

# The Power of Girls' Education

2023







# Table of Contents

01	<i>Introduction</i>	p 03
02	<i>Our Sponsorship Program</i>	p 04
03	<i>Our Research Study</i>	p 05
04	<i>Infographic</i>	p 06
05	<i>Key Findings</i>	p 07
06	<i>A Girl's Perspective on Education</i>	p 15
07	<i>Conclusion</i>	p 18



# Introduction

'Investing in girls' education transforms communities, countries and the entire world' (Unicef, 2023). Girls' education supports the development of local economies and allows everyone to reach their full potential.

However, access to secondary school education remains a challenge for those living in remote, rural areas of Tanzania. Faced with a combination of barriers that include extreme poverty, gender discrimination, cultural barriers, and isolation, only 27% of girls complete secondary school with rates falling as low as 6% among the poorest families (Unicef, 2019).

Since 2007, TEMBO has sponsored more than 500 girls for secondary school, many of whom have continued on to vocational training or teachers' college.

In 2022, TEMBO embarked upon a research study that would explore the impact of education for TEMBO sponsored girls. This report captures the results of this research including key findings and statements from participants.

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girls'  
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# Our Sponsorship Program



**“Without TEMBO, these girls would be married.”**

Twenty years ago, TEMBO recognized that sponsorship meant more than just providing funds to cover school fees. If girls were to be successful, they needed to have the necessary supplies to attend secondary school including a new school uniform, trunk, mattress, bedding, toiletries and school supplies.

As the girls entered secondary school, they were struggling to keep up with their studies. They faced the daunting task of transitioning from primary school, where the language of instruction is Swahili, to secondary school, where the language of instruction is English. As well, there was little reinforcement for education at home as the girls were often the first in their family to go to school. In 2010 TEMBO launched the TEMBO English Camp (TEC) program in recognition of the need for academic support for the girls. This program was designed to provide the girls with support for English, while also supporting success in core subjects including math, geography and sciences. Over 13 years, this 3-week program has grown from an enrolment of 33 girls to more than 130 girls each year.

Recognizing that young adolescent girls in Longido also needed academic support before they started secondary school, TEMBO launched the Primary and Academic Success (PASS) program in 2013. This 10-week boarding program provides academic and language support for girls ages 12-14. Today, the program is offered to 40 plus girls annually.

Additional enhancements to the TEMBO sponsorship program include the construction of the TEMBO Girls' Hostel, a 14-room facility for girls in 2019. This facility allowed TEMBO to develop the Girl Care Program, an initiative that provides a safe and secure place for vulnerable girls who are at risk of early marriage, pregnancy or extreme poverty, with a place to sleep and study when not in school.



# Our Research Study

**In 2022, TEMBO launched a research project to study the impact of secondary school education and academic support for girls sponsored by TEMBO (Tanzania).**

TEMBO (Canada), in collaboration with TEMBO (Tanzania) developed a questionnaire focusing on the girls' education journey, family background and means of support. TEMBO identified 269 individual girls who had been sponsored by TEMBO for secondary school education for any length of time including girls who had been sponsored and left secondary school at any point after starting Form 1. Girls who were still in school (secondary and vocational training) were not included in this study.

TEMBO (Tanzania) recruited four graduates of the sponsorship program to take on the role of interviewer. These girls received training prior to conducting the interviews (contacting the participants, asking questions and documenting responses). The interviewers contacted the participants by phone at which time they set up an in-person meeting. During the interview, the girls were asked to provide demographic information including marital status, home village and current village. The survey also included a series of questions regarding: (i) education (level completed, age upon completion, education of mother/father and education of siblings); (ii) number of children and schooling and (iii) employment.

A total of 195 interviews were completed by 4 graduate students (72% response rate). Interviews were conducted in person where possible, and by phone for those living a significant distance from Longido.

A preliminary review of the results demonstrated that there was limited information regarding employment, and that the term 'work' may have been misinterpreted, as including only permanent, salaried employment. A second sample of 50 girls was identified from the initial survey to include girls who had answered 'no' to employment and who had completed the interview in person. A second survey was developed to explore three possible 'work' options including: (i) activities to earn money, (ii) activities to support a family other than money and (iii) source of support where no other activities are available. For this follow up study, TEMBO (Tanzania) identified an individual who had no previous knowledge of TEMBO to act as the interviewer. A total of 40 girls completed the second survey in person (80% response rate).

# KEY FINDINGS



## # 1: Secondary School

80% of girls interviewed completed a minimum of 4 years of secondary school.

## #2: Vocational Studies

36% of girls interviewed attended a vocational training program after completing secondary school.



## #3: Children and Schooling

95% of girls interviewed with children 7 years or older have enrolled their children in school.



## #4: Work

40% of girls interviewed reported that they were working or had done some work to earn an income.





# Key Finding #1

**80% of girls interviewed completed a minimum of 4 years of secondary schooling.**



In Tanzania, students complete seven years of primary school, at which time they write a national exam known as the Primary School Leaving Exam (PSLE). A passing grade on the PSLE allows a student to be considered for secondary school. Secondary school includes: O-Level (ordinary or lower level) for four years of study followed by another national exam. Depending on their grades, they may proceed on to A-Level (advanced level) for an additional two years.

**155 of the 195 girls interviewed (80%) completed their O-Level studies equal to four years of secondary schooling.** These results are significantly higher than statistics reported by the World Bank (2020) for Tanzania indicating that the completion rate for females in secondary school was only 34%.

The TEMBO sponsorship program sets girls up for success by providing them with the necessary supports to complete secondary school including academic support programs before and during their studies, a staff mentorship program that encourages them to study hard, and informal education with parents and guardians to support a deeper understanding of the importance of education within the family and the community.

*“Education makes it easy to solve problems. In life, I face problems every day, on various occasions. Problems seem so critical that I can't possibly overcome from that, but having the ability to think differently helps. I could not accomplish much in life without education. I will get paid more with my education and I will get more success in my life.” (Namelock)*

The girls noted that TEMBO's academic support programs helped them to develop their command of English, the language of instruction, which contributes to their academic success in all subject areas.

*“Education helped me to take care of myself, to express myself in school...and to know different language like Swahili, English and my mother tongue.” (Neyeyo)*

The interview results confirm the girls' appreciation for the support offered by TEMBO, recognizing the impact of the programs and the encouragement from staff. A secondary school education provided them with confidence and opened doors for them in the community.

*““For sure, the education I received because of the sponsorship by TEMBO changed my life.” (Naomi)*

Lower Secondary School Completed as reported by girls	
Form 1	2%
Form 2	6%
Form 3	12%
Form 4	37%
Continued school beyond Form 4	43%





# Key Finding #2

**36% of girls interviewed completed a vocational training program after completing secondary school.**



Vocational training programs in Tanzania offer girls an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in fields such as tourism, animal husbandry, tailoring, hairdressing and community development.

Individuals have the option of completing a certificate (one year program) or a diploma (two to three-year program depending on the nature of the course).

*"Educations helps me to get a diploma, helps me to cover my basic needs and support my family and now it helps me to have awareness." (Diana Rose)*

*"College helped me to get knowledge, to know how to protect my children." (Anitha)*

*"My education about hairdressing helped me a lot because I am getting money, which helps me and my family." (Naomi)*

Post-Secondary Education Completed as reported by girls	
Military Training	2%
Certificate	25%
Diploma	11%
Degree	4%

# Meet the Girls

## Neyeyo



Neyeyo is now a primary school teacher and a mother of 4 young children. ***“Education helped me in many ways: to take care of myself, to express myself and to give the community education. I still see many girls in my community who are not in school and I see girls running from secondary school. It is my responsibility to help my community.”***

Neyeyo was raised in the traditional Maasai community of Kimokouwa and while she now lives with her family in another region, she often returns home. ***“As a teacher, I have the ability to help my family and my parents. I can meet my own basic needs and I am independent”.***

## Esupat



Esupat graduated from secondary school in 2013, having completed four years of study. Coming from a traditional Maasai family, plans were made for her to marry soon after secondary school. Today she lives with her husband and three children in Kimokouwa.

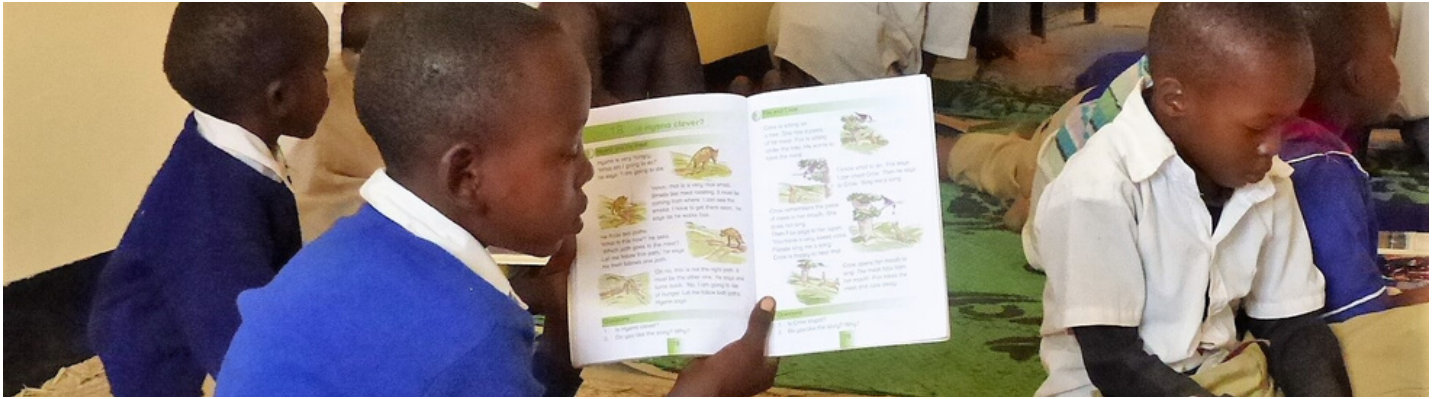
Esupat believes that education helped her ***“to find support for her family without depending upon her husband.”*** She believes in the power of education and her three children are enrolled in the local government school.

***“Children changed my life because now I have a duty to find all basic needs for them, for example, education”.***



# Key Finding #3

**95% of girls interviewed with children 7 years or older have enrolled their children in school.**



In Tanzania, children can enroll in a nursery school program at the age of 3, progressing on to primary school at the age of 5 or 6. Many children start Standard 1 (equivalent to Grade 1 in Canada) at the age of 7.

Results from the survey indicate that many of the girls who now have children are very motivated to send their children to school.

- **83% of the girls with children 3 or more years of age indicated that their children were in school.**
- This number rises significantly to **95% for girls with children 7 years of age or older.**

Access to nursery school can be a challenge for many parents in Tanzania. In more remote villages, a nursery school may simply not exist, or it can only operate when teachers are available. Young children may have to walk long distances to attend the nursery school programs; given potential hazards along the way, families may opt not to send their young children to school until they are in Standard 1.

***“I know what education is because I went to school. I know it is the way to see the world. If you do not have education, you are blind.”***  
(Tepeyan)

# Key Finding #4

**40% of girls interviewed reported that they were working or had done some work to earn an income.**

When developing the survey questions, it was important to ask about current as well as past work experiences. In Longido, work is often only available on an occasional basis, perhaps interrupted by changes in business operations. As well, women may also leave a position or take time off work for children and some may move as their family relocates.

Nature of Work as reported by girls interviewed (# of girls)		
	Permanent Work	Occasional Work
Related to Field of Study	29	11
Not Related to Field of Study	11	27
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>

**60% of the girls reported that they had no work**, prompting TEMBO to conduct a follow up study as there was a concern that the wording of 'work' may have been understood as salaried employment only (see page 5).

The girls who had responded 'no' to the question about work were contacted for a second interview.



# Follow Up Study on Work

40 girls who had responded 'no' to the question about work in the original study were contacted for a second interview, at which time they were asked to comment on **any** activities they might be engaged in that allowed them to earn an income.

**A total of 21 girls indicated that they were engaged in activities to earn an income, 17 of whom were self-employed. 4 girls indicated that they were receiving a salary but work was 'occasional.'**

**19 girls were not engaged in work**, but received support from family members. In a more traditional Maasai family, the husband might provide support (74%) or another male member of the household (24%). When girls live independently, a grandmother might offer support (2%).



"Tanzania has made important achievements in expanding women's economic opportunities over the past 20 years. The female labor-force participation rose from 67% in 2000 to 80% in 2019." (World Bank, 2022).

This same report indicates that "enhancing financial inclusion of women is critical – it is associated with significantly lower rates of poverty and income inequality." However, in remote, rural communities such as Longido, employment opportunities are limited and even more so for women with young children at home. If women are engaged in income-generating activities, they often require the approval and support of their husbands. Furthermore, they need access to capital to start or run a small business. Such capital can be very difficult to obtain.

# Meet the Girls



## Sinyati

*"I really liked my studies and I hope that I will be able to get employment. In my studies, I learned about gender equality. We studied the rights of children and women. I am Maasai and during my studies, I thought about my mother. Women have no rights in our community. Life is tough for them. For example, going to the forest to get firewood and then making charcoal, and making the home."*

Sinyati Paulo, age 27, recently completed a Diploma in Community Development at LGTI (Local Government Training Institute) in Dodoma, Tanzania. Sinyati is hoping to find work as a community development officer. *"I think, when I get employment, I can change the situation for women. I can change the life of women today."*



## Ivetha

My name is Ivetha Tobias. I am the fifth of eight children. I completed a three year course in Animal Health and Production at Kilachi College of Agriculture and Livestock Training Centre in Moshi.

I learned how to treat and care for domestic animals. I also gained entrepreneurial skills. I am currently working in an Agro-Vet in Longido. *"I like my job because it makes me learn different things about domestic animals like disease and treatment."*

# A Girl's Perspective on Education

During the interview process, the girls were asked to comment on the impact education has had on their life, including the impact on work and family.



**94% of girls indicated that education had a positive impact on their life.**

The vast majority of girls indicated that education had provided them with opportunities to grow and develop, to be contributing members of their family, and to develop skills that would allow them to become active members of their community.

**55% of the girls reported that education had increased their knowledge of the world.** Others spoke about how education contributes to one's understanding of human rights and the rights of women, while others recognized that education provides them with the knowledge to take care of their children.

**21% of the girls spoke about how education taught them how to 'read and write'.** While the level of the girls' education went far beyond learning how to read and write, their responses may reflect the fact that many of their parents and elders have very limited, if any, literacy skills.

For **some girls (4%), secondary school was challenging** and when asked if education had helped, they replied that "It didn't help because I didn't finish school." For others it was a negative experience and "It did not change anything because I did not reach my goal."



# A Girl's Perspective on Education and Work

**57% of all girls interviewed reported that education had a positive impact on their understanding of work.**

Education can play a significant role in helping individuals to learn basic lifestyles, to gain awareness about the community and the world in which they live and how they might play a role in economic opportunities in the future.

**40% of the girls reported that education provided them with knowledge about work and different jobs while 35% indicated that work helped them to live independently.**

Given the limited opportunities for employment in Longido District, **29% of the girls reported that education had little or no impact on work.** At the time of the survey, these girls had no means of earning an income.



# A Girl's Perspective on Education, Family and Children

**85% of girls with children reported that education had a positive impact on life with children.**

The Longido District is predominately inhabited by the Maasai, a patriarchal society that has strong beliefs and traditions. Bringing a child into this world is a blessing and brings the mother a great deal of respect in the community. *"I thank my children for giving me the respect of name 'mama'. I am working for them in order to get basic needs."* (Senewa)

**29% of the girls who had children reported that education provided them with the knowledge and skills to help them support their family.** *"I have a duty to keep my brain active. My youth period is gone (I am an adult) but now I know how to make a budget. If I get money, I will be careful and I can support my family."* (Martha)

Many responses related to family life focused more on how children had a positive effect on the girl's life. This is perhaps a reflection of the deep cultural traditions where women (girls) recognize that **having children increases their respect in the community (36%)** and **children allow the women to move to a new stage in the community (71%)**. *"The children changed my life because people now call me mama."* (Mosingo)



# CONCLUSION



Over the period of twenty years, TEMBO has made a substantial impact in the Longido community. Compared to national statistics, significantly more girls are attending and completing secondary school, gaining marketable skills, earning an income and raising healthier, more educated families. Today, TEMBO sponsored girls are working as teachers of young children teaching them how to read and write, while others are working as cooks and shopkeepers, many of them now raising a family.

The results of this study reinforce the fact that education has had a profound effect on their lives and the girls are the first to tell you this.

***"Education changed me in a big way. Education expanded my thinking about life. It builds a good foundation for life. Education changed me and now I know my vision." (Riziki)***

It is understood that the impact of education is generational and that we might not witness the the impact until we meet the children of these girls. The girls clearly understand the importance of education for their children as evidenced in the fact that more than 95% of school-aged children are now in school.

***"Now, I have a lot of duties because I must take care of the family for buying clothes and to find the way how to take them to school." (Laayo)***

TEMBO envisions a world where the girls and women of Longido District, Tanzania have equal access to education and economic opportunities. We will continue to provide support for the sponsorship of education and the delivery of academic support programs, and continue to track the outcome of the girls. This research study has reinforced our commitment to education and the ways in which education can transform a community.



# Acknowledgements

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