

### IPA Zambia and Varkey Foundation Co-Present on MGCubed



IPA Zambia Policy Associate Nampaka Nkumbula (left) presenting at the event to the First Lady of the Republic of Zambia, FAWE Chairperson, and Minister of General Education.

Innovations for Poverty Action Zambia co-presented with the Varkey Foundation on August 23-24 in Lusaka. The theme of the event, the Forum for African Woman Educationalists (FAWE) at the 10th General Assembly, was "Towards Gender Equality in Education, Positioning Youth to Champion Africa's Education Agenda." This high-level conference was attended by The First Lady of the Republic of Zambia (pictured above), Ministers of Education from the region, and international and local NGOs.

Leonora Dowley, Country Director of Varkey Foundation Ghana, and Nampaka Nkumbula, IPA Zambia Policy Associate, presented evidence from the study "["Making Ghanaian Girls Great!"](#)" and participated in a lively panel discussion on innovations and programmes that are successfully addressing second generation obstacles to girls' education and contributing to gender equality.

During parallel sessions, IPA Zambia also exhibited with the Ministry of General Education on the [Girls Negotiation](#) programme and other evidence on empowering girls.

Researcher: Jamie Johnston (Stanford University School of Medicine), Christopher Ksoll (Mathematica Policy Research)

Partner: Varkey Foundation

### IPA Zambia Co-Hosts Event on Interpersonal Communication to Encourage Use of Female Condoms in Zambia



Lead researcher Thoai Ngo during the presentation.

On November 7, 2017, Innovations for Poverty Action Zambia and Society for Family Health (SFH) co-hosted a dissemination meeting of initial findings from the study *An Impact Evaluation of the Introduction of a New Woman's Condom on Overall Condom Use in Urban Lusaka, Zambia*, conducted by Thoai Ngo and Jessie Pinchoff from Population Council, and Rachna Nag Chowdhuri from the World Bank. The event was

attended by representatives from SFH, WCG, USAID, the Center for Reproductive Health Education (CRHE), PATH, Population Council, CHAI, UNFPA and Scaling Up Family Planning (SUFPP).

Under the Expanding Effective Contraceptive Options (EECO) project with funding from USAID and Sida, WCG, Population Services International (PSI), and PSI's Zambian network member Society for Family Health (SFH) registered and launched the new Maximum Diva brand Woman's Condom (MDWC) in Zambia in March 2016, with the aim of increasing access to on-demand, non-hormonal, woman-initiated contraceptive methods, and growing overall condom use. The launch of the MDWC was accompanied by a mass marketing campaign that included the distribution of MDWC in pharmacies and other outlets by SFH, a mobile website, interactive forums, brand ambassadors, and an interpersonal communication (IPC) campaign. The IPC strategy targeted men and women aged 18-24 years old and involved providing content on the importance of contraceptive use with a focus on the benefits of female condoms. It also demonstrated correct use of the condom and taught negotiation skills to enable potential users to advocate for the use of a female condom through role-playing.

At the event, Thoai Ngo, lead researcher, reported that the study sought to answer whether the introduction and distribution of woman's condoms influenced knowledge and use of condoms in Zambia and whether IPC strategies increase knowledge, acceptability and uptake of the product. The initial results suggest that WC knowledge is associated with higher levels of education and greater knowledge of contraceptives. A key finding was that female condom and contraceptive knowledge increased over the course of the intervention. The study was designed to look for changes in the general population of youth rather than the specific individuals attending IPC sessions, with the hypothesis that changing knowledge and behaviors would diffuse beyond individuals to their communities, and that the intervention would reach most young adults in each area. IPC had no impact on condom related knowledge or use at the population level, but did have a marginal impact on knowledge among those who attended IPC sessions. Of those surveyed, 11% had ever attended an IPC session and 25% reported having heard of the new WC product. However, the age group targeted by the study (18-24 years old) made up only 40% of those who attended IPC.

After the presentation, the audience engaged in a lively discussion with the panel, highlighting the need for more targeted programming and research related to the target age group of the intervention. Although the results were not recorded as significant for the adolescent age group, questions arose as to whether or not IPC and the WC might be a solution for an older age group. Other discussions focused on underlying cultural issues surrounding low uptake of women-initiated contraceptives amongst women.

*Researchers: Thoai Ngo (Population Council), Rachna Nag Chowdhuri (World Bank), Jessie Pinchoff (Population Council)*

*Partners: USAID, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), WCG, PSI, SFH*

## **IPA Monitoring of the Catch Up Programme Supports MOGE Decisions to Scale!**

Building on over a decade of rigorous research around the world and two years of iterative learning in Zambia, the Ministry of General Education will scale up a teaching program called "Catch Up" to approximately 1,800 schools in Zambia over the next three years. Based on the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach pioneered by Pratham, an Indian NGO, Catch Up aims to improve basic literacy and numeracy skills of primary school students in grades 3-5.

Over the past year, the Government piloted Catch Up in eighty schools. To design the content and structure of the pilot, the Catch Up working group combined evidence on earlier TaRL programs with local knowledge of the particular demands and constraints of the Zambian education space. Together with Pratham, UNICEF, and VVOB, the working group developed teaching materials, assessment tools, classroom activities, and monitoring and mentoring processes tailored for the Zambian context. It also identified three potential models for students in grades 3-5, and piloted and assessed the performance of each during October 2016-July 2017. In the coming months, the Ministry's Catch Up working group will feed the lessons from the pilot into the implementation of the program at scale. The next phase, starting in January 2018 with support from USAID DIV, USAID Zambia Mission, and UNICEF, will involve the scale-up of the one-hour a day model, which will run for two terms each year. The schools in

the expansion will be in Southern and Eastern Province and the Ministry expects to start in around 500 schools. Training of the Master Trainers has already begun and the training is being led by the existing Government master trainers who were involved in the pilot with the support from two trainers from Pratham.

*Partners: Ministry of General Education, USAID, UNICEF, J-PAL Africa, Zambia Education Sub-Sector Technical Assistance (ZESSTA), VVOB Zambia*

## Saving for Safe Delivery

In rural areas in Zambia, maternal mortality remains a significant problem and facility-based deliveries remain far from universal. From the qualitative study on *Sustainable Access for Waiting Mothers* (Scott et al 2014), pregnant women cited being unable to afford items on the list of minimum requirements needed for a facility-based delivery, or, in other cases, transportation to the facility. The goal of this project is to identify and test the feasibility of potential financial models that could direct household savings towards preparing for facility-based deliveries.

IPA Zambia has identified two programs implemented by World Vision Zambia as relevant programs related to savings and birth planning, available to local communities in Southern Province, Zambia: *Time and Targeted Counseling for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (TTC)* and *Savings Group*. *TTC* refers to a series of household visits by Safe Motherhood Action Group (SMAG) members to promote healthy practices using storytelling, negotiation and dialogue counseling methods. The *Savings Group* program facilitates savings and access to micro-credit, where 15-20 individuals gather periodically to save and take loans out of the pool of communal savings to conduct income-generating activities.

IPA will conduct a feasibility pilot of two interventions that build on the *TTC* and *Savings Group* programs to encourage saving for safe delivery in conjunction with World Vision Zambia. This includes a birth plan and savings module in the *TTC* curriculum that aims to address behavioral barriers to saving. This intervention also seeks to encourage the community to support pregnant women by offering either a maternity bonus or reduced interest loans. The interventions will be piloted across 20 villages in Choma, Pemba, and Sinazongwe districts and will be inclusive of a thorough process evaluation to

understand the successes and challenges faced over a full savings cycle.

*Researcher: Peter Rockers (Boston University)*

*Partner: World Vision Zambia*

## Scaling Up Seasonal Loan Access through Out Grower Networks



*A photo from the [IPA website project summary](#) of the initial randomized controlled trial conducted between 2013-2015.*

Between 2013 and 2015, an IPA research team consisting of researchers Kelsey Jack, Günther Fink, and Felix Masiye conducted a randomized controlled trial in Zambia to establish whether expanding access to credit during the “lean season” may alleviate financial pressure on farms during the growing season. Access to lean season credit may reduce the need to sell labor locally, and increase the time farmers can spend on their own fields. This increased investment in farm labor could in turn increase farm output and break the cycle of poverty and dependency. The study showed that providing access to liquidity during the lean season (January to March) results in increased labor market efficiency and output, higher wages, and lower income inequality. The study also highlighted a high demand for access to cash during the lean season (98% uptake) as well as farmers’ willingness and ability to repay these loans after harvest (90% repayment). However, scaling up seasonal lending appears cost-prohibitive due to low population densities and limited road and other infrastructure.

The scaling pathways that were explored have revealed that a feasible route to scaling up such an intervention exists through agribusinesses contracting small-scale farmers as out growers in Zambia. Under this scheme, the agribusinesses sign input loan contracts with smallholder farmers at the beginning of the agricultural season; the total loan

amount is then deducted from the final payment made to farmers after selling their harvest at the end of the season. Out grower networks in Zambia offer advantages for supporting lean season lending, such as: agribusiness companies already have developed infrastructure to support lending and repayment. Second, explicit loan and lending relationships between the company and farmers have been established. Third, subsequent harvests provide (imperfect) collateral for loans.

By partnering with Alliance Ginneries Limited (Alliance), a major agribusiness in the Zambian cotton sector, IPA intends to evaluate the effects of relaxing lean season liquidity constraints through advanced payment options, and to measure the impact on family labor allocation, local and labor markets, and agricultural production using a cluster randomized trial. This scale-up intends to assess the impact of larger-scale seasonal credit programs on local labor allocation, wages and aggregate labor productivity and the profit impact and financial sustainability of such programs from the agribusiness perspective. Furthermore, this will build on the evidence base that can be used to inform agribusinesses.

*Researcher: Kelsey Jack (Tufts University), Günther Fink (University of Basel), Felix Masiye*

*Partners: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Alliance Ginneries Limited (Alliance), and Financial Sector Deepening Zambia (FSDZ).*

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## About

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. We design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications together with decision-makers to ensure that the evidence created is used to improve opportunities for the world's poor.

The Zambia Bulletin is designed to keep stakeholders and partners informed of ongoing research. For more information, visit [www.poverty-action.org/zambia](http://www.poverty-action.org/zambia).

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