



COUNTRY BRIEFING: ZAMBIA



GEC-T

1 project

8,750 target beneficiaries

The GEC has one project in Zambia, **Camfed**. The project also operates in Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Camfed is a GEC-T project focusing on transitioning girls between basic and secondary education. Girls that graduate from school are encouraged to lead initiatives to support girls' education within their communities. It operates in Mpika, Shiwangandu and Chinsali provinces. The project has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools, colleges and universities closed on the 20 March 2020 and re-opened on 1 June 2020 for examination classes only (Grades 7, 9 and 12). All other non-examination year groups are still out of school. In response, the project has focused their effort on distributing study packs and monitoring girls' wellbeing during the lockdown period. **Camfed's** community model via the Learning Guides has added value for learners out of school. The project has held life skills, wellbeing and study sessions in communities and schools, reaching over 4,950 girls supported by **Camfed** bursaries. **Camfed** Zambia has leveraged community networks to adapt to the pandemic, and also adapted learning content, for example integrating COVID-19 messaging and running extended sexual and reproductive health and rights sessions in response to protection concerns. Additionally, the project provided small grants to schools to support their COVID-19 response. These grants were used to purchase water containers and other WASH items necessary to maintain strict hygiene measures as schools reopened.

PROJECT NAME	WINDOW	LEAD PARTNER	PROJECT START DATE	PROJECT CLOSE DATE
<u>The Ultimate Virtuous Cycle of Girls Education</u>	GEC-T	Camfed International	1 April 2017	31 December 2021

Achievements

The project has held life skills, wellbeing and study sessions in communities and schools, reaching over 4,950 girls supported by **Camfed** bursaries.

- In July 2020, numeracy performance levels in the treatment groups remained relatively stable, while comparison group performance dropped (6.63% above comparison group).
- Over 3,700 additional girls benefitted from **Camfed** Association (CAMA) initiatives (CAMA is the network of young women leaders educated with **Camfed** support). CAMA initiatives are estimated to be as important to girls' staying in school as the **Camfed** financial grants. On average, every CAMA member supports at least four other girls to complete primary or secondary education.
- School communities are highly active, both in terms of supporting girls directly (e.g. through provision of school meals) and offering other kinds of support (e.g. working with boys and men to change harmful social norms and reduce harassment of girls at school and within communities).

Project data is based on reporting from May to October 2020

Since the start of the second phase of the GEC¹ (2017-2025), projects in Zambia have reported the following achievements up to June 2020:



1,135
teachers trained



51,288
textbooks distributed



113
assistive learning devices provided

Challenges

- Girls supported by the project are mainly based in remote locations with limited access to technology and radio coverage. Few have been able to access materials such as printed study packs or TV and radio content made available by the Ministry of General Education (MoGE).
- Girls have been expected to contribute more than normal to household chores, farm work and small family businesses, whilst schools have been closed and during COVID-19 restrictions, which has reduced the time available for study.
- Girls with disabilities have faced significant challenges in returning to school when schools reopened.
- Re-enrolling all learners in Zambia and catching them up on lost learning time will be an on-going challenge while adhering to Covid-19 restrictions (smaller classes, condensed curriculum etc.).
- Although the MoGE released self-study materials for non-examination classes on television and radio and complementary study packs, these only reached a minority of the **Camfed** beneficiaries, many of whom live in remote locations without access to television or radio.

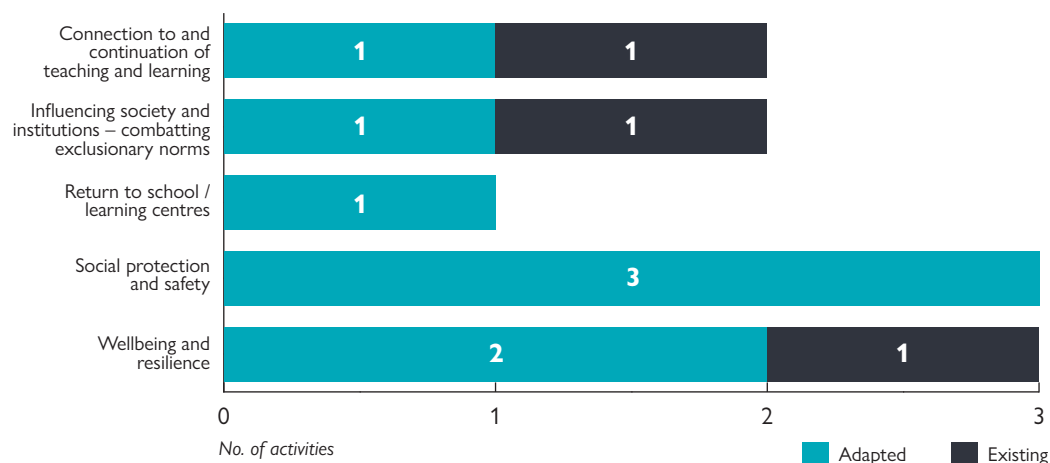
Recent highlights

In response to the challenges that have arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic, all GEC projects developed response plans with activities designed to best support girls to continue learning, remain safe and to be ready for schools and learning centres to reopen. Highlights from the **Camfed's** response to the challenges outlined above include:

- **Supporting schools to reopen** by providing small grants to schools to support their safe back to school preparations, enabling them to purchase water containers and other water, sanitation and hygiene items necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as schools reopened.
- **Reducing the likelihood of girls dropping out** of school, through regular monitoring and support for girls' attendance and learning engagement. CAMA members, Mother Support Groups/Parent Support Groups, Community Development Committees and Teacher Mentors also conducted follow up visits to monitor girls' psychosocial and physical wellbeing.
- **Encouraging girls to focus on their studies at home and attend village-based study groups.** Learner Guides and teacher mentors conduct regular visits to girls and their families, and provide COVID-19 prevention messaging on social distancing and wearing masks. Village-based study groups offer spaces outside of the home for children to focus on their studies.
- **Promoting sexual and reproductive health messages** locally in one-to-one and small groups meetings with the project's learner guides as well as through local radio broadcasts.
- **Raising awareness on the importance of continued education** through learners guides at community level, for example in meetings with village leaders, and promoting awareness messages on community radios, encouraging parents to support their children in their studies while schools are closed.
- **Camfed Zambia printed and distributed study packs** developed by the MoGE to all beneficiary girls so they could continue to study and learn at home.

¹ The first phase of the GEC ran from 2012-2017 and provided quality education for over a million marginalised girls. The GEC is now in its second phase (2017-2025), with up to 41 projects in 17 countries. The second phase is enabling existing GEC beneficiary girls to complete primary school and transition to secondary education, technical vocational training or employment. Within the second phase, a second cohort of girls are also being supported through the Leave No Girl Behind funding window, which consists of interventions for highly marginalised, adolescent girls who are out of school

Figure 1: COVID-19 Response activities in Zambia²



Coordination and collaboration

Throughout the pandemic, **Camfed** has recognised the importance of coordination and collaboration to reach girls and other stakeholders:

- **Camfed** is an active member of the MoGE's Working Group on Education in Emergencies, working on the printing and distribution of study materials to students who remain out of school, and in the translation, printing and distribution of materials promoting COVID-19 awareness.
- The project has provided inputs to the MoGE framework for school reopening, and is working with Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) to support the MoGE to draft a Statutory Instrument to strengthen enforcement of Zambia's re-entry policy, recognising that students were at increased vulnerability of early pregnancy and early marriage during the period of school closure. **Camfed** have aimed to prevent early marriages during COVID-19 by quickly mobilising Learner Guides and Parent Support Groups in communities.
- The project has also supported schools to access the MoGE's COVID-19 aid package for improving WASH facilities.
- In June, **Camfed** was authorised to air the My Better World (MBW) life skills educational content classes over national Education Broadcasting Services radio.

Lessons learned

- Interest in enrolling as a Learner Guide, to learn how to deliver the My Better World sessions, is increasing, with the development of the Business and Technical Education Certificate. The BTEC is increasing motivation to enrol as a Learner Guide and will provide new opportunities for study.
- **Camfed** has been successful in securing international partnerships to gain accreditation for the BTEC qualification, The award of the international Yidan Prize on Education Development for work to take the Learner Guide programme to scale, is testimony to the projects determination and effort to explore long term sustainability of programming.
- The strong evidence base for effectiveness of the My Better World Curriculum and use of Ed-Tech like the e-readers, offers potential for scaling up and widening access through crowd funding.

² Projects began implementing the COVID-19 response activities in Q2 2020 and will continue or be adapted in accordance with the evolving COVID-19 situation in each context and in agreement with the FM.

Priorities from January 2021

Camfed will continue to provide support to girls to best meet their needs as the COVID-19 crisis evolves.

- As schools reopen, **Camfed** will be providing bespoke support to the girls, helping them to continue to attend school in a safe manner, by continuing to provide schools and learning centres with hygiene facilities.
- **Camfed** will continue to support girls' learning and will focus on mitigating the loss of learning due to COVID-19 and the closure of schools, by providing catch up and remedial classes. The project will continue to offer training for Learner Guides, teacher mentors and head teachers.
- Though schools may begin to reopen, the project will go ahead with plans to increase the reach of its life skills learning content 'My Better World' by expanding dissemination of the content through Smartphone's, radio and TV to continue to reach girls out of school.
- The project will continue to foster learner wellbeing and psychosocial support to support girls' resilience and help girls to engage in learning within safe environments.

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**Girls'
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