



M31 RESEARCH LIMITED

# COMPANY PROFILE

2026

*Data. Research. Impact.*

A leading African research and advisory firm delivering rigorous data collection, programme evaluation, and applied research across Sub-Saharan Africa.

**14+**  
COUNTRIES

**400+**  
ENUMERATORS

**30+**  
PROJECTS

**10+**  
YEARS

# WHO WE ARE

M31 Research is a leading African research and advisory firm. Based in Lusaka, Zambia, we combine international best practice with deep local knowledge to produce evidence that drives real change.

Working at the intersection of data quality and development impact, we serve UN agencies, bilateral donors, international NGOs, and research institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa. Our teams have worked in all ten provinces of Zambia and more than fourteen countries, bringing the same standard of excellence to remote rural communities and national capitals alike.

Our name references Messier 31, the Andromeda galaxy — the farthest object visible to the naked eye. Like M31, we believe ambition, clarity, and precision can illuminate what seems out of reach.

**OUR MISSION**

*To improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable members of society by contributing to the global development agenda.*

**400+**

TRAINED ENUMERATORS

**10+**

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

**30+**

LARGE PROJECTS DELIVERED

**14+**

COUNTRIES REACHED

# WHAT WE DO

**Data Collection**

- Large-scale quantitative surveys (ODK, SurveyCTO)
- Qualitative research: KIIs, focus group discussions, and observational studies
- Translation and contextualisation of instruments
- IRB support for studies with vulnerable populations
- GIS-enabled field logistics and spatial data collection

**Research, Evaluation & Advisory**

- Impact and performance evaluations (baseline, midline, endline)
- Programme monitoring and M&E framework design
- Mixed-methods research design and full implementation
- Capacity building for national and organisational M&E systems
- Strategic advisory, business planning, and policy-relevant analysis

# OUR APPROACH

Every engagement is grounded in four principles that set M31 Research apart:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| <b>QUALITY ASSURANCE</b><br>Rigorous quality controls and independent verification are built into every stage of an engagement, ensuring the integrity and reliability of every finding and recommendation. | <b>TECHNOLOGY</b><br>We apply the right digital tools and analytical platforms to every engagement, enhancing speed, accuracy, and real-time insight from data collection through to analysis and reporting. | <b>COLLABORATION</b><br>Participatory design and close engagement with clients and stakeholders are central to every engagement, ensuring our work reflects the real context on the ground. | <b>LOCAL EXPERTISE</b><br>Born and based in Africa, we pair global standards with genuine local knowledge — established networks, local languages, and contextual insight across the continent. |
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# SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

M31 Research brings specialised expertise across the development sectors that matter most across Sub-Saharan Africa. Our cross-sector experience enables us to design and deliver research that reflects the complexity of real-world programmes.

|                                  |                               |                             |                      |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Health Systems                   | Education                     | Agriculture & Food Security | WASH                 |
| Gender Equality, HIV/AIDS, & SRH | Governance & Local Government | Enterprise and Operations   | Energy & Livelihoods |

# OUR CLIENTS

We are proud to have earned the trust of leading global and regional organisations. Our client relationships are built on consistent delivery, methodological rigour, and genuine partnership.

|                     |                   |                       |                     |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| UNICEF              | UNAIDS            | PATH                  | GIZ                 |
| WWF                 | World Bank        | UNFPA                 | UNIDO               |
| Busara Center       | Grassroot Soccer  | University of Toronto | Development Gateway |
| Columbia University | Save the Children | Laterite              | Jigsaw Education    |

# PROJECT EXPERIENCE

A selection of M31 Research assignments delivered for UN agencies, bilateral donors, international NGOs, and leading research institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                       |
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| <div>01</div> <div><b>Data on Youth and Tobacco in Africa (DaYTA) — Zambia</b></div> <div><b>Development Gateway</b> All 10 provinces, Zambia • Apr 2026 – Jan 2027</div> <div>A multi-country programme generating nationally representative evidence on tobacco and nicotine use among adolescents aged 10–17. M31 designs and implements Zambia’s population-based household survey with the national statistics authority and Ministry of Health.</div> <div><b>APPROACH</b> Multi-stage stratified cluster sample of 3,486 adolescents across 175 enumeration areas (screening ~15,845 households); CAPI on SurveyCTO with household and adolescent tools in seven languages, weighted and post-stratified to the 2022 Census.</div> <div><b>OUTCOME</b> Delivers current, nationally representative evidence — including out-of-school youth — to strengthen Zambia’s tobacco-control strategies and the regional DaYTA evidence base.</div> | <div>PUBLIC HEALTH</div> <div>3,486 adolescents</div> |
| <div>02</div> <div><b>Zambia Property Tax Survey 2026 (LoGRI)</b></div> <div><b>University of Toronto / LoGRI</b> Mansa &amp; Chipata, Zambia • May – Dec 2026</div> <div>A property-tax study piloting more efficient and equitable ways to identify and value properties for local revenue. M31 delivers mapping and valuation across two towns plus an embedded behavioural research component in Mansa.</div> <div><b>APPROACH</b> QGIS polygon mapping and CAPI ground-truthing of ~19,000 properties, expert valuation of a 5% sample, and a spatial regression-discontinuity design with a ~2,000-respondent baseline, tax-saliency messaging, a mock-election module and up to 40 FGDs.</div> <div><b>OUTCOME</b> Produces validated spatial datasets and experimental evidence on how mapping and messaging shape attitudes to property tax, supporting fairer, more sustainable local revenue systems.</div>                             | <div>GOVERNANCE</div> <div>~19,000 properties</div>   |

### 03 Ground-Truthing Energy Audits for Mini-Grid Sites

**Columbia World Projects (QSEL)** Southern & Eastern, Zambia • May 2024 – Dec 2025

**95 sites**

Ground-truthing energy audits to inform rural electrification and private mini-grid development, with Columbia University's QSEL and ICAP and funded by SEforALL. M31 was the field implementation partner across 95 candidate sites.

**APPROACH** Household energy, Productive-Use-of-Energy, business, education, health, pole-inventory and site surveys, plus farmer FGDs and farm-plot validation for irrigation potential, delivered with dedicated teams and two field vehicles under daily QA.

**OUTCOME** Site-specific data on energy demand and barriers (cost, drought, distance) informing the Rural Electrification Authority, the Presidential Delivery Unit and developers on where mini-grids can best serve rural communities.

### 04 WASH Endline: DRC Refugees & Host Communities

**UNICEF Zambia (KfW)** Four provinces, Zambia • Feb – Sep 2023

**1,587 households**

Endline evaluation of a KfW-funded programme improving WASH services for DRC refugees and host communities (~164,000 people) across four provinces, later expanded to include COVID-19 education support.

**APPROACH** Mixed-methods design covering 1,587 households, 35 health facilities and 59 schools with water-quality testing, KIIs and FGDs; stratified random sampling assessed relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and equity against OECD-DAC criteria.

**OUTCOME** Evidenced marked gains in safe water access and reduced diarrhoeal disease among under-fives, with practical recommendations to strengthen future WASH programming.

### 05 Data Must Speak: Positive Deviance Research

**UNICEF** All 10 provinces, Zambia • Dec 2022 – May 2023

**120 schools**

The Ministry of Education's Data Must Speak "positive deviance" research, identifying why some schools outperform peers in similar contexts. M31 was the independent national data-collection partner.

**APPROACH** Quantitative surveys, systematic classroom-observation coding and semi-structured interviews across 120 schools and 1,080 respondents in all ten provinces, with tools in seven languages and daily high-frequency quality checks.

**OUTCOME** Strengthened MoE capacity for data-driven decisions and produced evidence to scale effective school practices, supporting reforms to reduce learning poverty and improve equity.

## 06 Optimising Teacher Professional Development at Scale

Jigsaw Education (IDRC / GPE KIX) Central Province, Zambia • Dec 2024 – Jun 2027

IDRC/GPE KIX-funded research on scaling and institutionalising teacher professional development based on the Teaching at the Right Level approach within government systems. M31 implements the Zambia data collection and co-design.

**APPROACH** Design-based implementation research across six baseline, three cycle-one and six cycle-two schools, with 60 interviews, 90 surveys, 120 classroom and training observations and FGDs with TaRL staff and MoE officials, iterated over two cycles.

**OUTCOME** A refined, practical TPD package ready for government integration, contributing to global knowledge on adapting and sustaining proven education innovations.

EDUCATION

## Design-based research

## 07 Biomedical Equipment Management Survey (SOURCE)

PATH / Gates Foundation All 10 provinces, Zambia • Feb – Sep 2023

Biomedical Equipment Management Survey under the SOURCE oxygen programme, responding to hypoxemia mortality by documenting respiratory-care equipment across Zambia's health system.

**APPROACH** A random sample of 91 facilities surveyed by nine provincial field teams with two back-check teams, cataloguing oxygen concentrators, cylinders and plants, functionality and maintenance readiness, with spot-checks, GPS and dashboards.

**OUTCOME** Actionable evidence on device standardisation, access, maintenance and workforce training to strengthen facility readiness and improve access to life-saving medical oxygen.

HEALTH SYSTEMS

## 91 facilities

## 08 M&E Survey — Green Innovation Centres (GIC)

GIZ Zambia Eastern & Southern, Zambia • Sep 2022 – Mar 2023

Annual monitoring survey for the Green Innovation Centres project supporting smallholder productivity and incomes across the groundnut, soya bean and dairy value chains in 19 districts.

**APPROACH** 800 household surveys, 20 focus group discussions and 36 key-informant interviews across Eastern and Southern Provinces, capturing productivity, gross margins, innovation adoption and food security under structured quality control.

**OUTCOME** Documented gains in yields, dairy production and improved-practice adoption, giving GIZ a credible basis to assess impact and shape future interventions.

AGRICULTURE

## 800 households

## 09 Motivational Barriers to TaRL Implementation

**Busara Center** Lusaka, Eastern & Central • May – Jul 2023

A quantitative study of the motivational barriers and levers shaping Catch Up teachers' delivery of Zambia's Teaching at the Right Level initiative, building on earlier qualitative work.

**APPROACH** Structured phone surveys with 2,000 teachers (after a 24-teacher pilot) by enumerators working in Bemba, Lenje, Nyanja and Tonga on SurveyCTO, with rigorous cleaning in Stata and Excel dashboards for reporting.

**OUTCOME** Robust evidence on teacher motivation that fed a co-design workshop and guided strategic improvements for scaling the TaRL model across Zambia's schools.

## 10 KVTC Heavy Equipment Operation — Business Plan

**UNIDO** Kitwe / Copperbelt, Zambia • Apr – Sep 2026

Market and sustainability analysis plus a costed business plan for Kitwe Vocational Training Centre's heavy-equipment operator programmes, under a Government–Japan–Hitachi–UNIDO partnership as the project enters its final year.

**APPROACH** An adapted 5C framework, market and institutional analysis, and activity-based costing with scenario and depreciation modelling, informed by stakeholder interviews across Kitwe, Lusaka and the Copperbelt and North-Western provinces.

**OUTCOME** A costed, evidence-based business plan and sustainability roadmap supporting cost recovery and KVTC's path to recognition as a regional Centre of Excellence.

## 11 TaRL Testing Phase — Randomised Controlled Trial

**Busara Center** Lusaka, Eastern & Southern • Apr – Oct 2024

A randomised controlled trial exploring the behavioural drivers of teacher engagement within the Catch Up foundational-learning programme, delivered with TaRL Africa and VVOB Zambia.

**APPROACH** Mobile behavioural labs — 24 tablets, a server and backup power set up in Ministry of Education resource centres across three provinces — ran computerised games measuring planning effort, instructional choices and classroom management, two sessions daily.

**OUTCOME** Behavioural insights into teacher practice that informed intervention design and strategies for scaling Catch Up to improve foundational learning outcomes.

## 12 Strong Bodies, Strong Minds — Baseline Evaluation

**Grassroot Soccer** Lusaka & Eastern, Zambia • Oct 2020 – Feb 2021

Baseline evaluation of a Comic Relief-funded model integrating mental health into SRHR and ART-adherence programming for youth living with HIV, delivered with StrongMinds Zambia.

**APPROACH** Mixed-methods baseline combining quantitative surveys with FGDs and KIIs, ethical approvals from UNZA and the NHRA, and training of GRS coaches as “young investigators” to support youth-led data collection.

**OUTCOME** Showed the integrated model to be feasible, acceptable and scalable, with improved SRHR knowledge, mental health and treatment adherence, setting reference points for outcome measurement.

HEALTH / HIV

### Mixed-methods baseline

## 13 INSURED — Baseline, Midline & Endline Study

**Busara Center** Zambia • Oct 2020 – Nov 2022

Three-wave evaluation of INSURED, an IFAD/Sida climate-insurance programme promoting insurance as a tool for rural resilience and agricultural risk management, with deliberate attention to women’s inclusion.

**APPROACH** Quantitative CATI surveys with 600 respondents and qualitative interviews with 30 respondents using structured tools, under rigorous enumerator training, monitoring and ethical safeguards.

**OUTCOME** A comprehensive evidence base tracking resilience, risk management and livelihoods among poor rural households across the programme’s life.

AGRICULTURE / CLIMATE

### 600 respondents

## 14 Assessment of the Data Mentorship Programme

**UNAIDS** 14 countries, ESA & WCA • Jan – Jun 2025

External review of a regional Data Mentorship Programme strengthening government data managers’ ability to use health data toward eliminating vertical transmission of HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B.

**APPROACH** Qualitative design combining a structured desk review with in-depth interviews across a purposive sample of 30 mentees, mentors, partners and UN stakeholders in 14 countries, analysed thematically.

**OUTCOME** Confirmed the programme strengthened data-use capacity and delivered actionable recommendations on sustainability, digital delivery and local mentorship to guide regional scale-up.

HEALTH / CAPACITY

### 14 countries

**2,200 properties****15 LoGRI Property Tax Survey — Mansa**

University of Toronto / LoGRI   Mansa, Zambia   •   May – Aug 2022

A property survey for the Local Government Revenue Initiative to develop policy-relevant research and tools helping councils collect revenue more fairly and transparently.

**APPROACH** Twenty enumerators surveyed 2,200 properties stratified by neighbourhood, selecting households near randomly generated GPS points via a controlled random-walk and recording external property characteristics.

**OUTCOME** A representative property dataset for Mansa analysed to inform property-tax policy and administration, with potential to extend to other parts of Zambia.

**34 interviews & FGDs****16 Women's Roles in Dairy & Poultry Health**

Laterite (Zoetis Alpha+)   Zambia   •   Jan – May 2025

Zambia component of a Kenya–Zambia study, commissioned by Zoetis through Alpha+ and led by Laterite, examining women's roles across the continuum of animal-health care in dairy and poultry.

**APPROACH** Qualitative design with 12 KIIs, 10 in-depth interviews and 12 FGDs across provinces and value chains, with tools translated into local languages and interviewers trained on qualitative protocols and ethics.

**OUTCOME** Evidence on gender-differentiated barriers and opportunities, guiding Zoetis and partners to design more inclusive, gender-responsive livestock interventions.

**250 institutions****17 EdTech Readiness for TVET Institutions (ETRI-VET)**

World Bank / RMI   Zambia   •   Jun – Nov 2024

A World Bank and Mastercard Foundation assessment of how far educational technology is integrated across Zambia's TEVET institutions, structured around devices, connectivity and instructors.

**APPROACH** Stratified random sample of 200–250 institutions surveyed via CATI on SurveyCTO with in-person observation at 10%, analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics under back-check and high-frequency QA.

**OUTCOME** A comprehensive readiness dataset and recommendations on closing urban–rural gaps and scaling EdTech equitably across the sector.

## 18 CREATE Climate-Resilient Agriculture — Baseline

**GIZ Zambia (BMZ)** Southern Province, Zambia • Jun – Sep 2026

Baseline for the CREATE programme's climate-resilient agriculture indicator, measuring adoption of food-sensitive, climate-resilient practices among smallholder households across three project districts.

**APPROACH** A randomised, gender-differentiated mixed-methods design across Monze, Mazabuka and Pemba, with CAPI household interviews and FGDs, disaggregated by district, gender, youth and inclusive-business participation.

**OUTCOME** Credible, verifiable pre-intervention values plus a household contact database, providing the comparison basis for the planned 2027 endline.

AGRICULTURE / CLIMATE

600 farmers

## 19 BENGU III — Conservation & Food Security (KAZA)

**WWF Zambia (BMZ)** Sioma Ngwezi GMA, Zambia • Nov 2023 – Mar 2024

External evaluation of a WWF Germany/BMZ conservation-agriculture and food-security project in the Zambian KAZA TFCA, which reached over 3,656 households over its five-year life.

**APPROACH** Mixed-methods assessment using KIIs, FGDs, quantitative surveys, document review, field visits and stakeholder workshops against relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact criteria.

**OUTCOME** Evidence that the project improved food security and income and embedded sustainable conservation-agriculture practices, informing future programming.

ENVIRONMENT

400 households

## 20 Gender Inequality & Midwives' Capacity

**UNFPA / hera** Zambia • Sep 2024 – Apr 2025

Zambia component of a multi-country study on how gender inequality within and beyond the health system limits midwives' capacity to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

**APPROACH** Qualitative design with 12 KIIs (central and field level) and 8 FGDs across urban and rural districts; tools translated into local languages, with ethical approval, recording, transcription and thematic analysis.

**OUTCOME** Rich, contextually grounded evidence on gender-based barriers feeding the cross-country analysis and global advocacy for midwifery equity and leadership.

GENDER / HEALTH

20 interviews & FGDs

## 21 Energising Development (EnDev) — Endline Survey

**GIZ / SNV** Kisumu & Siaya, Kenya • May – Jun 2025

Endline survey for the Energising Development programme, assessing whether MSMEs are empowered to make informed investment decisions on climate-friendly energy technologies.

**APPROACH** A quantitative survey on KoboToolbox with GPS-enabled tablets reached 116 MSMEs and farming households across four sub-counties over five days, with real-time supervision, logic checks and geo-tagging.

**OUTCOME** Exceeded the target sample and evidenced high awareness and active investment among MSMEs, contributing to EnDev's global Output Indicator 1.1.

ENERGY ACCESS

**116 MSMEs**

## 22 Evidence Gathering & Documentation Training

**Save the Children (Sida)** Chaminuka, Zambia • Oct 2020

A capacity-building assignment for the closing Sida-funded Civil Society Strengthening Project, building the ability of Save the Children and nine implementing partners to harvest and document project evidence.

**APPROACH** A training needs assessment and pre/post-test framed a five-day participatory workshop combining presentations, case studies, coaching and hands-on practice with SCI's documentation tools.

**OUTCOME** Measurable knowledge gains and partner-produced evidence-harvesting, sustainability and exit plans, leaving the project evaluation-ready.

CAPACITY BUILDING

**10 partners trained**

# OUR RESOURCE CAPACITY

M31 Research maintains the human, logistical, and technical infrastructure to deliver complex, multi-site research projects at scale — from rapid assessments to multi-year longitudinal studies.

## Field Operations

- 400+ trained enumerators in quantitative and qualitative methods
- 300+ deployable enumerators per country of operation
- 50+ tablets maintained for digital data collection
- National study capacity, including hard-to-reach populations
- Experienced field managers, supervisors, and provincial coordinators

## Technical Expertise

- Data analysts skilled in SPSS, Stata, R, and NVivo
- Evaluation specialists in health, education, agriculture, WASH, and governance
- GIS analysts for spatial data collection and programme mapping
- Multilingual capacity for translations, transcriptions, and KIIs in local languages
- Research ethics and IRB support for studies involving vulnerable populations

# ETHICS & SAFEGUARDING

M31 Research upholds the highest standards of research ethics. For studies involving children, women, people living with HIV, and other vulnerable populations, we apply rigorous safeguarding protocols — ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, dignity, and safety at every step. Our teams are trained to international standards, and all studies are conducted with the full approval of relevant Institutional Review Boards.

## GET IN TOUCH

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