



Fund for Innovation
and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation
et la transformation



OVO SOLAR TECHNOLOGIES

Increasing Poultry Production in Zambia

Context

In Zambia, many rural farmers raise chickens to supplement their diets and incomes. However, the productivity of their small, informal poultry businesses is limited by the low hatch rate of eggs.

The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, OVO tested the distribution of solar chicken egg incubators, along with related training, as a means to help rural farmers in Zambia increase their hatch rate, raise more chickens, diversify their incomes and improve their overall livelihoods.

Advancing Gender Equality

OVO tested their innovation in a gender sensitive way by ensuring women's participation and tailoring training content to the needs of women farmers. In addition, OVO partnered with Zambian NGO Musika, which also places a strong focus on supporting women. Musika committed to funding subsidies for 150 women farmers that purchase egg incubators through VITALITE, the business local partner, to help reduce gender gaps.

Testing Framework

The impact of the OVO Solar egg incubators was measured using data collected in three separate survey tools, and organizational records. The sample group had 32 treatment farmers (including 20 women) and 22 control farmers (including 19 women).

The Baseline Survey looked at incubator users and non-users, focusing on demographics, gender information, and details about running poultry businesses.

Poultry Journals were given to participants to record profitability and changes in consumption. Field-based surveyors conducted weekly visits to record findings.



COUNTRY	AMOUNT
Zambia	\$249,030

TESTING PERIOD
12 months
Ended August 2021



GENDER RESPONSIVE (GE2)

THEME: AGRICULTURE

A Final Survey collected data about farmer perceptions of the incubator and included a follow-up on gender impact information.

VITALITE captured demographic data about the customer with each new sale.

Results and Impact

The provision of solar egg incubators has had a positive effect on participants' financial and food security, with poultry-related profit increasing by an average of \$19.20 during the first 3 months. 95% of participants purchased their incubators using pay-as-you-go financing, increasing their access to financing. OVO found that the majority of incubators had a positive effect on women's financial security, while over a third of incubators sold increased women's financial independence.

Key Lessons

1. Going forward, there is a need for more granular data to make recommendations about which solar panels are needed for which regions. There are micro-climates within Zambia that have lower temperatures and more frequent cloudy days. These areas require a larger solar panel.
2. Additional, long-term data is needed to verify whether household consumption increases consistently, as well as the long-term income effects, especially for women poultry farmers. This data will be collected going forward.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic caused manufacturing and shipping delays that significantly affected project timelines and the ability to collect data. These potential delays need to be taken into account in future planning.

Mercy, a farmer from Hangata village in Zambia's Southern Province, spent years watching many of her neighbors' farms fail and leave the area due to poor rainfall. Mercy's new poultry business is providing stable profits and eliminating her financial insecurity. Mercy already owned 85 chickens when she bought her incubator. After three months, her flock had grown to 207 chickens. She has already started selling mature roosters and eggs. "This incubator farming is very easy, and it gives you profit!"

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- VITALITE
- Musika

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

94 rural Zambian farmers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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