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SUCCESS STORY

Customary Land Certification in Zambia Helps Secure Land for the Next Generation

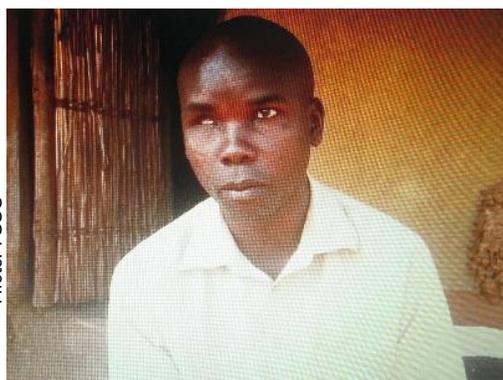


Photo: TGCC

Stephen Mbewe, a resident of Mgombe village, spoke of the benefits he and his family had seen from the customary land demarcation and certification work being undertaken in Mshawa Chiefdom

In Zambia's Chipata District, USAID has been supporting a local organization, the Chipata District Land Alliance (CDLA), to work with chiefs, village headpersons, and local communities to document village boundaries, community resources, and household land rights. As the current phase of work, which allows for preliminary parcel boundaries to be reviewed and agreed by community members before the issuance of land certificates, comes to an end, headpersons and community members have expressed their support for the work carried out thus far.

One such community member is Mr. Stephen Mbewe, a visually impaired resident of Mgombe village in Mshawa Chiefdom. Mr. Mbewe explained that his land was originally allocated to his parents by the village headperson; once his parents died and he married, the land passed to him. He said, "There has always been issues concerning boundaries since my neighbors thought I would not be able to tell exactly where the boundary was passing through the two fields... Each time there was a conflict I would appeal to the headperson who was always there to resolve the issue at hand."

When asked whether the customary land certification work had made any difference to the situation, Mr Mbewe stated, "Firstly, the demarcation exercise sealed off any future dispute on field boundaries... Secondly, with the issuance of certificates by the chief, my wife and children will be secure until the next generation to come. I am so happy that CDLA came to our village at the right time and I am looking forward to the day when I and the family will receive the certificate."

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Telling Our Story

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