



Perceived behaviour change among poultry farmers supported by Silverlands Tanzania Limited

Introduction

Under the African Poultry Multiplication Initiative (APMI), Silverlands Tanzania Limited distributes day-old Sasso chicks to small-scale poultry producers. The Sasso breed is a dual-purpose, slower maturing chicken valued for eggs production as well as meat. Silverlands also provides technical assistance and training on poultry production to the farmers, and offers them market access. Since 2019, Silverlands has been recruiting extension marketers to help farmers understand the benefits of Sasso chicken and encourage trial of the breed, both for sale and consumption in Tanzania.

Tanager conducted a gender and nutrition training with the marketers, to enable them to effectively disseminate information to the poultry farmers. Tanager worked with them to develop messages to promote consumption of chicken and eggs to improve family nutrition, or to use income from the chicken to diversify family diets. The messages also aimed at fostering women's participation in the poultry value chain and decision-making. In late 2021, Tanager conducted a study to understand the impact of these interventions on the farmers' trial of Sasso chickens, and on their poultry-related decision-making. The study also examined family consumption of eggs, chicken, and other nutritious foods.

Research methods

- Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) – the approach used in the study. QuIP generates feedback about causes of change in people's lives. The approach relies on testimonies of a sample of intended beneficiaries of a specific intervention.
- 138 – the total number of poultry farmers interviewed through a telephone survey in Tanzania.
- November 2021 and December 2021: the period of data collection
- Five-point spectrum – the score used to establish causal impact of interaction between Silverlands marketers and poultry producers. Lowest score (1) corresponds to negligible causal link between the improvement and Silverlands actions, while the highest (5) indicates that Silverlands was the sole driver of the positive change observed.

Key Findings

1. Silverlands' interaction encouraged farmers to take up Sasso rearing:

- 72% of the farmers who interacted with Silverlands' marketers started rearing Sasso chickens in the six months prior to the study; 41% said outreach by Silverlands influenced their decision.

- More women (76%) than men (67%) started rearing Sasso birds in the previous 6 months, with **44% of the women and 34% of men attributing their decision** to Silverlands. Other respondents reported they had expanded their existing Sasso business.

“I had no idea about keeping Sasso chickens or doing poultry business before but after receiving an education from Silverlands’ staff, I was motivated to buy Sasso chickens, so I partnered with my sister to buy 100 Sasso chickens and start a poultry business.” - Female, 38.

2. Silverlands contributed to increasing couple’s joint decision making on poultry:

- While majority of farmers reported no change in the way decisions on poultry are made on in their household, 38% reported making more decisions jointly in the past six months. 19% of these farmers attributed this change directly to Silverlands’ interactions. Women were more likely to report increase on joint decision-making than the men.

3. Change towards more equitable distribution of poultry management tasks noted:

- Silverlands’ marketers sought to encourage men and women to raise Sasso birds together, to achieve more equitable distribution of tasks at household level. Results show that 41% of respondents reported more equitable poultry management in the previous six months, with

increased family and men participation. *“All my family members engage in poultry management. There is work division by gender, for example men are responsible to mix chickens feed because I always prepare chickens feed. I do engage my family because I am not always available at home so sometimes other family members help in poultry management.”-Female, 52*

4. Silverlands may have contributed to increased egg and chicken consumption in households:

- **46%** and **62%** of the producers reported that egg and chicken consumption respectively had increased in their households the past six months. Close to half of those that reported increase in egg consumption and 39% of those reporting increased chicken consumption attributed this change to Silverlands.

“It [chicken consumption] has changed a lot because before a month would pass without eating chicken, but now every week we eat one or two chickens because I have many to sell and eat” Male, 30

5. Some families are using income from Sasso chicken to buy other nutritious foods:

- Only **22%** of respondents reported using part of their poultry income to buy food for their family. **41%** directly attributed using poultry income to buy nutritious food to Silverlands.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Silverlands interactions have led farmers to start rearing Sasso chicken and realize benefits. Regular follow-up and support to the farmers in the early days of keeping this breed can enhance the benefits and sustain adoption in the longer term.
- More efforts should be made to promote equitable distribution of chicken-rearing tasks among household members, with greater involvement of all family members.
- While many households have increased consumption of eggs and chicken, not many farmers are using income from their poultry to buy food for the household. The study recommends encouraging more farmers to do so, to enhance nutrition for all members of the household.