



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



BRIEF

Applying MAST for Enhanced Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Outcomes

MAY 2023

Research [finds](#) that strengthening women's land and resource rights positively impacts women's empowerment and decision-making capacity. Yet laws and practices across much of the world hinder women's access to these critical assets.

USAID has helped address this inequity over the past decade through [Mapping Approaches for Securing Tenure](#) (MAST), a blend of participatory land mapping techniques and flexible technology tools developed to help communities document and secure their land and resource rights. Applications of MAST range from increasing women's empowerment and food security to assisting with climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation. MAST's participatory mapping methodology emphasizes local engagement and training to empower citizens with information and tools to document their land rights and build their capacity to maintain land information in order to sustainably manage their land and resources.

MAST has strengthened women's land tenure and promoted women's empowerment in communities throughout Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia, among other countries. This brief provides an overview of these participatory mapping efforts as they relate to gender equality and social inclusion, as well as key outcomes, challenges, and considerations from implementation.

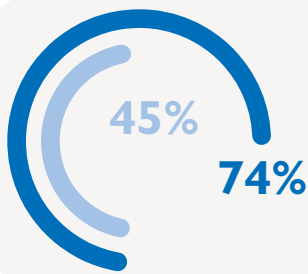
Quick Links

Country Examples	2
Mozambique	2
Tanzania	2
Zambia	3
Recommended Practices and Key Lessons	4

MAST's Benefits to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: Country Examples

MOZAMBIQUE

A majority of rural Mozambicans are either unaware of their communal and individual land rights or [lack the political, economic, or technical means](#) to effectively assert those rights. USAID's [Integrated Land and Resource Governance](#) (ILRG) mechanism has implemented MAST in five provinces to document land rights through inclusive and gender-sensitive processes. In particular, ILRG requires maintaining an equitable gender balance within implementing teams and promotes and closely tracks gender-specific outcomes.



KEY RESULTS

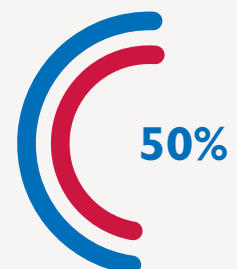
As of November 2022, ILRG registered over 24,000 women as traditional landowners, accounting for nearly 55 percent of all registrants. Data collected at the end of the project showed that **74 percent** of survey respondents believed that women should be able to control and own land and resources in their own name compared to **45 percent** of respondents who held those beliefs prior to the start of the project.

TANZANIA

Land registration in rural Tanzania often moves slowly due to limited operational capacity, leaving landowners with insecure property rights. USAID's [Land Tenure Assistance](#) (LTA) activity adapted MAST in southern Tanzania to more efficiently demarcate parcels and register land rights for smallholder farmers, providing nearly 100,000 ownership documents. Through intensive awareness campaigns and trainings, LTA encouraged women (along with youth and other marginalized groups) to fully participate in mapping, registration, and village-level decision-making activities as para-surveyors and dispute adjudicators.

KEY RESULTS

LTA provided over **100,000 customary land ownership documents**, with roughly **50 percent** registered to women. The recruitment of women to map land parcels and serve as dispute adjudicators provided them with short-term employment, transferable skills, and stronger feelings of confidence and empowerment.



ZAMBIA

Demographic changes and accelerated economic growth have led to increased land conflict and pressure on resource management throughout Zambia. USAID's [ILRG](#) mechanism adapted the MAST approach to address the lack of a legal framework for registering customary land rights in Zambia, supporting chiefs and local leaders to document land rights in over 900 villages. Setting up the project, ILRG innovatively added an option for women to be listed as a "person of interest" on ownership documents if their husband chose to register themselves as the sole landowner.



KEY RESULTS

ILRG documented the land rights of over 22,000 women between 2018 and 2020, representing nearly **50 percent** of all registrants during that period. Dozens of local-level traditional leaders across six chiefdoms participated in ILRG-facilitated dialogues where they discussed gender norms and ways to promote greater participation of women in the land rights process, boosting their ability to **champion gender equality** in land and resource governance.



PHOTO CREDIT: CLEMENT CHIRWA / USAID

Recommended Practices and Key Lessons for MAST Implementation

- **Intentionally cultivate women’s participation:** Communicating early and explicitly about the gender-related benefits of the MAST approach can build awareness and buy-in for a more gender-equitable mapping and documentation process. Key components of MAST include community-wide trainings and sensitization campaigns on gender-related mapping goals, laws and regulations governing women’s land rights, and the benefits of strengthening women’s tenure security.
- **Engage men as champions of women’s participation and equality:** It is helpful to engage men, especially leaders, who can support women’s participation in the MAST approach, particularly early in the process. This can help ensure greater and more meaningful involvement of women. Male champions are helpful in transforming traditional attitudes to promote more active participation of women and help avoid harmful pushback toward women during and after mapping.
- **Tailor women’s engagement to the local context:** Local communities maintain their own customs, inheritance processes, familial structures, and class dynamics. Women often have responsibilities unique from men, including childcare and domestic household duties. The MAST approach can and should be adapted to the local context in order to engage women in ways that adequately consider their social roles, needs, and schedules.
- **Account for the time and effort required to change attitudes:** It can take multiple community meetings, one-on-one outreach, trainings, dialogue with traditional leaders, and provision of practical guidance tools to [effectively educate](#) communities on the laws and regulations governing women’s land ownership. The same is true for the nuances of how strengthening women’s land rights can benefit entire households and communities. This deliberate engagement within the MAST process lengthens the time frame for land documentation compared to on-demand, targeted, and rapid documentation, but it is one of the most critical components for shifting behaviors and norms related to women’s land rights.
- **Meaningfully and directly involve women:** Recruiting women as para-surveyors and dispute adjudicators helps ensure that their perspectives and land claims are taken into account; this engagement also provides women with short-term employment, transferable skills, and strengthens feelings of confidence and empowerment.

LEARN MORE

Questions? Contact the EEI/LRG team at landmatters@usaid.gov. Additional resources are also available on the *LandLinks* [MAST Learning Platform](#).



PHOTO CREDIT: USAID



Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM)

Sound management of natural resources is central to long-term development and resilience. Faced with an urgent need to reduce environmental degradation while improving human well-being, solutions that effectively integrate investments in natural resource management with economic and social development are increasingly urgent. INRM promotes integrated programming across environment and non-environment sectors and across the Program Cycle. INRM supports USAID to amplify program impacts, strengthen gender equality and social inclusion, and identify best practices for integration.

For more information: <https://land-links.org/project/integrated-natural-resource-management-inrm-activity/>

Title: Applying MAST for Enhanced Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Outcomes
Author: Tim Robustelli

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared with support from the Integrated Natural Resource Management Task Order 7200AA18D00020, under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II (STARR II) IDIQ. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.