

IPA Zambia



Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy non-profit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world's poor. Since our founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 400 leading academics to conduct over 500 evaluations in 51 countries. Future growth will be concentrated in focus countries, such as Zambia, where we have local and international staff, established relationships with government, NGOs, and the private sector, and deep knowledge of local issues.

More Evidence

In Zambia, we have continued our global tradition of rigorous, applicable research by building foundational research capacity and conducting evaluations in areas of pressing national concern. Examples of our research below offer promising insights into everyday issues that affect the lives of the Zambian poor.

HEALTH

In recruiting community-based civil servants, offering career benefits need not undermine community attachment. An evaluation led by researchers from Harvard Business School and the London School of Economics found that when recruiting community health workers in Zambia, emphasizing career incentives rather than social incentives attracted workers who were more qualified and

performed better on the job. These workers conducted 29 percent more household visits and organized twice as many community meetings, while also seeing the same number of patients. In response, the Zambian Ministry of Health has begun using career incentives in its nationwide recruitment of community health workers.

Monetary and non-monetary incentives are effective in increasing female condom sales.

A study of a female condom distribution program in Lusaka, which used hairdressers as private sales agents for condom distribution, found that those agents who were given non-monetary rewards in the form of social recognition sold more than those who received monetary rewards and more than those

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Since 2010

FOCUS SECTORS

Agriculture
Education
Governance
Health

RESEARCH PROJECTS

11 Completed, 12 in Progress

KEY PARTNERS

Caritas, Chipata Hospital and Chaisa Clinic, NWK Agri-Services, National Food and Nutrition Council, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare, Ministry of Forestry and Lands, Ministry of Health, Public Service Management Division, Office of the President, Decentralization Secretariat, Cabinet Office, Southern Water and Sewage Company, Shared Values Africa, Society for Family Health, USAID, University of Zambia, Zambia Center for Applied Health Research and Development

KEY RESEARCHERS

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who received no rewards at all. Both monetary and non-monetary incentives were more effective in promoting sales for those who initially had the highest intrinsic motivation to sell.

AGRICULTURE

Can food loans increase food consumption during lean times? Many farming households turn to off-farm work to make ends meet between harvests, reducing the amount of time they can invest in increasing their farms' productivity. In this study, researchers are testing the relationship between scarcity, labor supply, and agricultural output. Selected farmers receive access to either cash or food loans during the lean season that they are responsible for repaying at harvest. In the pilot study, food loans increased food consumption during the lean season, reduced the portion of households engaging in off-farm work, and increased wages.

Does making seedlings more affordable for farmers benefit both them and the environment? Farmers in Eastern Province were offered an opportunity to join a tree planting program where they were randomly assigned to receive various levels of subsidies for seedlings and/or cash incentives for keeping the trees alive for a year. Subsidies for the seedlings lead to greater adoption, without compromising how well farmers care for the trees. Subsidizing seedlings isn't enough, however; cash incentives for tree survival led to increased participation, tree planting, and tree survival rates. The estimated carbon sequestration benefits, together with the fertilizer benefits for farmers in the long run, justify the investment.

EDUCATION

Do negotiation skills matter for girls' health and education outcomes? School data for Zambia shows a dramatic decline in female enrollment from primary to secondary school years. While this drop is normally attributed to the commencement of school fees in the eighth grade, a closer look reveals that school dropout rates increase prior to the fee increase. This project tests the impact of negotiation training for girls. Specifically, the evaluation will provide evidence on how communication skills can contribute to an overall HIV/AIDS prevention curriculum which already includes information on the risks and impact of HIV/AIDS.



Our Future

IPA Zambia is at an inflection point in its evolution as an organization. We are transitioning from our early status as a young non-profit working in the development space into a go-to resource for evidence-based insights for government, non-profits, and the private sector. As we navigate this transition, we are focusing on two goals. They are to:

- » **Reinforce IPA's status as a known source of high-quality research.** As one of the only organizations in Zambia with the skills and capacity to conduct high-quality impact evaluations, we are in a strong position to merge our deep knowledge of local issues with our unparalleled research capability. For example, we have trained CARE Zambia in using rigorous evaluations, and we are interested in designing more tailored workshops for other relevant organizations.
- » **Partner with decision-makers to seek, generate, and apply evidence at scale to help the poor.** Our IPA research affiliates and our local staff are a rich source of deep expertise and established relationships with local development organizations and government agencies. For example, our long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Health through the efforts of Professor Nava Ashraf and our staff has led to evidence-based policy and the ministry using randomized evaluations in their work. We are working to expand such relationships by building policy considerations into all study designs, communicating what we know, and collaborating with decision-makers to apply it.

Building a world with **More Evidence** and **Less Poverty.**

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