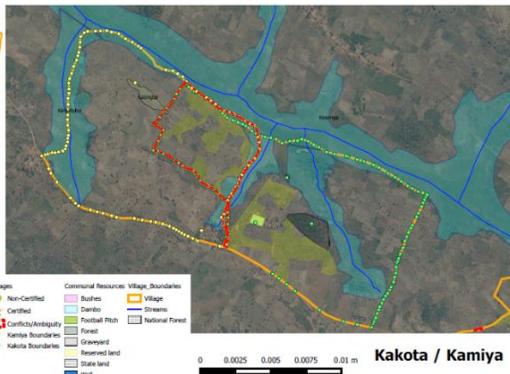




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SUCCESS STORY

Participatory Mapping Exercise Resolves Land Conflict in Zambia



This map illustrates Kakota village (right), Kamiya village (left), and disputed area (red). Blue and green areas represent communal resources or areas reserved for future use.



Community members in Kakota village celebrate the successful resolution of village boundary conflict.

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In rural Zambia, village boundaries are not formally documented, and conflict often emerges from boundary ambiguities. Local traditional leaders and village headmen responsible for resolving land disputes often lack the maps and other tools they need to make informed decisions. In March 2015, USAID supported completion of a participatory mapping exercise that peacefully resolved a decade-long dispute between two communities.

Each planting season, community members of the Kakota and Kamiya villages in Eastern Zambia engage in heated exchanges over the ownership of agricultural land and “bush” areas that both communities hope to use for agricultural expansion. USAID’s local implementing partner, the Chipata District Land Alliance (CDLA), worked with these communities to conduct “boundary walks” and create maps illustrating village boundaries and community-managed resources. Community members validated the maps, and for the first time saw the area of long-standing conflict illustrated on paper; a powerful visual for all.

Village members gathered to review the maps, and a discussion of the history of the land ensued. A village elder from Kamiya explained the story of the founding of the two villages. The contested area originally belonged to Kakota, but as demand for land increased, community members from both villages began establishing fields in the area.

The communities agreed that the land would be administered by Kakota’s headperson, but that residents of Kamiya could continue to farm and request land in the neighboring village.

Members of both communities were grateful for the exercise. One Kakota community member noted that because the land ownership has been clarified, he will be able to farm the land without fear of expropriation. “We are grateful that you helped us resolve this wrangle,” he said to the CDLA. “I can now reserve some of my family land as bush until we need it, because we have proof that it belongs to us.”