participate in the management of educational provision;
2. To provide a support network for school-leavers and enable young women who leave school to make the transition to a safe livelihood; and,
3. To develop a network of partnerships that extend from school and community to national level in order to channel resources to affected communities in the long term, and in turn ensure that capacity is in place to accountably manage these resources and make demands on service-providers.

V. THE METHODOLOGY

Study Design

A multi-site cross-sectional design was adapted for the evaluation. The design took into account the data sources at each study site. Eleven schools were visited in Chikomba West and Wedza.

Sources of Data

The key sources of data at each site were the CDC, SDC, Parent Support Groups consisting of the Mother Support Group (MSG), the Father Support Group (FSG), the Teacher Mentors (TM), Cama and pupils, as beneficiaries.

The distribution of study units by district are indicated in Table 1 below. At every district, members of the CDC were convened. After introductions of the study and the data collectors, the group was split into two groups to allow for

better group discussions and participation. At every school, corresponding representatives of the school development committees, mothers support groups, teacher mentors and pupils were interviewed. At some schools where there were Cama members, they were also interviewed. However, larger groups of Cama members were gathered at Wedza. In some instances, the Student Councils, individual headmasters and teachers were interviewed.

Table 1: Distribution of study units by school /sites in each of the selected districts

District	Number of groups					Individual
Schools	CDC	SDC	MSG	Cama	Pupil groups	Headmaster /mistresses
Wedza Zana Secondary Fels Primary Nhumwa Secondary	1	3	3	1	5	1
Chikomba West Hitter Hunzvi Secondary Nhakayedu Secondary Zimondi Secondary Simukai Primary Masarirambi Secondary. Hokonya Primary Manyene Secondary Shingirayi Primary	1	8	8	2	9	2
Total Number	2	11	11	3	14	3

Data collection techniques

Four data collection methods were used to gather data for the evaluation; desk review, observations, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Before the field work and during the study, a desk review was conducted based on available documents. During the desk review, proposals, periodic reports, work plans, policies and study reports were examined. The review was used for developing the study protocols, including data collection instruments.

The data collection methods were qualitative. For the different groups, data was gathered using focus group discussions or just group discussions. For key informants interviewed individually, in-depth interviews were most appropriate. While in the field, observations were considered to be an important element of the data gathering process. For instance, information and education materials were observed at the study sites and record books for Camfed related work were reviewed.

Training and field work

Between the 15th and 16th of September, the study investigators were oriented on the study in Harare. The investigators were experienced researchers with

at least a master's degree in developmental studies. Field work was conducted between the 18th and 24th of September in the Zimbabwe sites.

The teams conducted field work together in order to trouble shoot and standardise the procedures of data collection. Data collection in the field took place at primary and secondary schools. Prior to the arrival of the data collection teams, the respondents were gathered at the schools. Therefore, the schools served as venues where interviews were conducted.

Analysis of the qualitative data followed immediately once the teams were out of the field and they had keyed the data into the computer. The data was largely analysed by field investigators and this process ran concurrently with report writing.

Limitations of the study

The study is largely purposive in design and therefore caution should be exercised in interpreting and generalising results. The groups interviewed at different levels were not randomly selected and this may have biased the selection of interviewees. However, we note that qualitative methods are normative and convergence of views may show the extent to which there is agreement and how much generalisation can be made. The districts and schools were purposively chosen to minimise costs.

VI. FINDINGS

An enormous amount of data was generated from the interviews conducted in the districts. The representation of the results follows the key areas or problem statements that motivated the study and these are presented below.

1. Reasons for being part of the programme

CDC

The different groups within the Camfed programme got involved for different reasons. Many in the Community Development Committee came to be involved because they represent the different Government Ministries who are stakeholders in the programme. These include the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, Ministry of Women Affairs and Community Development, Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, Ministry of Justice, the District Administrator's Office, District Police Administration as well as the President's Office. These ministries have community initiatives and it is beneficial for them to harmonise with the Camfed programme.

SBC

The School Based Committee (SBC/SDC) is very crucial as it is at the forefront of making sure that the school is run professionally and is instrumental in the beneficiary selection process. Members of the SDC were mostly democratically elected by parents of children who attended the schools. In some schools, the participants in these schools were relatively young, with an average age of about 35.

MSG

Participants in the Mothers Support Groups (MSGs) were of varying ages (with a range between 20 to 70 years old) and all indicated the voluntary nature of the association. Some were attracted by the call of volunteerism; others had experienced similar hardships in their childhood years and wanted to change circumstances; yet others saw a potential of reaping economic benefits through income generating projects. The MSGs in the resettlement areas were very committed to the programme and most of them had female teachers as members of the MSGs.

FSG

The men from the two FSGs interviewed joined because they saw the benefits that were resulting from the work that MSGs were doing in their groups. They felt challenged by the successes of the MSGs. Where they have started, namely, Gumbonzvanda and Fels, they are very active and very visible at their schools.

Teacher mentors

Teacher mentors came into the programme through two routes: they volunteered or they were appointed by the headmaster of the school. This group tended to be the head of the Guidance and Counselling Department in the school, as well as advisors to the Student Councils. In many of these schools, other teachers tended to be distant from the Camfed programme.

Cama

Many young women joined Cama largely for financial benefits, which they used to support their families as well as disadvantaged children. On the other hand, the new group of Cama recruits seemed to be motivated by potential financial support to start a business. Then there were members who had been beneficiaries of the Camfed SNF or the secondary school bursary. This group had a greater calling than merely getting economic benefits through income generation projects. They wanted to help the community and they provided voluntary services to vulnerable children, the elderly and other disadvantaged children. A challenge remains of how to deal with swelling numbers of Cama members, of which some know very little of the programme and have elevated expectations of support from Camfed.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries were vulnerable in many ways and could not afford to attend school without Camfed support. This group largely wanted to complete their studies and return to their communities to help those unable to help themselves.

2. Relevance

The Camfed project is relevant to the resettlement areas in a number of ways. It has helped to reduce poverty through the MSG income generating projects. Children who could not afford to go to school are supported to go through the SNF and the bursary. Furthermore, the programme has created awareness on the rights of children and has helped to set up protection measures to

protect children from abuse. Student Councils exist in resettlement areas and have helped children to know how to recognise abuse and what they could do to stop it. The involvement of communities in school affairs is also building the confidence of resettlement communities, so that they can contribute meaningfully in the education and protection of their children's rights. At the broader level, it promotes economic independence, improves access to education and addresses the gender disparities that exist in the communities where it operates. For the children, there is greater creation of awareness of human rights and the need for protection of children.

Child rights and protection

Rights awareness campaigns are conducted by the MSGs, Cama, teacher mentors and the two FSGs that were interviewed. MSGs educate children and youth on child abuse, both at the school and in the community. They emphasise that children must keep in a group when walking to or from school. MSGs conduct home visits to assess living conditions at home. If an MSG member suspects a case of child abuse, she discusses it with the family. If there is no resolution, she reports it to the relevant authorities for investigation. MSGs also provide counselling to children and work closely with the Victim Friendly Unit of police. Collectively, the MSG, Cama and teacher mentors protect children through a number of initiatives, including the *"Together we can"* campaign.

Knowledge of children's rights was widespread in the schools but not universal. Some of the rights as reported by the children are education, protection, non-discrimination, access to food, protection against child abuse and (freedom of association). In Zimbabwe, the rights of the child were well reported by primary school children, compared to those in secondary school (Form 3 and 4). In some schools, children did not have an understanding of the rights issues, as they said that no one ever told them or taught them about the rights.

The Camfed programme has also established a network of entry points through which girls as well as boys and relevant staff can report violation of children's rights. The entry points are typically the teacher mentors, headmaster/headmistress, child protection committees, the neighbourhood police, MSGs and Cama members. These mechanisms are very important as some children reported that these groups are very approachable and understand them.

For instance, asked whom the girls would tell if they felt that their rights were being violated, many of the children reported that they will tell the teacher mentor because she is approachable and she understands them very well. Others preferred the MSGs because they are popular, people listen to them, they are good leaders in the community and they are readily available. Others still were comfortable in telling the police, an adult in the community, the police or the school head.

At the same time, some children complained about some MSGs and teacher mentors who were not able to keep secrets. In such instances, children wanted them to be changed because they felt betrayed.

Students'/Children's Clubs

In most cases children are now aware of their rights as most of them are involved with the structures like the Girl Empowerment Movement (GEM), Boy Empowerment Movement (BEM), Student Councils and the Child Protection Committees, whose functions are the creation of awareness on child abuse and identification of children at risk. Abuse of rights is reported to the teacher mentors or any other teachers, then counselling is provided to the victim. The GEM and BEM are relatively new movements in the schools. The movement empowers children with life and leadership skills. It develops social skills and responsibility among girls as well as boys as it offers them opportunities to become models of pro social behaviour. The effectiveness of these structures is yet to be seen as all the structures were formed this term. However they are popular with the children as in some cases children proudly talk about them when asked about their different clubs.

Child Protection Committee (CPC)

The Child Protection Committee at the school works closely with the Child Protection Committees in the community. These groups have made a network where they can easily identify and solve issues of child abuse and assist those who need help. Such groupings are very important as they make more children participate although in some communities they are not known or not popular. Child protection committees were well established at Ward, Village and School levels. In some few schools, the names of members of the CPC were written in the headmaster's office.

Student Council

An important institution that has developed in some schools is that of Student Councils. Members of the committee are seen as the eyes and ears for other students at school and at community level. The Student Council members are empowered to report the teacher to the Headmaster or Head mistress if the teacher is not doing his work satisfactorily. Members of the Student Council are given chances at the assembly to talk to other children on issues of child protection. This council is different from the prefect's body which is viewed as pro-teacher and anti-student. Many children feel free to talk with members of the Student Council.

It was also reported that the Student Council engages in fundraising activities and the proceeds from the fundraising is used to fulfil the needs of the under privileged children. This demonstrates how the students are developing a caring spirit for the disadvantaged and are concerned about their colleagues remaining in school. The positive spirit of caring and oneness has been fostered through community engagement by MSGs, SDCs TMs and Cama members.

The SDC in some cases also reported that they are striving to create child friendly schools. For example they fill in some pits so that children will not be

injured during their play, they provide IEC material on rights and abuse, cultural building to preserve cultural heritage. Some examples include building a culture hut, fencing the school, provision of water and sanitation facilities; things that make children want to go to school.

The structures described above are not necessarily initiated by Camfed but they are closely associated with the organisation in different ways. For instance, teacher mentors have received training from Camfed and are part of the Camfed structures as counsellors to learners in schools as well as advisors to many of the students' clubs or structures. The protection and promotion of the children's rights, especially the girl child, are embedded in the work of Camfed through the MSGs, FSGs, TM and Cama, who tend to be members of Child Protection Committees. Consequently, these initiatives tend to be associated strongly with Camfed.

3. Equity

Children (Girls and Boys)

The programme focuses on the girl child who, for a long time, has been disadvantaged in terms of access to education. This is being done by ensuring that the girl child attends school, remains in school until completion and is supported further through the transition from childhood to adulthood. Promotion of gender equality and general rights of disadvantaged populations is made through different community groups, namely, MSGs, TM and Cama members.

At the household level, the researchers learned that a number of mechanisms are in place to promote equality. To improve access to education, MSGs help the girl child by taking turns to assist with household chores. Hard household work was identified as a contributing factor for girls dropping out of school. MSGs and Community Health Trainers (CHTs) take turns to take care of the ill members of her family, so that she can attend school. Families are encouraged to build enough huts or rooms to separate sleeping arrangements between boys, girls and adults.

All groups interviewed confirmed that household chores are distributed evenly to boys and girls without consideration of their gender. There are some traditional communities that are still fixed on the allocation of chores by gender, for boys and girls, but a noticeable change was indicated by interviewees.

In the school, children's clubs promote gender equity to ensure the girl child grows up actively involved in issues to do with community development. These movements encourage the nurturing of boys and girls, so that they respect each other as they grow up. With respect to the bursary scheme, the focus on the girl child was lauded by some and criticised by others for lack of equity. Those criticising it argued that the principle ignores other deserving children, especially the boys whose situation may be worse than that of the

girl child. In this case, some people argued that the boy child is being discriminated against.

The MSG supports all children in need, regardless of whether they are boys or girls. When training in life-skills, both boys and girls are included, and emphasis is made that all children are important and should be respected and protected against abuse.

Women and men

The programme has provided women with opportunities for work and the ability to look after the family, rather than waiting for fathers to provide for them. Women have become self-reliant; traditionally they were not involved in economic activities. The women even boasted that “*tatovevarume isusu*” (*we are men ourselves*). This is because they now have income that they can use the way they want, without interference from their husbands.

There are gender based campaigns and trainings with representation of both women and males by traditional leaders. In such instances, Father Support Groups have participated to teach boys about gender issues. However, in some communities, domestic violence is still a big challenge. The administrative structures at district (CDC) and school levels (SDC) are striving towards equal ratios of representation between genders. One of the CDC participants noted that “*we should have a 50-50 representation, but we are not yet there as we are at 45-55, but this shows that we are in the right direction.*”

Some women who participated in exchange visits said that they got the opportunity to have passports. This presents them with an opportunity to engage in cross border trading as this was a big step and a stepping stone in their lives.

The partnership with Padare (a men’s organisation which educates communities against gender based violence and discrimination against women and girls), strong in Wedza district, has ensured that both sexes are taught to complement each other in work they do on daily basis. Some men never used to help their wives when doing different chores around the house, but observation shows that men are changing, as seen by the work they do in communities. Women report that they are now able to voice their opinions to their husbands in a more effective way and their partners listen to them. Further, early marriages of girls from some religions were reported to have reduced. If forced to marry, girls felt they knew where to report this violation of their rights.

4. Efficiency

Partnerships

All respondents at both community and district levels explained that Camfed clearly explained their roles to them at the inception of programme. Members of the CDC and most of the SBC were very articulate and clear about their roles. However, in some schools, respondents mentioned they were told that there is an organisation that is offering scholarships and other forms of support for girls. In such cases, the introduction of Camfed was weak.

Camfed's work relies very heavily on partnerships; therefore, efficient and effective functioning of relationships are crucial for achieving goals. At national level, Camfed is part of the Education Cluster, which consists of over 200 NGOs that discuss education issues, policies and distribution of materials and text books. This is part of the "Back to School Campaign". The Cluster provides statistics to the Department of Education and oversees the BEAM programmes. Specifically, the work of Camfed was cited by a Cluster committee member from UNICEF as invaluable because it contributes to government policy and provides learning materials at different levels, starting with the Early Childhood Development Programme up to the secondary school level. Participation at these meetings means that Camfed effectively supports government policy.

At district level, the CDC is made up of a number of key stakeholders drawn from government Ministries and NGOs as well as Cama members. Six CDCs were interviewed to find out how they function, how they collaborate and cooperate with each other, and areas of conflict. Generally, the functioning of the committees demonstrated a high degree of maturity. The fact that the groups coordinated their activities for the good of the community was cited as a measure of a high degree of collaboration.

Handling of funds

Those handling funds from Camfed at different levels were very clear about the processes involved in receiving money and accounting for it. At the national level, Camfed Zimbabwe uses a well-tested standard accounting package Called Sun System 5, which is consistent with the one used in the Camfed UK office. The package is versatile, thus allowing for focused monitoring of financial data by any of the selected data fields (district, CDC, SBC, funder, amount, dates).

At the district level, the CDC receives funds from Camfed through the bank account with signatories of people who are accountable. It was also mentioned that at school, there were a number of signatories from the SDC.

Identification and participation of beneficiaries

The responses that were generated also showed that Camfed beneficiaries are identified through an efficient, open process at community level. The process may vary slightly, but the main objectives are the same. Typically, the Mother Support Group (MSGs) work hand in hand with local chiefs, School Based Committees and teacher mentors and Cama (where they exist) to identify needy children, after which the children and their representatives are

involved during the rest of the process. Eventually, SBCs compile beneficiary lists for SNF packages and requests for bursaries and scholarships.

5. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is explored in terms of knowledge of children's rights, the work of the MSGs and Cama, and gender issues.

Knowledge of children on child abuse and child rights

Knowledge of children's rights was widespread among adults in communities, but rather deficient among learners. The majority of children interviewed had scanty knowledge, with a few whose knowledge could be classified as very good. No amount of probing could produce better results in this area. Most reported that they had regular sessions on child rights and child abuse given by teachers, Cama, MSGs, and the Victim Friendly Unit of the police. Surprisingly, there was no difference in knowledge uptake between the secondary school and the primary school children.

An observation in the schools was the absence of information, education and communication (IEC) materials on walls, where children can read to reinforce their knowledge. Where some IEC materials were noticed, it was in the headmaster's office, resource centre or library – areas which are not normally patronised by children. Some Camfed partners, namely UNICEF, Padare, Government ministries and Childline produce IEC materials that could be sourced and availed to children for enhancement of their knowledge.

Despite the knowledge gap on abuse, children knew where to report if they thought their rights were violated. The child protection structures that have been put in place at school and at the community levels are reported to be functioning well, as children have come out to report abuse or have been identified by the existing structures. Another important feature of schools is the emergence of Student Councils which, in some places, are reported to be so powerful that it is now getting the teachers concerned as they report to the Headmaster if they think the teacher is slackening in his teaching or if he answers his phone while teaching. This happens where the Student Councils have been operating for some time.

Cases of abuse are reported to have gone down at school and in the communities where they are functioning properly. Increased reporting is an indication of the effectiveness of the information and education children are getting from different stakeholders on abuse.

Effectiveness of the support provided to children

Camfed support was credited with improved attendance and punctuality at schools. The support is being used as leverage on the children to be punctual at school. Camfed has promoted love and working together for the good of the children and also elevated the poor to higher heights through the projects carried out by the MSGs and Cama. Children in communities are reportedly having a positive outlook and adopting positive behaviour. The number of girl dropouts due to pregnancy was reported as reduced in all schools; children's

participation in class is reported to have improved and girls have better self-image.

Activities of the Mother Support Group

It is the researcher's view that the MSGs are the backbone of the Camfed programme. They have rallied around the children at school and at the community, providing psychosocial support and material support. They follow up on the handicapped and the elderly at home. They address children on child abuse and child rights and they have come to be known as mothers of all children in the community, as they have taken all the children for whom they provide support as their own children. The formation of FSGs has been motivated by MSGs. MSGs have encouraged the mothers to work for themselves and not to wait for handouts.

Through this programme, mothers have reportedly learnt to share what they have, to serve their communities without expecting to be paid, to recognise child abuse in communities and to report abuse to the police (regardless of protest from perpetrators). The programme has built confidence in women through working with sectors, such as teachers. They have also built partnerships with their husbands and spouses as they have acquired good communication skills.

Camfed has initiated a movement, *"Together We Can"*. The movement has instilled a spirit of unity among MSGs, teacher mentors and Cama. This helps the groups to appreciate the role played by each other in supporting children. For instance, mothers have gained confidence in articulating issues that affect their communities, as well as tackling gender disparities. One teacher mentor described her experience in working with MSG:

"I never imagined that one day I would sit with ordinary women at the same bench and in the same office discussing problems of children in our country. This has taught me to be humble and I salute the women of Zimbabwe"

A grandmother's tribute to the Camfed programme is as follows:

"Where did you come from those that take care of orphans, the poor and those with problems? Our grandchildren are now going to school smartly dressed in uniforms and we as guardians and parents now only look for soap and food. Books and pens were a challenge. There is now a change for the better in the way our children are writing and reading ... They now have school fees."

During the field discussions, one team checked on the enrolment statistics of children at Fels primary school. The SNF grant that was received in the 1st term had led to increased enrolment at the school as shown by table 2 below.

Table 2: Enrolment figures at Fels Primary School for 2011

	Total no of students	Boys	Girls
1st	278	138	140
2nd	292	147	145
3rd term	312	153	159

Table 3 Pass rate in the past four years at Fels school

Year	% pass rate
2007	39
2008	24
2009	6
2010	39

The drastic dip in the pass rate in 2009 is attributed to the challenges posed by the collapse of the economy. Most children had stopped coming to school. In 2010, the pass rate returned to the 2007 level.

Activities of Father Support Groups

The FSG interviewed in the resettlement area had ten members but only two were met for discussion. The group started in May 2011, making it a fairly new group. Motivated by Camfed support, they decided to start a Father Support Group to complement the support provided by Camfed to the children of their community at Fels Primary School. The primary focus of this group is teaching children life skills that will help them survive as they grow older. Their activities include building or renovating children's houses, ploughing fields for child-headed families, making buckets for carrying water for needy children, planting fruit trees for children at their homesteads, bee keeping, welding and building. In these activities, boys were encouraged to participate.

Cama activities

The creation of Cama and their presence in the communities presents a great opportunity for addressing poverty in the communities. Though the members are trained to different levels and have different expertise in business and project management, they are highly motivated and looking for opportunities to help themselves. Through Camfed, Cama members have received different types of training, namely, leadership skills, entrepreneurship and community health. Cama members run a narrow range of businesses, which include buying and selling goods, rearing chickens and sewing. Those already engaged in businesses make a reasonable amount of money to pay their bills and school fees for their children. In a number of instances, they provided

financial support (fees, food and uniforms) to disadvantaged children in their communities.

Between the start of the project and the end, 353 young women were trained in business skills and they received grants, through the Seed Money Scheme (SMS), to start small enterprises. This financial support has changed the lives of the recipients and their families. For those owning livestock, the animals continue to breed and multiply, thus contributing to a significant improvement in the livelihoods of the Cama members. Nearly all those engaged in business were found to have plans and they keep records for their activities. However, these systems need strengthening to assist in setting targets and proper monitoring of their projects.

In addition, close to 450 Cama members were trained in community health programmes as community health trainers (CHT). Once trained, they visited schools to support learners and teachers. Asked what they do in the schools, Cama members mentioned that they counsel learners and hold health and life skills talks to learners. In the communities, they conduct health education talks and assist with home based care for those in need. In the communities, their work complements that of community health workers and needs to be properly integrated.

For young women, the Seed Money Scheme (SMS) is likely to have a long term impact on their lives. Judging from reports and interviews, the Cama members are improving their livelihoods from the support of the SMS. When asked how much money they need to start business, the Cama members indicated a modest range of between 80 and 200 USD to enable them to start or maintain their business activities. There is still a large group of young women who are enthusiastic about exploring opportunities for business and they are looking for financial support.

6. Impact

The design of the project presents positive economic, social and political impact to the people of Zimbabwe. As indicated earlier, the project addresses a number of MDGs. The income generation projects by MSGs, FSGs and Cama directly address the eradication of poverty and hunger directly for themselves, as well as for other community members. The increase in the number of school enrolments, retention in school of girls as well as boys achieves MDG 2, which seeks to achieve universal primary education. Empowerment through income generation projects and focus on the girl child were found to promote discussion and practice of equity in the community and schools.

The fund contributed to all the three areas of protecting the poor or marginalised groups, strengthening in-country advocacy and policy development and improving the impact, capacity and contribution to collaboration of civil society organisations. By working in the rural areas where women and girls are traditionally marginalised, the fund has contributed significantly to their improvement. Camfed participates in the Education

Cluster and thus is at the forefront of advocacy and policy development. Another lasting contribution of Camfed is the creation of civil society organisations in the communities in rural areas and developing their capacity to work amongst themselves as well as develop linkages with others.

The impact of Camfed support in the resettlement schools is demonstrated as follows: the SNF grant that was received in the 1st term of 2011 had led to increased enrolment at a resettlement school and greatly improved the pass rates as demonstrated by Tables 2 and 3. In 2010, the school registered pass rates which were so good that the school was rated 5th out of fifty-four schools in the district by the Ministry of Education (this included schools that were outside the resettlement areas).

VII. CHALLENGES

1. High demand unmatched with resources

From discussions it was clear that demand is high for assistance at most schools and at some schools, a significant number of children are orphans. There is a call for Camfed to expand the number of beneficiaries, as well as to include boys for the bursary scheme.

Interviewees indicated that MSG and FSG have their own families, and, as a result, at certain periods there is a lull of activities (support at school). This happens especially during the rainy season when these groups will be engaged with subsistence farming and home duties.

2. Selection of beneficiaries

In selecting beneficiaries, the farming and resettlement areas face different challenges. The criteria for selection are clearly spelt out by Camfed, but in a situation of limited resources, there is bound to be stiff competition for survival. As expected, many parents and guardians would like their own children to be selected as beneficiaries.

The selection criteria used for picking beneficiaries in resettlement farm areas are perceived to discriminate against the children of 'proper' and 'rightful' farmers who were the first to settle in the former white commercial farms before the land reform programme. The selection criteria are based on need, and the children of workers are the most affected. Therefore, they are the most eligible. Children of farm workers and not those of 'absentee plot owners' are benefiting from the SNF and bursary schemes. The contradiction is that these children and their parents are not regarded as part of the community. As workers, they can migrate away at any time, depending on their job situation, and their children would have to follow. Consequently, parents of the original group of farmers are not willing to pay school fees because they feel their own children are not benefiting.

3. Political interference

Political interference comes in at different stages of the programme. In some districts, interviewees indicated that political figures, for example councillors, could demand that their children be included as beneficiaries. This could instil fear of victimisation during political campaigns. While there may be pressure of this sort, investigators did not come across situations where selection was said to have been directly influenced by political pressure.

4. Reporting incidents of abuse

Cases of abuse are generally not reported. Community members are not willing to come out in the open and report child abuse because they fear reprisals from their neighbours. Teacher mentors felt that they were ill equipped to deal with matters of child abuse, especially when the case leads to prosecution. When there was a need for them to testify, they were identified by perpetrators of abuse and threatened.

5. Co-ordination and collaboration

Stakeholders from the non-education ministries are not as well informed about education issues as the players in the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture. These stakeholders point out that there is too much focus on education. They believe that this limits the contribution of other ministries. However, the close relationship between Camfed and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture should be understood in the context of the work of Camfed.

6. Reporting expenses

SDCs pointed out that preparation of acquittals is time consuming, as some receipts take long to come and some are misplaced or lost and may need to be replaced. This may result in some acquittals being submitted late by the schools to the districts. The reporting system in accounting for resources received from Camfed is paper based, and there are challenges with filing and loss of documents. There was concern that sometimes, expensive purchases like those of school uniforms and other materials were conducted with more expensive shops because of the requirement for receipts. This is because some informal or small shops in the countryside, may not issue receipts.

7. Capacity building

There was great appreciation of the training rendered to different groups of participants, but at the same time, a high level of unmet need for training was indicated. Concerns were also raised about the choice of those who are selected for training. Some groups pointed out that only a limited number of people are consistently being invited to workshops (for example, the chairpersons and secretaries).

8. Diversification of MSG, FSG and Cama projects

There is a problem by Cama and MSG in terms of selecting income generating projects. There is no diversity at the moment, as all groups are involved in gardening, flea markets, poultry and sewing. Participants felt that this will saturate the market.

VIII. LESSONS LEARNT

1. Good business practice

The SDCs and MSGs have learnt the importance of good financial management, record keeping, and monitoring budgets as important ingredients for business management.

Almost all the respondents indicated that they had learnt that, if properly planned, a voluntary self-help spirit coupled with unity of purpose, can make a difference in community life. Along the same lines, the communities learnt that when community and school structures support children's education, boys and girls compete with each other favourably in class.

2. Self-reliance through volunteerism

In the Chikomba West as well as Wedza districts, the concept of volunteerism was highlighted as one of the lessons learnt. This statement from one of the participants sums it all up:

"The project has taught us self reliance and taught communities how to do things for themselves. The community owns what is done. It belongs to them and there is emphasis on using local initiatives to address local problems."

Collaborating statements from different interviewees follow:

"I have been taught to give".....MSG

"I have learnt to give".....Cama

"Poverty can be eliminated through assistance"..... Headmasters

Sometimes assistance evokes unexpected emotions:

"To see them receive; you can cry, sometimes you feel they are reminded of their poverty." An example is given of a boy who was awarded BEAM money but refused to receive it.

The team members felt the spirit of volunteerism encouraged unity of purpose (having children at heart), leadership, communication and negotiation skills. A lot of potential among marginalised people was recognised and this can be brought to the fore by creating an enabling environment for them to realise it.

3. Collaboration and cooperation

The interviewees highlighted that working as a team and networking with others, they would achieve more. Abuses are easily identified and remedial action taken quickly and it helps with getting in touch with what is happening in the district and how new players can complement what is going on.

When working with the community and children, one has to be respectful of other stakeholders providing the same or similar service— *“tiri mitezo yakasiyanasiyana asi basa redu rimwechete”* (we are different, but we have one goal). At both the CDC and community levels, there was great appreciation of transparency in the Camfed programme. Respondents indicated that they had learnt that transparency is the “secret of success” because it promotes trust among stakeholders.

The relationship between teachers, the headmaster and the SDC within the school is important in planning, communication and feedback. It is also important to ask for ideas from the SDCs. Through participation, people that are affected by the plans are given a chance to make critical decisions.

4. Integration of extra-curricular activities in Camfed packages

It was also observed that the Camfed programme was deficient in extracurricular activities, such as sports, music and drama. Schools explained that they appreciate the financial and material support received from Camfed. They also suggest that the support could be improved by including activities such as sports, drama, and music to engage students in worthwhile activities after school.

IX. SUSTAINABILITY

The respondents were asked whether they thought the Camfed programme would be sustainable without Camfed funding. This was the most discomfoting question in the whole evaluation exercise because respondents were suspicious that Camfed was planning to phase out its programme. Nevertheless, respondents expressed the view that the programme had potential to be sustained without financial support from Camfed. Specifically, the areas indicated below could be sustained.

Use of a participatory and holistic approach

Respondents felt that the participatory and holistic approach that Camfed had used to develop human capacity at district levels (CDCs), the school and communities were sustainable. Even the financial support provided to orphans and vulnerable children, which was initiated by the community groups, such as MSGs, FSGs and Cama, should be able to go on, but at varying degrees.

Spirit of self-initiative

Some respondents also pointed out that the communities had already shown a spirit of self-help initiative by generating some funds locally to support some programme activities within their communities. Examples were given of the Chapananga women who were rearing pigs to generate funds for supporting girls.

However, all respondents were quick to observe that on their own, they would not have enough financial capacity to run the programme. They therefore saw their present initiatives only as a sign of their willingness to continue the programme in the event that the Camfed programme is phased out. There was an indication that stakeholders would expect Camfed to empower them economically before phasing out the programme.

Positive working relationship with the Ministry of Education

At CDC level, it was observed that the project had a high chance to continue without Camfed funding because it was introduced through the Ministry of Education headquarters, thereby enjoying full recognition by all Ministry of Education structures.

Financial support from potential networks

Although there were no formal networks in place, some respondents were of the view that they had created networks that have a potential to sustain Camfed activities without Camfed funding. In any case, most of the MSGs had started and continued to function without external financial support.

X. REPLICABILITY

Wholesale replication

Respondents felt that the process that introduced the changes that the Camfed programme had brought about in their districts and communities was replicable. Some thought that the process could be replicated in its entirety because it was straight forward and easy to be understood, even by ordinary villagers. The research did not bring up anything that would not be replicated in resettlement areas.

Modified replication

Others, however, thought there was room for modification, citing economic support for innovative activities, such as income generating activities and the school feeding programme. An important aspect of replication is that communities where the programme is taken should be willing to engage in voluntary self-help work and have interest in the education of girls. Where there is unity of purpose, social cohesion, empathy for children of all backgrounds and open mindedness, this programme can be replicated. Respondents stated that, technically, the programme could be replicated in many girl-centred projects.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in this evaluation report are based on the findings from the desk reviews of project documents, focus group discussions, site visits and observations at sites in 11 schools in the districts of Chikomba West and Wedza. The recommendations are not exhaustive, but they should provide guidance on how the processes can be improved and outputs

enhanced towards a sustainable programme. Recommendations completely out of the mandate of Camfed are excluded. These recommendations included the request for constructing buildings and requests for the purchase of motor vehicles to be used for monitoring the programme.

1. Demand outstrips supply

All communities recognised that Camfed support through scholarships and the SNF was valuable, but just a small response in the context of the demand from the communities. The need for support to MSGs, FSGs and Cama members is equally big. Groups recommended an increase in the number of children supported by the programme. Secondly, it is recommended that a comprehensive database of MSGs, FSGs and Cama members be constructed and that increased financial support to them be awarded.

2. Support for IEC materials

IEC materials related to children's rights and health issues were very limited in the schools. Lack of learning resource materials was identified as a drawback in enhancing children's learning.

Recommendation: An effort should be made by different groups (e.g. teachers, Cama members, TMs) in school to gather IEC material relevant to build a library for pupils.

3. Selection of beneficiaries:

There was an all round call to review the ratio of girls to boys benefitting from the Safety Net Fund. Boys were viewed in such communities to be in the same precarious circumstances as girls.

Recommendation: It is suggested that Camfed reconsider the girl/boy ratio of 3:1 in allocating benefits from the SNF. Secondly, there is a need to extend scholarship awards to boys and, more particularly, to orphans who get selected for secondary school.

Some communities, in particular teachers, recommend an introduction of incentives for best performers among student beneficiaries, awarded on the basis of their achievement rather than their level of poverty.

When a child who is on scholarship drops out of school, the community should be allowed to select a replacement

4. Revisit the support package

Schools and communities felt that the specification of the package sometimes restricted the level of assistance they could provide to the children.

Recommendations: For girls, a more comprehensive package which includes necessary underwear and sanitary wear was suggested.

Camfed needs to introduce material or financial support for girls living in self-boarding facilities.

5. Strengthen community capacity building

There was a general call for capacity building by all groups. While it recognised that individuals are interested in training for different reasons, most of the requests appeared legitimate in the context of what the individual responsibilities of the different groups are.

Recommendation: Training programmes designed for the groups (MSGs, SBCs, TM, Cama) should be designed and implemented to impart basic technical skills relevant to their work. The training should include small scale business management, report writing, proposal writing, counselling skills, women's empowerment and monitoring. For those with basic training, refresher courses are recommended.

Children need basic skills on Child to Child counselling to be able to respond to the problems of their peers on the spot.

6. Exchange programmes

Recommendation: There is a need to learn from experiences of Camfed programmes in other districts and countries. Therefore, exchange visits are highly recommended. At beneficiary level, learning trips to other schools and learning centres will widen the horizons of pupils beyond their district and school confines. For instance, the Father Support Group at Fels Resettlement School could be used to share their experiences with other resettlement communities where forming Father Support Groups is a challenge.

7. Monitoring and reporting

CDC staff felt that they are not able to conduct frequent monitoring and support visits to schools, due to distances and lack of transport. The schools also pointed out that receipt of their reports is not acknowledged at higher levels such as CDCs.

Recommendation: An orientation course on monitoring and reporting should be implemented by CDCs for schools. Refresher courses may be required where gaps exist.

A system of monitoring reports sent up and down the reporting system should be developed or strengthened.

8. Evaluation

Camfed works in different districts and countries and an opportunity is lost in learning how best programmes can be implemented in terms of process and outcomes. It is recommended that a few operations research (OR) studies be

integrated in the evaluation of the programme, in order to learn about the processes of approaching communities and promoting self-help projects.

XII. CONCLUSION

Interviewees from the sites in the two districts of Wedza and Chikomba West expressed their opinions about the Camfed programme. Camfed is well recognised in the communities that were visited. While the sample sites were few, it is the general feeling of the investigators that the views converged across the sites and therefore a high degree of confidence can be assigned to the responses. All the interviewees were full of applause for the programme. The programme had brought what in some communities had been lost – the spirit of self-reliance and volunteerism. The communities have rallied behind a common call to work together to address their challenges. They felt they owned the programme and could continue to meet tomorrow's challenges with confidence. The ripple effect of the work done by MSGs, FSGs, Cama and teacher mentors will not die in communities and schools where these communities have touched the lives of children. In the words of one CDC member "the *Camfed programme is... now with the communities*".

The Camfed programme is anchored on partnerships and hence the potential for suspicion and conflict is immense in most communities. However, systems are generally in place for smooth functioning as communities acted as the watchdogs.

Communities registered different success levels in terms of outputs and processes. For instance, where the Camfed programme had been implemented for longer periods, success tended to be higher; that is, more groups were formed and they were stronger. Where the communities were more cohesive, there was a greater likelihood of the formation of successful civil society groups. Transient communities, such as those in resettlement farms, tended to lack cohesion and were not giving extensive support to schools and what they stood for. In nearly all the communities, women tended to seize the opportunity and lead the social revolution to come together and help themselves and their communities. Transparent governance and the time spent during the introduction of the programme to the communities were deemed to be other critical elements for success.

The support of the Baring and John Ellerman Foundations focused on communities in the resettlement areas of Zimbabwe, but the researchers were privileged to visit other types of communities; namely, communal and farming areas. This enabled the research team to gain some insights for comparison between different communities and to answer the question as to whether implementing Camfed programmes in resettlement areas presented special challenges and lessons.

Researchers observed that, at this time, schools and communities in Zimbabwe generally face similar challenges resulting from the economic meltdown of a few years ago. Therefore, the challenges for the rural communities tend to be the same; but in the resettlement areas, the challenges are more exaggerated. While all rural communities in the country generally face high levels of poverty, in the resettlement areas, problems are confounded by the lack of cohesion; generally, high levels of suspicion among residents hinder cooperation on communal activities. Therefore, the differences between schools in resettlement areas and elsewhere are not likely to be easily visible because most rural schools are still working towards achieving the minimum standards.

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