Impact of Musika, Zambia

EVALUATION BRIEF OF 2025:1A

OCTOBER 2025

This is a summary of an evaluation of how the Zambian NGO Musika has impacted small-scale farmers in the country.

Musika's ultimate goal is to reduce poverty and create wealth in rural Zambia by stimulating relationships between the businesses and smallholder farmers. Sida was a major funder of Musika between 2013 and 2023.

1. WHAT MUSIKA DOES

The ultimate beneficiaries of Musika's work are *Zambia's small-scale farmers.*
However, the direct support went to *small businesses in the agricultural sector*, which received funding and technical assistance, so that they could serve small-scale farmers better.

This set-up is part of the Making Markets Work for the Poor approach.

If successful this would mean that:

- businesses offer small-scale farmers a greater range of products and services
- businesses reach new, underserved areas
- markets become more sustainable for both buyers and sellers.

The ultimate aim is to give smallholder farmers better chances to invest and work their way out of poverty.

Musika supported four types of agricultural markets, as illustrated below.

Agricultural Input Markets.

Musika supported commercial suppliers of seed, fertilizer, agro-chemicals and farm equipment to encourage investments tailored to smallholder's needs.

Agricultural Finance Markets.

Musika supported the development of financial services to enhance financial access in rural Zambia.

Agricultural Service Markets.

Musika supported service companies to offer farmers better technical know-how, machinery services, after-sales support etc.

Agricultural Output Markets.

Musika supported actors in the market for crop and livestock products, aiming to reduce risks for both buyers and sellers.

2. THIS EVALUATION

The evaluation is based mainly on data from small-scale farmers, both those who benefited from Musika and those who did not. The evaluators compared how each group's situation *changed* over time. To make the comparison fairer, farmers with similar characteristics were paired.[1]

The evaluators also used techniques to check how certain the differences between the two groups were. In some cases, a difference appeared, but it wasn't strong enough to be confident about it. Such results are called "insignificant."

3. THE RESULTS

The results are summarized on the next page. Please note that these results only concerns the outcomes for which data was available. They are presented in a sequence: first direct effects of Musika's activities, which can contribute to intermediate effects, which in turn can contribute to overall impact.

- **Direct effects:** Farmers gained better access to markets, finance, and weather information. However, there were no clear effects on access to other information (such as prices, extension services, or mobile banking) or on farm technology.
- **Intermediate effects:** There was a clear increase in livestock numbers, but no effects on crop yields.
- **Impact:** The strongest positive effects are seen in food security and incomes. Household assets might also have improved, though the evidence is less certain.

4. RESULTS IN CONTEXT

Still, these positive results were not enough to offset rising poverty in Zambia as a whole. Drought and COVID-19 had severe effects, and by 2022 almost half the population lived in extreme poverty. It is likely, however, that poverty would have increased even more without Musika's support.

Musika's impact should also be seen in light of the programme's scale. Spread across all final beneficiaries, the support over ten years amounts to about 4 cents per farming household per day—far below the dollar-per-day poverty line.

This is a summary of the evaluation:
Impact study of Musika, a Zambian rural project. 2025:1a
Evaluation authors: Carsten Schwensen, Louise Smed, John Rand. (Nordic Consulting Group A/S)
The main report is available at: https://www.sida.se/en/about-sida/publications/impact-study-of-musika-a-zambian-rural-project
The evaluation is a case study that is part of the Central Evaluation of Sida's Work with Poverty.
The evaluation was summarized by Sida / Mattias Lindgren.
Art. no.: sida62806en, urn:nbn:se:Sida-62806en
Ljungbergs Tryckeri 2025

1 The technical names for these methods are Difference-in-Difference and Propensity Score Matching. More information about how the evaluators applied these and other techniques can be found in the main report. The evaluators used data that were already collected by others.

EFFECTS OF MUSIKA

Direct effects

Output market access — Partly positive

Finance access — Positive

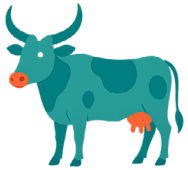
Weather info access — Positive

Other info access — Insignificant

Farm technology — Insignificant

Intermediate effects

Farm Yields — Insignificant

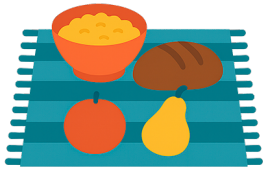


Livestock — Positive

Impact

Assets — Insignificant, but positive

Incomes — Positive



Food security — Positive