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GENDER NORMS AND LAND

IDENTIFYING AND SHIFTING HARMFUL NORMS TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

INTEGRATED LAND AND RESOURCE GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALIGN	Advancing Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms
CLC	Customary Land Committee
CRB	Community Resource Board
ECOM	Ecom Agroindustrial Corp.
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GALS	Gender Action Learning Systems
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GSP	Good Social Practices
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILRG	Integrated Land and Resource Governance
LLG	Land Leasing Group
MAST	Mapping Approaches for Securing Tenure
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
Prindex	Perceptions on Property Rights Index.
Pro-WEAI	Project-Level Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
STARR II	Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAG	Village Actions Groups
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WFP	World Food Program

I.0 INTRODUCTION: GENDER NORMS IN LAND AND RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

I.1 BACKGROUND

Land and natural resources are critical for rural women’s livelihoods and economic security. There is growing evidence that secure land rights are a key element of women’s empowerment, leading to benefits for women, households, communities, and agrifood systems. According to the 2023 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) [The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems](#) report, women’s ownership and control over land and natural resources are linked to expanded economic opportunities and security for women, greater decision-making and bargaining power for women, increased agricultural productivity, increased household profitability and responsible expenditure, reduced vulnerability to gender-based violence (GBV),¹ improved adoption of technologies and climate-smart practices, and greater resilience to external shocks from climate change, conflict, and health or economic crises.

Yet, [40 percent of countries](#) worldwide have legal limitations to women’s rights to own land and property. Only [44 countries provide men and women equal inheritance rights](#) in law and practice, and [women make up less than 20 percent of landholders](#) globally. More importantly, even when women have legal rights to land, social norms constrain their ability to own, access, inherit, and control land. This is further complicated because in many countries land rights are governed by customary systems that are often male-dominated and influenced by harmful gender norms.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) Activity drew upon conceptual and programmatic frameworks on social norms change that have been developed and applied in other international development sectors² to strengthen women’s land rights as a pathway for empowerment and economic security. ILRG is a global mechanism that works with governments, traditional and customary authorities, communities, civil society organizations, and private sector partners to improve land rights, support inclusive land and resource governance, build resilient livelihoods, and promote women’s empowerment and economic security. ILRG designed and implemented norms-shifting interventions in five countries – Ghana, India, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia. Activities in each country had different timeframes (varying from 18 months to five years of engagement) and focused on one or more of three main areas of work: land rights, natural resource management, and land-based agroforestry value chains (Figure 1).

In Ghana, ILRG partnered with [Ecom Agroindustrial Corp. \(ECOM\)](#), a global commodity trading and processing company, to promote gender equality and [empower women in the cocoa value chain](#). In India, ILRG made the [business case](#) for women’s empowerment in the [PepsiCo](#) potato supply chain in West Bengal through improved access to land and other productive resources. ILRG supported the

¹ Gender-based violence (GBV) is any harm or potential of harm perpetrated against a person or group on the basis of gender. It encompasses many expressions of violence – whether in public or private spaces – including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic deprivation of land, property, income, and other resources.

² Most literature and practice on social norms change has been applied to the health sector, particularly sexual and reproductive health. The 2021 [Social Norms Atlas: Understanding Global Social Norms and Related Concepts](#), developed by The Social Norms Learning Collaborative, provides an overview of social norms and promising norms-shifting practices in ten different sectors (COVID-19, Education, Harmful Traditional Practices, Intimate Partner Violence, Nutrition, Provider Behavior, Sexual & Reproductive Health, Technology, Violence Against Children, and Women’s Economic Empowerment).

Malawi government to [register customary land rights](#) of 42,620 people (50 percent women), [using a gender-responsive approach](#). In Mozambique, ILRG supported multinational agroforestry company [Green Resources](#) to divest itself of land that was transferred to 131 local communities. Another partnership with [Grupo Madal](#) supported the company in providing long-term land use rights to 1,585 smallholder farmers (86 percent women) who had encroached into the company’s land. The company also developed a gender-responsive ingrower and outgrower program that allowed 2,194 farmers to enter commercial value chains for the first time. In Zambia, ILRG engaged with the government, traditional leadership, and civil society organizations to support the documentation of customary land rights for 89,677 people (46 percent women). In the natural resource sector, ILRG worked with the Zambia government and civil society organizations to promote gender-responsive elections to community resource governance structures, as well as increased women’s participation in wildlife and forestry law enforcement.

FIGURE I. ILRG GENDER EQUALITY AREAS OF WORK



Building upon an [initial brief on gender norms and land](#), this report shares ILRG’s activities to identify norms, implement norm-shifting interventions, and capture impact. The report provides a summary of key gender norms concepts, followed by details on ILRG’s approaches to changing gender norms related to land and natural resources across countries. The final section shares the key results and impacts, with recommendations for future work. The report aims to provide resources for organizations working on land tenure and resource governance to incorporate gender norms change into their programming while contributing to the broader knowledge base on gender norms by applying the conceptual framework to the land and natural resource sector.

I.2 KEY GENDER NORMS CONCEPTS

Social norms are the unwritten or informal rules about what is typical or appropriate in a setting. A type of social norm, gender norms are unwritten rules based on biological sex and/or social perceptions of gender. They describe which behaviors are appropriate and which are not appropriate according to one’s gender and include expectations of how people of different genders should relate and interact. Norms can be descriptive or normative (also called prescriptive or injunctive). Descriptive norms are perceptions about what behavior is typical in a setting (“how things are” or “what I think others do”), whereas normative norms are perceptions of behaviors that are approved or disapproved (“how things should be” or “what I believe others think I should do”).

It is important to note that social and gender norms are different from attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Attitudes and beliefs are individual and internally motivated, whereas norms are collective and extrinsically motivated. An individual's behaviors are informed by various factors, including their attitudes and beliefs, and also by social norms. However, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and norms do not always align. For example, a man may have a personal belief that his wife has equal claims to the land the family cultivates, but the norm in his community might be that land belongs to men in the household only. He therefore may end up not including his wife in the land title so as not to go against community held beliefs or norms and risk social repercussions.

Several factors lead people to comply with norms, even if they are at odds with individual beliefs and attitudes, including the desire to conform to their social identity, the pursuit of belonging or fitting in, socioeconomic conditions, and enforcement. Indeed, social and gender norms are passed on, reinforced, and enforced through the socialization process and sanctions or rewards carried out by reference groups. Reference groups are the people or groups of people whose behavior and beliefs shape one's own behaviors and beliefs. Reference groups can include family members (parents, spouse, siblings, in-laws, extended family), community or traditional leaders, neighbors, and teachers, among others. A glossary of key terms related to gender norms is provided in Annex I and summarized in Figure 2 below.

TABLE I. KEY TERMS³

Motivation	Term		Definition
Individually Motivated	Attitude & Belief		What I prefer & what I know.
Socially Motivated	Social and Gender Norms	Descriptive	What I think others do.
		Normative	What I think others will approve/disapprove of me doing.
	Reference Group		People whose opinions matter to me (for a particular behavior or context). People who reward or sanction me for my behavior.
Individually and Socially Motivated	Behavior		What I do.

Social and gender norms are embedded in communities, systems, and structures and operate as part of complex social systems. As such, they are situational, contextual, and open to change. Social and gender norms can promote both positive and harmful behaviors and practices. Harmful gender norms perpetuate unequal power relations that are usually detrimental to women and girls. Through power dynamics and sanctions, harmful gender norms normalize and reinforce gender inequality and can limit women's access to resources and their decision-making power.

³ Adapted from CARE, 2017 & Chung & Rimal, 2016.

Identifying and shifting harmful gender norms is a key component of gender-transformative approaches, which address not only the *consequences* but also the *causes* of gender inequality, especially unequal roles, resource allocation, and decision-making power.⁴ There are different theories on why and how social (and gender) norms and behaviors change, stemming from different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and communications.⁵ However, there are commonalities across different theories and approaches that gender norms can change as a result of broad drivers (economic growth and technological advances); shifts in laws and policies; intentional efforts at the individual, household, community, and institutional levels; exposure to new ideas and practices through formal and informal channels (space for reflection and dialogue, conversations, role modeling, mass media messages, etc.); and diffusion of new ideas and behaviors that reach a tipping point or critical mass. Research by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) found that norms change processes are rarely straightforward, but rather “messy,” with old norms existing alongside new ones as they take hold. Moreover, as new norms and behaviors emerge, resistance or pushback is expected, and mitigating, preventing, and responding to unintended consequences is critical.

Although there is no consensus, the ODI and the Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change identified key attributes of norms-shifting interventions, including:

- Grounded in appropriate assessment of social norms⁶;
- Seek community-level change, beyond individual-level shifts;
- Engage people at multiple levels (individual, household, community, institutional), including people displaying the targeted behaviors and reference groups;
- Increase awareness/visibility of harmful behavior and norms, correcting misperceptions;
- Emphasize the creation of positive new norms;
- Create a safe space for critical community reflection;
- Root issues within the community’s own value systems;
- Community-led;
- Address power imbalances, particularly related to gender; and
- Use organized diffusion, beginning with a core group, who then engages others.

Based on this theoretical background and evidence from social and gender norms change programs in other sectors,⁷ ILRG designed and implemented interventions to shift gender norms related to women’s land rights, women’s participation in natural resource management, and women’s participation in land-

⁴ The FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) or the World Food Program (WFP) developed a compendium that identified six core characteristics of 15 gender-transformative approaches, including addressing underlying social norms, attitudes, and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequalities. See FAO, IFAD, and WFP, 2020. [Gender transformative approaches for food security, improved nutrition, and sustainable agriculture – A compendium of fifteen good practices.](#)

⁵ For an in-depth analysis of the different theories of social normal change, see Legros and Cislighi, 2020. [Mapping the Social-Norms Literature: An Overview of Reviews.](#)

⁶ Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change. 2017. [Identifying and Describing Approaches and Attributes of Norms-Shifting Interventions](#); Harper, C.; Marcus, R.; George, R.; D’Angelo, S.; and Samman, E. 2020. [Gender, power, and progress: How norms change.](#)

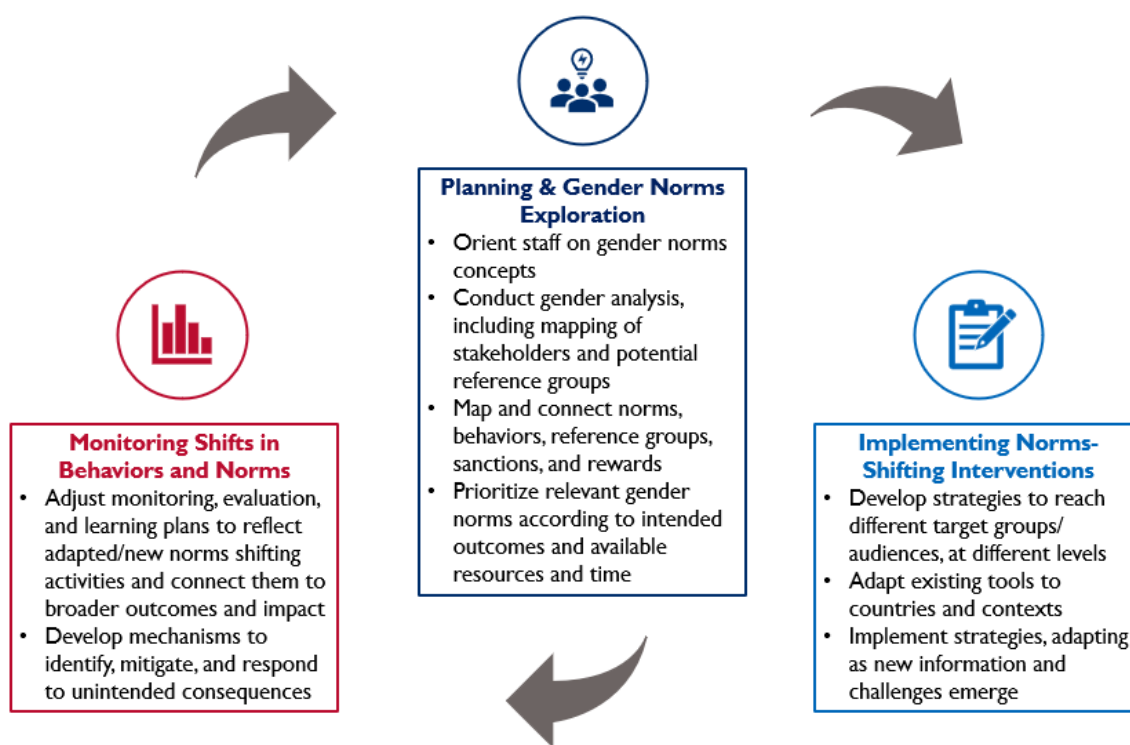
⁷ [USAID-funded Passages Project](#) and the [ALIGN \(Advancing Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms\) Platform](#) have developed several resources and tools to explore, shift, and monitor gender norms.

based value chains. Strategies were adapted to each context or country, responding to different entry points and reference groups.

2.0 DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING, AND MEASURING NORMS-SHIFTING INTERVENTIONS

ILRG’s gender norms-shifting interventions followed three phases: 1) planning and norms exploration, 2) implementation, and 3) monitoring, evaluation, and learning. However, these phases were not distinct, with constant learning and adaptation taking place within and across countries. As shifting gender norms takes time and action at different levels, it is inherently an iterative and continuous process.

FIGURE 2. GENDER NORMS CHANGE PROGRAM CYCLE



2.1 PLANNING & GENDER NORMS EXPLORATION

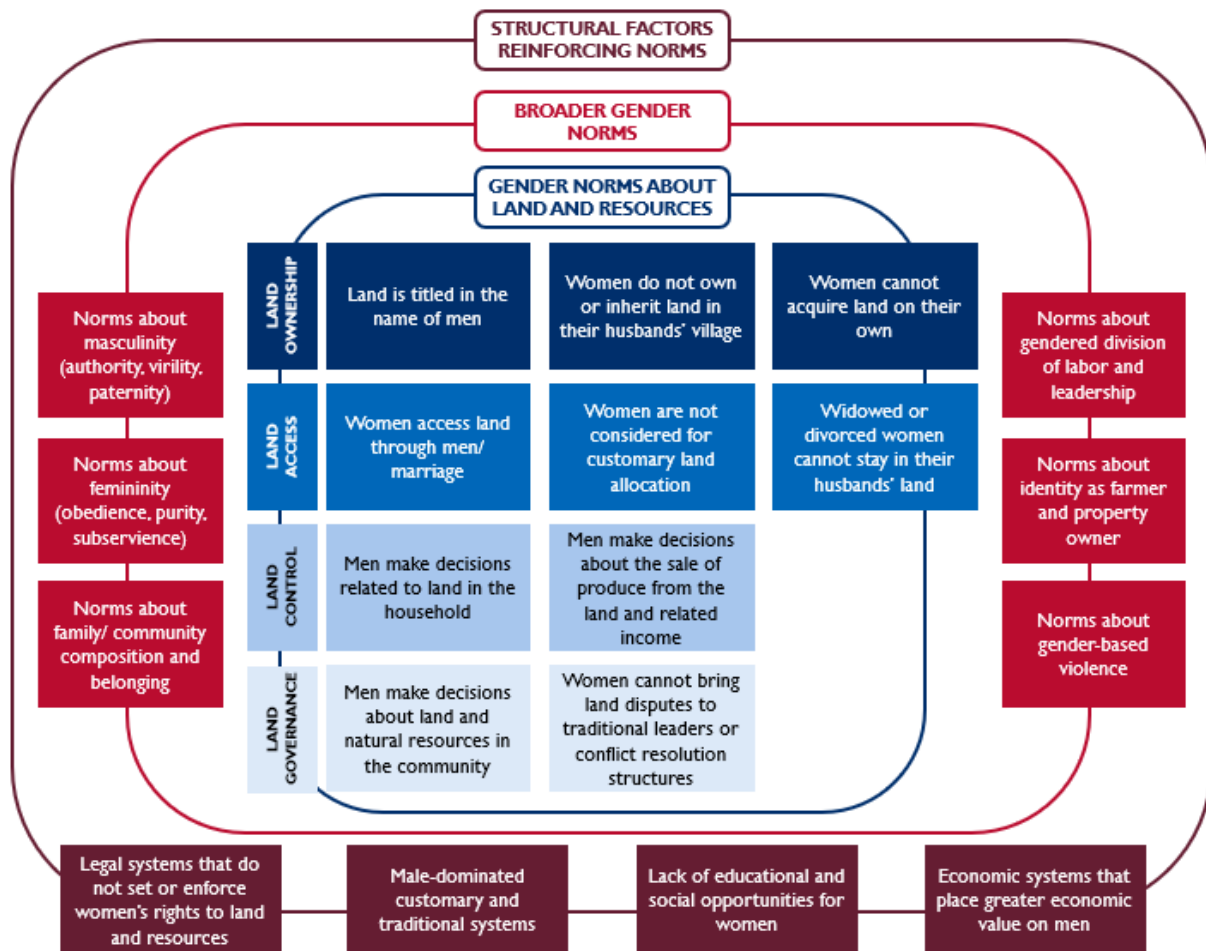
In addition to ongoing training on gender equality, women’s empowerment, and GBV, ILRG partnered with the USAID Passages Project to deliver tailored in-depth training on social and gender norms to all project staff and partners at the global and country levels. This allowed project teams and partners to have a shared terminology and conceptual background to inform norms-shifting work. The exploration of gender norms was part of the gender analyses in each country that mapped key stakeholders and provided initial information about prevailing norms and influencing factors,⁸ and was refined during implementation. ILRG’s process for identifying key norms relevant to land and resource governance and land-based value chains was not linear, and norms were not always fully identified before implementation

⁸ See country-level gender analyses: [Ghana](#), [Malawi](#), [Mozambique](#), [Mozambique/Zambia](#) (land sector), Zambia ([wildlife sector](#)).

started. This was intentional, so target populations were able to identify relevant gender norms and strategies for change themselves, using participatory approaches such as practical exercises and vignettes. This allowed greater community ownership, honing in on norms that were locally sourced instead of externally imposed.

Despite context-specific variation, ILRG identified 10 key harmful gender norms related to land and natural resources, as well as other broader gender norms and structural factors that influence land and resource governance and benefit-sharing (Figure 3, further details in Annex 2). Harmful gender norms affecting land are more complex and nuanced than “women do not own land in our community,” with variations across land/resource tenure components (ownership, access, control, and governance) and context. Even when women have access to or ownership of land, control and governance generally remain in the hands of men. This is largely the case in both matrilineal and patrilineal areas. Gender norms about land and resources are influenced by – and influence – broader gender norms and structural factors. For instance, norms about gender roles within the household (assigning men as heads of households and women as responsible for unpaid household and care work) influence perceptions of who should be named on land certificates and who has time to participate in land and resource governance or commercial land-based value chain activities. Likewise, norms that restrict women’s ownership or access to land often place women at a [higher risk of experiencing GBV](#).

FIGURE 3. GENDER NORMS RELATED TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

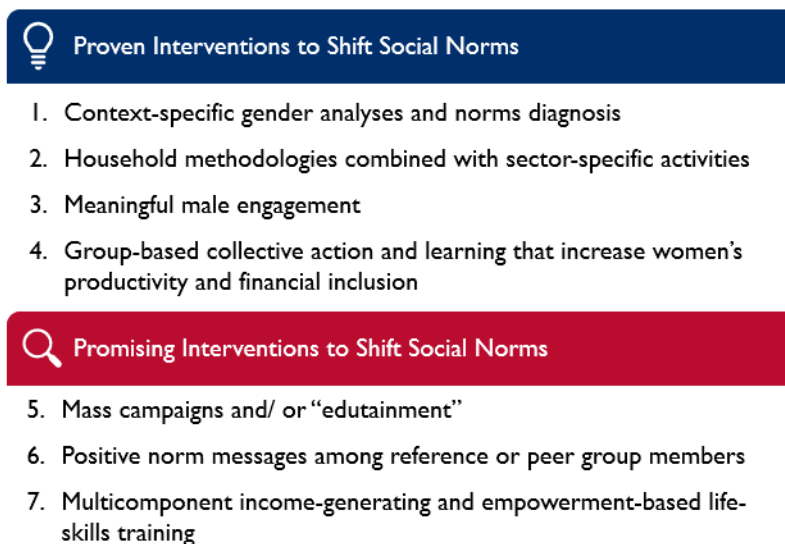


Identifying harmful gender norms was the first step to devising appropriate norms-shifting interventions. This allowed ILRG to select the more salient norms and relevant entry points. For instance, in some contexts the focus was on norms related to land ownership, whereas in others land governance was the focus. In other countries, especially under private sector partnerships to empower women in land-based value chains, the focus was on broader gender norms that ultimately affect access to and control of resources, such as norms on division of labor and decision-making within the household. The analysis of entry points also included the selection of key stakeholders or reference groups to target in each setting (e.g., community members, traditional leaders, or company staff), as well as the best strategies or approaches to engage them.

2.2 IMPLEMENTING NORMS-SHIFTING INTERVENTIONS

Following the attributes of norm-shifting interventions (see end of Section 1.0), ILRG focused on promoting community-level change, shifting harmful norms, creating positive norms, promoting locally-led processes, and engaging people at multiple levels (individual, household, community, and institutional). ILRG implemented seven main norms-shifting interventions, based on the norms, stakeholders, and entry points identified in each country. These interventions were implemented in parallel and ILRG leveraged in-country and cross-country learning to adapt and improve them during implementation. The seven activities were aligned with the [summary of interventions with proven and promising evidence](#) developed by the USAID Women’s Economic Empowerment Community of Practice (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. ILRG INTERVENTIONS TO SHIFT HARMFUL GENDER NORMS



ILRG used **household methodologies** to facilitate dialogues on harmful gender norms with men and women farmers and with traditional leaders, which served as an opportunity for locally-led and **context-specific norms diagnosis** and a space for critical reflection and **meaningful male engagement**. ILRG facilitated gender norms dialogues with community members in Ghana, India, Malawi, and Mozambique. In India, ILRG used the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) and Nurturing Connections approaches to facilitate gender norms dialogues with 289 farmers (174 women and 115 men) in 11 communities. After reviewing over 20 gender norms training methodologies, ILRG developed a tailored curriculum to facilitate gender norms dialogues in the context of land tenure and

commercial agroforestry value chains, which it adapted for use in the other four countries. This curriculum drew from tried-and-tested methodologies like GALS and Nurturing Connections, to identify and shift harmful gender norms that affect women’s land rights and increase their participation and benefit-sharing in value chains. In Malawi, ILRG facilitated gender norms dialogues with 198 people (99 men and 99 women) in 10 communities. In Ghana, the curriculum became ECOM’s revised Good Social Practices training, which the company offers to all cocoa farmers it engages with (in addition to training on Good Agricultural Practices). Following a training of trainers for its field officers, ECOM used the curriculum to train 2,646 farmers (1,213 men and 1,433 women) in 37 communities. The curriculum was translated into Portuguese and ILRG provided training of trainers to its local partner organizations, who adapted some of the exercises to use in participatory community sensitizations and training (this approach was less structured than the dialogues in Ghana, India, and Malawi). In total, over 54,398 people (27,059 men and 27,339 women) were sensitized on harmful gender norms affecting land governance, community resource governance, and women’s participation in commercial value chains in Mozambique.

ILRG curriculum for gender norms dialogues with communities

- Targets 20-30 men and women from the same household (preferably couples)
- Six two-hour modules
- Fully participatory and appropriate for people of any literacy level
- Uses participatory exercises, stories, role-playing, and drawing
- Guided discussions on power, GBV, and gendered division of labor, access to/control of resources, and decision-making
- Visioning exercises to ideate change, with concrete actions and milestones

ILRG pursued **meaningful male engagement** in different ways. Also building upon existing methodologies like GALS, ILRG developed a curriculum to facilitate dialogues on gender norms with traditional leaders. They are key actors to engage, given their important role in customary land registration and governance and as cultural gatekeepers and authorities. ILRG facilitated dialogues with 508 traditional leaders in Zambia (12 percent women) and with 26 leaders in Malawi (22 men and 4 women). The dialogues offered traditional leaders the space and tools to identify existing harmful gender norms and actions they can adopt to influence change. The dialogues were structured around three sessions, with the first one focused on norm diagnosis and the second on visioning change and action planning. The third session was held a few months later and provided an opportunity for traditional



During gender norms dialogues traditional leader in Maguya Chiefdom, Zambia, designed a joint vision and plan of action for gender equality in their areas. ILRG

leaders to reflect on the initial results of implementing the actions agreed upon during the previous sessions. In addition to traditional leaders, ILRG engaged other men in positions of power and reference groups. ILRG provided training and support on gender equality, gender norms, and GBV for the staff of private sector partners PepsiCo in India, ECOM in Ghana, and Grupo Madal in Mozambique, as well as government officers in Malawi. In Zambia, ILRG worked with traditional leaders at the highest level, through the House of Chiefs, to develop and roll out [Gender Guidelines](#) to guide how traditional leaders support women’s rights – including to land and natural resources – in their chiefdoms.

As men are frequently the power bearers at the household, community, and institutional levels, engaging them is critical so they can act as allies for change and role model positive behaviors. **Group-based**

collective action was important to mobilize women’s collective agency and promote shifts in norms about women’s access to land, financial inclusion, and participation in commercial agriculture. ECOM formed 52 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) with 1,283 women in Ghana, which provided women in cocoa farming households with access to credit. This allowed women to support household expenditures during the cocoa off-season, pay for school fees for their children, and invest in cocoa and non-cocoa businesses, improving their overall economic security. In West Bengal, where women face legal and social restrictions to own and lease land, ILRG supported 36 women to establish seven Land Leasing Groups (LLGs). LLGs provided women from minority groups, including Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and religious minorities with access to land and the opportunity to enter the value chain as PepsiCo suppliers. In Mozambique, Grupo Madal established over 90 producers’ clubs with 1,903 women and 291 men who received secure land use rights and entered commercial value chains for the first time. The VSLAs, LLGs, and producers’ clubs allowed women to spread risks, leverage their collective voice to negotiate with stakeholders, and support each other to negotiate and navigate pushback from household members and communities.

In addition to community and stakeholder sensitization across countries, ILRG supported small-scale **“edutainment” mass campaigns and events**. In Malawi, a local popular artist developed a jingle about women’s land rights and social inclusion in land documentation which was broadcast as part of a series of four programs on the local Umunthu Community Radio. The programs included pre-recorded and live segments with government officers and traditional leaders. Community members could call or text in with questions and concerns. In Ghana, ECOM used mass communication campaigns and community events to complement gender norms dialogues to reinforce positive shifts in norms. Local community radio stations broadcasted messages on GBV in 17 communities, reaching an estimated 2,550 people. ECOM organized a cooking competition for men in the communities to promote further reflections about the gender distribution of household labor and encourage positive role modeling. A total of 202 community members including local leaders participated in the competition, remarking that the event was a fun and educational way to motivate men to take on unpaid household tasks traditionally assigned to women.

ILRG used **organized diffusion** to increase the reach of **positive messaging** on women’s land rights during the systematic land registration process in Malawi. Following the household-level dialogues on gender norms, ILRG identified a group of 41 highly engaged participants (21 men and 20 women) to act as community gender champions. The project provided them with an orientation on how to facilitate productive discussions and provided a suite of communications materials to aid their efforts, including four posters, a comic booklet, a discussion guide, and a frequently asked questions document, all in the local Chichewa language. The gender community champions received a small stipend and used a simple form to report on progress. They worked in gender-balanced pairs to reach community members through existing community gatherings (like church functions and sports events) and door-to-door outreach. Over three months, the gender champions reached 4,500 people (about 60 percent women) with messages about how gender and social norms affect women and men, the impact of power dynamics on decision-making over land, and the advantages



Community gender champions in Malawi with posters and comic booklet used to start conversations about harmful gender norms and land. THAIS BESSA

of collaboration within the household. Traditional leaders also drove organized diffusion as part of the actions they identified during the gender norms dialogues. Over three months they organized awareness meetings in their communities, reaching 12,926 people (7,040 men and 5,886 women) with messages about harmful gender norms and land rights. In Zambia, ILRG provided training on women's empowerment and leadership for 108 people (56 women and 52 men) from 25 civil society and government organizations in the natural resource sector, who went on to train 8,399 men and 14,593 women on harmful gender norms affecting women's land rights and women's participation in natural resource management.

Women in positions of power and influence contributed to the dissemination of **positive norm messages** among reference or peer group members. Giving visibility to women in leadership positions can accelerate shifts in norms as they role model new behaviors and normalize new beliefs and attitudes about women performing non-traditional roles. ILRG supported this in different, context-specific ways. In India, women agronomists trained and hired from local communities delivered extension services and training to women. Despite initial resistance, they came to be perceived as trusted sources of agronomy knowledge in potato farming communities. Women elected to land and resource governance leadership positions, such as Customary Land Committees in Malawi, Community Resources Boards in Zambia, and community land associations in Mozambique, not only brought women's voices into these spaces but encouraged other women to participate in land registration and resource governance. In Zambia, ILRG promoted gender-responsive elections for Community Resources Boards in four chiefdoms by engaging traditional leaders as champions and sensitizing communities about women's leadership. Working with traditional leaders led to the appointment of women headpersons for the first time in certain communities in Zambia, increasing the acceptance of women traditional leaders. ILRG supported the government and civil society organizations that employ wildlife community scouts in Zambia to develop more gender-responsive recruitment and training practices. This increased the number of women scout recruits and led to the creation of Zambia's first-ever all-women patrol unit by the non-governmental organization (NGO) Conservation Lower Zambezi. These women became important role models in their communities within an extremely male-dominated environment.



Agronomy training for women farmers in West Bengal, India.
ILRG

A final intervention implemented was **income-generating and empowerment-based life-skills training**, targeting women in land and governance leadership positions and land-based commercial value chains. Drawing from existing training methodologies, ILRG developed a curriculum on women's empowerment focusing on self-esteem and confidence, as well as socio-emotional skills such as communication, assertiveness, active listening, negotiation, risk-taking, and decision-making. For each country and context, the empowerment curriculum was complemented by

content to increase women's technical knowledge and human capital. In Malawi, 70 women elected to Customary Land Committees received training on empowerment and leadership, providing them with the skills to meaningfully exercise their roles. In Zambia, ILRG supported 150 women running for leadership positions in Community Resources Boards with training on leadership and campaigning skills and invited male family members to an initial orientation for elected women to increase intra-family support for women to exercise their new roles and decrease their vulnerability to intimate partner violence. In India, 21 women in LLGs and working as community agronomists (and seven male

spouses/partners) took part in empowered entrepreneurship training provided by Johns Hopkins University. ECOM trained 1,402 women in 37 cocoa farming communities on entrepreneurship and financial literacy, providing them with the skills to make the most of their participation in VSLAs and to invest in their cocoa and non-cocoa businesses.

FIGURE 5. PEOPLE REACHED BY ILRG NORMS-SHIFTING INTERVENTIONS



2.3 MONITORING SHIFTS IN BEHAVIORS AND NORMS

There is consensus in the existing literature that measuring change in social and gender norms is uniquely challenging.⁹ Being the “rules of the game” that all individuals absorb through socialization, gender norms are deeply ingrained and intangible. They exist at the collective or societal level, where measuring change is much more complex. Moreover, shifting harmful gender norms is a long-term process, making it difficult for short-term interventions to assess impact and attribute changes to the activities implemented. However, the literature also suggests that short-term interventions can test approaches and assess changes in beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors, which can indicate initial shifts in gender norms (or potential for shifts over time).

ILRG assessed initial shifts in gender norms through proxy measures at the individual level, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data included surveys with community members, as well as data on practices reported (for instance, women named in land certificates or percentage of women in resource governance structures). Data on practices is important because they reflect shifts in actual behaviors. A combination of changes in attitudes and more gender-equitable practices can indicate a contested or changing norm. Qualitative data was obtained through individual and couple interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and staff observations. The interviews and FGDs were semi-structured and oftentimes included participatory exercises and vignettes to identify shifts in attitudes and behaviors related to gender equality in land/resource governance and land-based value chains.

It is important to note that ILRG data collection efforts aimed to assess program results and gather information for adaptive management, rather than rigorously determine causality for a formal impact evaluation. For instance, the same data collection tools were not used across all countries but rather varied according to the context and timeframe available (Table 2). A quantitative baseline and endline

⁹ See Samman, E., 2019; Cislighi, B. and Heise, L., 2016; Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change, 2019; Mackie G., Moneti et al., 2015; among others.

were not carried out in all countries and in some cases baseline and endline were only a year apart, making it hard to capture meaningful differences.

TABLE 2. QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTED

	Ghana	India	Malawi	Mozambique	Zambia
Quantitative Data	Baseline and endline survey with men and women farmers Pre- and post-training surveys for ECOM staff	Baseline and endline survey with men and women farmers (Pro-WEAI ¹⁰) Survey with women farmers in Years 3 and 4 Baseline and endline survey with PepsiCo staff	Baseline and endline survey with men and women in communities Data on land registration and dispute resolution	Data on land registration Data on participation in community land and resource governance structures Data on participation in commercial value chains	Data on land registration Data on community resource governance structures Data on recruitment and training for community scouts
Qualitative Data	Interviews and FGDs with men and women farmers and ECOM staff Observations by ILRG, ECOM, and training facilitators	Interviews and FGDs with men and women farmers and PepsiCo staff Observations by ILRG and PepsiCo	Interviews and FGDs with men and women in communities and traditional leaders Observations by ILRG, enumerators, and training facilitators	Interviews and FGDs with men and women in communities and company staff Observations by ILRG and partner organizations	Interviews and FGDs with men and women community members and traditional leaders Observations by ILRG and partner organizations

Another limitation inherent to surveys, FGDs, and interviews was social desirability bias and the Hawthorne effect¹¹. There were limitations in the full body of data collected, including less information on men’s perspective. Although men participated in interviews and FGDs, surveys were not conducted in Mozambique and Zambia, and only women were surveyed in India. In addition, the data collection methods and consequently the analysis focused more on perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to the norms identified, and less on expectations of sanctions and rewards from reference groups. Finally, it is important to note that the changes in attitudes and behaviors were assessed and observed only among those participating in ILRG activities. While these initial changes are not yet present in the broader community, they may represent the potential for larger shifts in the medium to long term, but more follow-up data collection is needed, which is beyond the scope of the project.

¹⁰ The [project-level Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index \(Pro-WEAI\)](#) measures women’s empowerment in agricultural projects. The Pro-WEAI was developed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and is comprised of ten indicators that measure three types of agency: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. ILRG adapted the Pro-WEAI assessment implemented in India to include questions on land tenure from the [Perceptions on Property Rights Index \(Prindex\)](#).

¹¹ The Hawthorne effect refers to when participants alter their responses or behavior because they are aware of being observed, instead of because of the intervention.

3.0 IMPACT: INITIAL CHANGES IN GENDER NORMS RELATED TO LAND TENURE, NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE, AND LAND-BASED SUPPLY CHAINS

ILRG implemented a comprehensive gender-transformative approach¹² to systematic land registration. As such, gender norms change interventions were implemented in parallel with other activities, including gender equality and social inclusion capacity strengthening for all stakeholders, activities to increase women’s access to resources and land-based opportunities, skills training for women to meaningfully participate in land and resource governance positions, and GBV mitigation and prevention efforts. This comprehensive approach led to tangible results in women’s participation and benefit-sharing in the three areas of work previously mentioned (Figure 5). The following sections detail emerging shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors linked to key harmful gender norms identified across all five countries, including norms directly related to land and natural resources, and broader gender norms that influence them.

FIGURE 5. OVERALL ILRG RESULTS PER GENDER EQUALITY AREA OF WORK



3.1 GENDER NORMS ABOUT LAND OWNERSHIP AND ACCESS

A 55-year-old widower from Zambia said she never had land of her own: she went from cultivating her father’s land, to her husband’s land, and then back to land left by her father when her husband died. She thought it was normal for a woman to depend on land owned by men. Across the five countries where ILRG worked, gender norms dictate that women access land through men, commonly through marriage, and are not capable or allowed to own land on their own. In areas that are patrilineal and/or follow a patrilocal marriage set-up (i.e., women move to their husband’s village after marriage), gender norms perpetuate the view that women are considered “outsiders” and therefore unable to own land in their marital village. As such, women in patrilineal areas are not considered for customary land allocation, either in their natal or marriage village.

ILRG implemented a comprehensive gender-transformative approach to systematic land registration focused on integrating gender equality into all steps of the land documentation process and shifting

¹² Gender transformative approaches intentionally seek to challenge gender inequality by transforming underlying structural barriers, including harmful gender norms and asymmetrical power dynamics. Gender transformative approaches go beyond individual level actions, creating an enabling environment for sustainable gender transformation. Gender-transformative approaches are part of a continuum of gender integration in programmatic efforts and policies that goes from gender exploitative to gender-unaware, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, and gender-transformative.

harmful gender norms around women's land access and ownership. Coupled with the use of a participatory approach to land documentation processes through the [USAID Mapping Approaches for Securing Tenure \(MAST\)](#), this led to positive results. In terms of land ownership, in Malawi, women were named on 68 percent of the 8,392 household parcels registered, a sharp increase compared to 38 percent in an earlier World Bank pilot in the same area. The share of women named in land documents was also high in other countries where ILRG supported the registration of rural land. In Mozambique, 240,000 people (52 percent women) in 151 communities had their community land rights delimited, and 11,000 people (61 percent women) had 13,210 individual land parcels registered. ILRG registered household customary land rights for 89,000 people in Zambia, with women representing 41 percent of landowners and 50 percent of persons of interest¹³.

“We did not favor girls’ access to land, as it was not in our tradition. At the workshop, we learned a lot. We used to assume that a woman should be counted where she is married. But when her husband dies and if she has to come back here, she will have no land. Married women should also have land with their parents. Now the girl child gets her share, whether or not she will marry in the future.”

Village headman from the Nzamane Chiefdom, Zambia

Qualitative data showed the importance of the participatory process and a link between norms-shifting interventions and changes in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors related to women owning land. The gender norms dialogues and sensitization led by traditional leaders and community champions focused on how men and women work together on the family land. In Malawi and Zambia, traditional leaders involved in gender norms dialogues led by example, with many registering their land jointly with their wives or giving part of their land for their wives to register alone. Others registered their land with their sisters, regardless of whether they were married and living elsewhere. Given their authority in the communities, they served as a role model for other men to challenge their own beliefs and attitudes and include women on land certificates. Traditional leaders also started to allocate land to older widows and solved pending land disputes affecting women, especially young and orphaned women

who had lost access to their land to male relatives. Chieftainess Muwezwa in Zambia issued a directive to change traditional practices to allow women to pay the *impaizhyo* (traditional token of appreciation/tribute for land allocation) and to ban land grabbing from divorced or widowed women. Chief Mphuka ordered a land audit to increase opportunities for women to be allocated land.

Similarly, men in Malawi and Ghana who participated in the household dialogues on harmful gender norms clearly linked the sessions to shifts in their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Although ILRG's work in Ghana was not focused on land registration and an assessment of women's perception of land tenure security showed little or no change from baseline to endline, qualitative data revealed that some men in the target communities started to allocate portions of land for their wives to farm cocoa independently, with others expressing the intention to transfer ownership of one of their land parcels to their wives in the future (some had already started the process). Men connected this decision to the gender norms dialogues, claiming that it made them realize that their wives are equal contributors to the family cocoa farming business and capable of managing the business on their own. However, men were open about their initial resistance and

“I thought she wanted to override me. I thought that once women have land, they will not respect us [men]. The [gender norms dialogue] sessions changed my mind.”

Man from Asin Fosu, Ghana

¹³ The inclusion of “persons of interest” in land certificates was an intentional gender-responsive and inclusive approach to help attach more women and girls to parcels even in cases where men were not yet willing to name them as landowners. It is a way of documenting individuals who may have a long-term interest in the land, particularly for inheritance purposes.

concerns, particularly around how women's land ownership could affect power dynamics within the household. The sessions were also impactful for women, who said after the dialogue sessions they became more aware of how their land tenure situation was insecure and felt more comfortable discussing these issues with their husbands. This shows that bringing men and women together to discuss harmful gender norms and land can lead to new behaviors that strengthen women's land rights.

"My wife had access to my land and planted crops of her own choice. But I never thought about what could happen to her if I died, and when I reflected on, I knew I needed to act while I was still alive. I gave her a portion of the land to be her own. After I did, I felt empowered to tell people in my village to do the same."

Induna Jacob Phiri, Mnukwa Chiefdom, Zambia

Harmful gender norms hinder not only women's ability to own and be allocated land but also their ability to inherit land and continue to access land in case of life altering events. Traditional leaders and community members noted that a key gender norm that restricts women's land rights in their communities is the tradition of women being forced from their husband's land in the case of divorce or the death of a spouse. This led to the dissemination of messages about how inclusion in land documents can protect women from land grabbing in such events. ILRG observed some initial shifts in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors related to women inheriting land and/or remaining on her husband's land. In Malawi, the share of people who agreed that women and men should be able to inherit land in the same

way increased from 87 to 96 percent (88 to 94 percent for men and 85 to 97 percent for women) from baseline to endline. At the same time, the proportion of those who agree that in case of divorce or spouse death, a woman should return to her natal village decreased from 57 to 47 percent (45 to 36 percent for men and 66 to 53 percent for women). The shift in attitudes and beliefs was accompanied by action. In Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia, men claimed that protecting their wives from future land grabbing was the main reason they included them on land documents. Traditional leaders also took charge of promoting new behaviors. In four chiefdoms in Zambia, traditional leaders who participated in gender norms dialogues drafted by-laws supporting women's rights to inherit land in the event of the death of a spouse or divorce, banning property grabbing and similar practices.

As women access land mostly through men, this is often accompanied by vulnerability to multiple forms of violence and land grabbing. Many women live in constant fear and emotional distress about their continued ability to access and use land, or the prospect of being hurt or even killed due to disputes over control of the land. In some cases, land documentation and measures to guarantee women's rights to own and inherit land seemed to dissuade some of these concerns. According to a woman in Zambia, "When my husband passed away 11 years ago, his relatives said I could stay on the land with our children. But they never said for how long, and that uncertainty was always on my mind. How long would they let me stay? Now, I have land documents and I can stay forever." A woman farmer with nine children from the Mkanda Chiefdom in Zambia recalled how before being included on the land certificate with her husband, she was terrified to speak up or disagree with his relatives. She feels more confident now, knowing they will not be able to chase her away if her husband dies.

"Everyone wants land, so it became a custom to chase widows away and take their land. I have put an end to this practice. Women are entitled to land, to farm, to rights."

Chieftainess Mkanda, Zambia

Qualitative data showed that women felt particularly empowered by land ownership, linking it to a stronger sense of security, self-confidence, and self-efficacy stemming from both participating in the land registration process and being included on land documents. Women highlighted that increased tenure security encouraged them to invest in the land and engage in land-based productive activities. They also noted that their confidence to effectively manage intra-family and intra-community land-based conflicts and to protect their land from trespassing has increased. For instance, a 42-year-old woman in Chifunda Chiefdom in Zambia talked about how important land registration was to formalize her ownership. Her late father had divided his land between his wife and children, but relatives kept encroaching onto the land where she lived with her mother, asking her several times to take her mother back to her natal village. Now that the land is documented, her relatives know they cannot take her land away and the conflict has ceased. Traditional leaders in Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia raised that land-related conflicts decreased with land registration, particularly with gender-inclusive registration.

“If women have land, they can grow”

Living in a matrilineal Nyamphande Chiefdom, Zambia, headman Kawezhya inherited the position of village headperson and land through his maternal line but held the belief that the man is the head of the family. With the power to allocate land in the village, he used to prioritize men over women “Even when a woman is the one that came to ask for land, I did not see it right to give it to her because a man to such a woman cannot be respected, so I would ask her to come with the husband or the oldest son.”

After the first gender norms dialogue for traditional leaders, headman Kawezhya changed his beliefs and started allocating land to women. Prior to land documentation in the village, the headman called for a community meeting to discuss the benefits of including women. Leading by example, he announced his decision to give land to his three wives and female children and willingness to give land to all widows in the village. He also encouraged all men to include their wives and children in the land certificates. “When we met as indunas with the Chief to discuss these issues, we all agreed that we had a lot of problems in our villages because men who had a lot of power in the homes were contribution a lot to poverty. Once they harvest and sell crops, they spend the money on drinking beer, leaving the women to suffer with their children. As a result, many of the children are dropping out of school. We agreed to support women, and this is what I thought I should do. If women have land, they can grow and have their own money.”

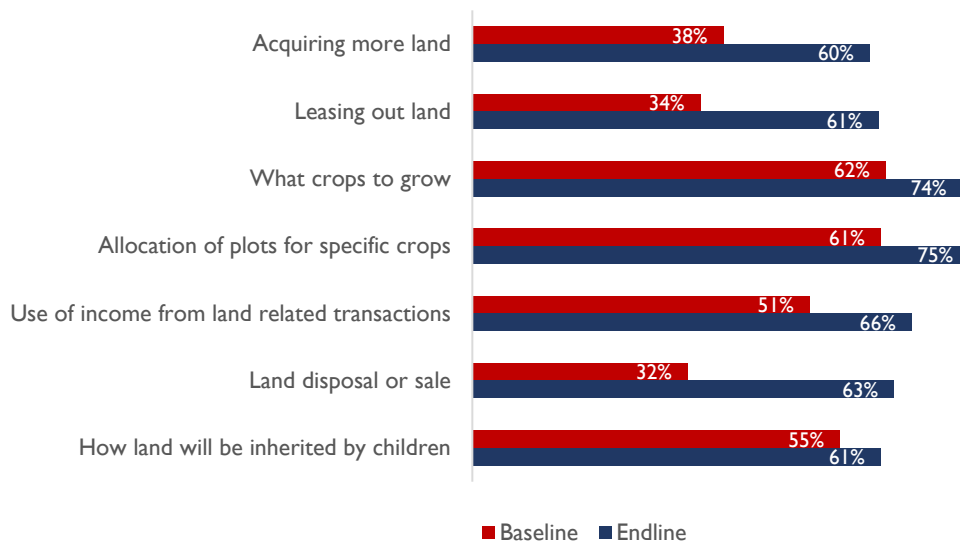
3.2 GENDER NORMS ABOUT CONTROL OF LAND IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Even when women can own, access, and inherit land, gender norms often prevent them from controlling land and income derived from land. A harmful norm identified in all five countries was that men make decisions related to land in the household (buy, sell, rent, register, which names to include on the certificate, who inherits, and how land is used). Discussions around this norm revealed that in some cases women can provide input into the decisions, but men almost always have the final say. Women always need to consult with their spouses about decisions related to land and land use, but the same does not apply to men, who frequently make decisions independently. The key message around this norm was the benefits of joint decision-making for the whole household, and ILRG observed some shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. In Malawi, endline conversations with community members revealed greater intra-household collaboration on farming and financial decision-making. Results around decision-making over land were also encouraging (Figure 6).

“Having our land certified on both our names has strengthened our relationship. At first my wife considered it to be my field alone and showed no interest in investing in it. Now we can discuss and decide on matters of our land together.”

Man from Mkanda Chiefdom, Zambia

FIGURE 6. SHARE OF WOMEN WHO MAKE SOLE OR JOINT DECISIONS REGARDING LAND IN TA MWANSAMBO, MALAWI



In Ghana, India, and Malawi, men and women participating in gender norms dialogues expressed an understanding of the benefits of consultation and joint decision-making and started practicing it in their households. Increased knowledge by women because of agronomy training in India and financial literacy training in Ghana also contributed to this change, raising their credibility within the household. In Zambia, men remarked that women having their own documented land or co-titled plots with their husbands has reduced intra-household conflict as they each have their own source of income. However, higher levels of illiteracy and lower numeracy skills for women are persistent challenges to economic opportunity, in addition to persistent broader gender norms around women being less apt financial decision-makers.

“Ability to influence decisions about land and farming is not common among women but it is gradually receiving community approval.”
Woman from Dwendama, Ghana

3.3 GENDER NORMS ABOUT COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Influenced by broader gender norms about masculinity linked to authority and femininity linked to subservience, women in the five countries often have limited ability to participate in public decision-making. According to gender norms prevailing in most of the areas where ILRG worked, men make decisions about land and natural resources in the community and are the ones in leadership positions and/or elected to governance structures. The norms-shifting interventions focused on supporting women in leadership positions by providing them with the necessary skills to meaningfully participate and strengthening the enabling environment through men’s engagement, role modeling, and dissemination of positive messages. Women in leadership positions, such as traditional leaders and women elected to governance positions in Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia, and women agronomists/ extension agents in Ghana and India played a key role in normalizing women as decision-makers and sources of knowledge.

“A woman can be a leader. Leadership is not only the purview of men.”
Elizabeth Lukelo, first woman headperson in Mukawalawa village, Zambia

According to some traditions in Zambia, only men can be village headpersons. Women in the headship line could only be appointed as a “caretaker” without the authority to decide on village matters including land. Rites that give recognition and authority to an appointed headperson were only performed for men. As a result of the gender norms dialogues, some traditional leaders started to speak with men from royal families about the importance of having women as headpersons and tried to convince them to pass the title to a woman. There was resistance to this idea, with people questioning why they should allow a woman to be headperson. However, women have now been placed as headpersons in some areas with the same rights as male headpersons. In some chiefdoms, the rules about succession and the performance of rites were changed. Elizabeth Lukelo became village headwoman in Mukawalawa in May 2019. At first, she refused to become a headperson because she believed that the role belonged to men and that she would not know what to do. After attending gender sensitization and the gender norms dialogues, her confidence increased. Across most villages where women were appointed as headpersons, there is continued resistance and challenges, with some people respecting their authority and others firm in their belief that women cannot lead. This shows how shifting gender norms is a long-term process requiring continued efforts until a critical mass or tipping point is reached.

Traditional leaders in the Muwezwa Chiefdom, Zambia, issued a directive for equal representation of women and men on all committees, which enabled women to join committees on fisheries and wildlife and enter into leadership positions. In Mozambique, ILRG supported the establishment of 173 land associations and producer clubs, with women making up over 45 percent of founding association members. Although the figures did not represent full equality, it was a remarkable achievement given the rigid gender norms about leadership and public speaking. This was the result of engaging influential men as gender advocates and extensive gender equality sensitization in the communities before the establishment of associations that emphasized the value of women’s voices for stronger and inclusive decision-making. Women said they used to stay in a corner, quiet. Women said they felt excluded, and their husbands spoke for them in public settings. Men attended community meetings and told women to stay home and that they would relay the information to them later. Now, some community land association members note that they feel like leaders. Before, if someone came into the community to exploit resources such as timber, they did not say anything, but now they feel more confident to report it.

“Men want to lead over you and find it difficult to respect women in top positions. If not careful, you spend time dealing with unnecessary conflicts rather than serving the people. The orientation helped a lot. The affirmative action measures are forcing us to talk about gender more, and everyone is beginning to appreciate women’s leadership and becoming positive about it.”

Agnes Chavula, Chikwa CRB Chairperson, Zambia

ILRG also supported gender-responsive elections to Village Actions Groups (VAGs) and CRBs in four chiefdoms in Zambia. When women attempt to occupy positions of prominence and leadership, there is often pushback and women and men show similar levels of resistance to change. During the campaigns, men undermined women candidates with comments that reflected ingrained gender stereotypes and gender barriers women face, such as, “You are just wasting your time, you (women) cannot manage CRB work,” “How can you even get votes if you don’t even have finances and time to campaign, this is a game for men,” and “You can’t read, write, or speak English, how will you represent the people?” On the other hand, women were often overly critical of women candidates, in some cases questioning their character and mocking their efforts, which they did not usually do with men candidates. ILRG provided training on empowerment and leadership skills for women candidates and women elected members,

engaged traditional leaders as gender champions for inclusive elections, carried out comprehensive community sensitization, and organized orientations on gender equality with men and women elected members and their partners to mitigate GBV risks. The efforts to conduct inclusive elections resulted in an increase in women’s participation in VAGs from 21 percent in 2017 to 50 percent in 2020, and in CRBs from five percent in 2017 to 23 percent in 2020. It is important to note though that results were more modest in chiefdoms where prevailing gender norms were stronger, as evidenced in the initial [gender analysis](#). The highest increase happened in chiefdoms where women’s leadership was already more accepted, underscoring the importance of long-term interventions to shift deeply ingrained norms.

Qualitative data showed that participants felt that their very participation in community activities such as the gender norms dialogues and sensitization meetings increased their confidence and self-efficacy. This was even more pronounced for those women accessing leadership positions for the first time. In Malawi, community gender champions shared that the work helped them gain confidence and they felt proud to serve their communities and be respected/recognized as a resource person. Many reported that the gender norms dialogues and their role as champions changed their mindsets and behaviors. For instance, some reflected on their new belief that women are intelligent and capable, reporting that they no longer look down on women and people who married into the community as outsiders. They also reported feeling fearless about modeling different gender behaviors in their own interpersonal and household relationships. Women Community Agronomists in India reported increased self-awareness and confidence, noting they have enjoyed becoming mentors, trainers, and change-makers in their communities. In Mecuburi, Mozambique, Julieta Massuri said she felt excluded in the community due to her disability, but after being elected vice-president of the community land association, she felt valued and heard.



Julieta Mario Massuri, vice-president of the community association in Mecuburi, Mozambique.
ARLINDO MACUVA/TERRA FIRMA

In addition to accessing leadership positions, gender norms also impact women’s ability to bring grievances to land and resource decision-making bodies. Gender norms that limit women’s decision-making power in the household and at the community level may also jeopardize their ability to bring land disputes to traditional leaders or conflict resolution structures, unless accompanied by or through a man. ILRG saw more mixed experience addressing these issues. Malawi, gender norms that prevent women from speaking to authorities, coupled with male-dominated leadership, long distances, associated fees, and lack of knowledge hinder women’s access to land-related conflict resolution mechanisms. Only

“Before no woman sat on the traditional court. The Chief called for the inclusion of women and now they can sit in court session. Communities brought land disputes to court and traditionally the girl child had no rights. Now we need to protect their rights.”

*Village Headman Kapachika,
Nzamane Chiefdom, Zambia*

33 percent of women said they knew of dispute resolution mechanisms in their area both at baseline and endline. There was a low number of disputes recorded, and no separate recording of gender-based disputes, despite the provision of gender training to all stakeholders involved in dispute resolution. There were a small number of disputes related to polygamous families, underscoring the vulnerability of women’s land rights in these types of unions. In Zambia, the engagement of traditional leaders, especially through gender norms dialogues, led to some initial changes regarding women’s access to dispute resolution bodies. In

Mnukwa Chieftdom the Chief and indunas added a woman representative to traditional court proceedings to encourage more women to access the courts. The indunas also drafted a Code of Conduct that emphasized the importance of considering the rights of women when dealing with dispute cases brought before them. In Nzamane, Maguya, and Mnukwa Chieftdoms, indunas in the traditional court were sensitized on women's land rights and how to handle gender-based disputes in an objective way. These shifts and community sensitization led to an upsurge in the number of women bringing their cases to the attention of the indunas and the chiefs.

3.4 BROADER GENDER NORMS INFLUENCING LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS

Gender norms related to land ownership and control are influenced by and influence broader gender norms related to masculinities, femininities, family composition and authority, gendered division of labor, and GBV. As such, ILRG interventions attempted to discuss some of these broader underlying gender norms that extend beyond land and resource rights to plant seeds for long-term change.

3.4.1 MEN AS HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

In all five countries, a key broader gender norm identified was the perception that men are considered the heads and providers of the household. Another common norm was men are seen as decision-makers and women are expected to follow their decisions. This directly affects women's ability to own, access, and control land. For instance, women in Mozambique stated that even when they were able to purchase land, it was put in their husband's name, as he was considered the head of the household. The gender norms dialogues and other norms-shifting interventions focused on discussions about roles and responsibilities in the household and how the current distribution of labor and decision-making impact household members, and in particular their access to land and other productive resources.



Couple during gender norms dialogues in Asorefie, Ghana, discusses their joint vision for their household.
THAIS BESSA

During initial community sensitizations in Mozambique, women would sit on the floor and men on chairs, separated from each other. A woman explained the practice, "It is a matter of respect. We respect our men as the head of the household, which is why we sit on the floor." However, during FGDs at the endline, men and women frequently sat on chairs, freely mixing, showing initial shifts in gender norms around men's and women's roles and perceived authority. Women also said that men used to sell household produced agricultural goods at the market and use the money as they wanted, including for consuming alcohol. But there are a growing number of men who recognize the need to speak with their wives and jointly plan how to use income, prioritizing buying food and school uniforms for the children. In Malawi, there were changes in beliefs and attitudes related to these broader gender norms, measured by baseline and endline surveys. The share of women agreeing that they do what their spouse tells them, even if it goes against their interests, decreased from 50 percent to 21 percent. The proportion of women who trust their spouses to make all decisions decreased from 54 to 28 percent.

Improved perceptions of gender equality within households improved women's self-efficacy, evidenced by greater mobility. Women farmers in India said the different training opportunities allowed them to socialize and consequently feel more confident to move in public spaces. They reported that they used

to seek permission from their husbands and other men in the family (e.g., father-in-law) before going anywhere, but now they mostly inform them instead of seeking permission. This greater mobility was also experienced in Ghana, where the share of women who said they could attend training and farmers' meetings without seeking permission from anyone increased from 70 percent at baseline to 90 percent at the endline.

3.4.2 JOINT DECISION MAKING

In India, both men and women expressed an increasing understanding of women's role in the economic stability of the household. Most men and women consulted said they did not think that providing for the family was the sole responsibility of men. This shift helped build trust among men that gender equality can benefit the whole household, increasing their engagement in shifting harmful gender norms.

Recognition of farming as a family enterprise was key for men to accept that women have an equal right to on-farm earnings and to make decisions about income use. At the end of the project, 94 percent of women felt recognized as equal contributors to household income and the same percentage reported improved opportunities to determine how income is spent, whereas 88 percent reported making joint decisions with their spouses about land. Across project years, women who felt able to freely use resources like land, tools, and equipment increased from 57 to 87 percent.

"I used to just put some money in my pocket. Now we both bring our money together and discuss how to use it."

Man from Unidade Moçambique, Ribaue district, Mozambique

This shift in household decision-making, especially on income use, was also observed in Mozambique and Ghana. However, it seems that women had greater influence over decisions, but men were still the final decision-makers, illustrating the complexity of norm change and the need for longer-term engagement. For instance, a woman in Ribaue district, Mozambique, said, "If we really disagree, and he wants to buy a chair and I want to buy shoes for our children, we will buy the chair. He is the head of the household." In Ghana, qualitative data revealed emerging shifts in decision-making power in households as a direct consequence of attending gender norms dialogues. The dialogues used a visioning exercise, adapted from the GALS approach, that allowed men and women to devise individual and joint goals and outline the steps needed to achieve them. Men and women had great recall of this tool and talked about how they are now working together on these goals, which require collaboration and joint management of household income. Indeed, most men and women surveyed at the endline reported that they make joint decisions with their spouses about household income and expenditures (93 percent of men, 79 percent of women), crop production (95 percent of men, 80 percent of women), and land (96 percent of men, 81 percent of women). Couples started to be more transparent with each other regarding income earned, and some started to pool resources together, which is uncommon in the target communities. Many farmers expressed how this shift toward joint decision-making has been beneficial, bringing more peace and harmony to the family and allowing them to better navigate economic hardship during the cocoa off-season. It is important to note that layering the gender norms dialogues with women's access to finance through VSLAs and empowerment and financial literacy training was critical to increase women's confidence and perceived value in the household. Men reported increased trust in women's judgment, and the share of women who feel recognized as equal contributors to household income increased from 69 to 88 percent.

“We now share the good part of the chicken”

Sitting on wooden benches next to each other, women and men in Unidade Mocambique, a small community in rural Nampula, Mozambique, are discussing the meaning of gender equality. “Women used to do everything in our community – fetch water and firewood, cook, clean, look after the children, and work on the machamba [farm],” says Jose Manuel. “I used to just sit there with an empty stomach and wait for her to come back from the field to start cooking. No more! Now I just go ahead and make the fire and put the pot on. Now we eat earlier, and we both have time to rest.” He is not alone. Others raise their hand and agree. When asked who fetched water that same day, many men raise their hands. In discussion we learn that quite a few thoughts of this as “helping” their wives who were either sick or absent and a heated discussion emerges. “This is not what gender equality is about!” laments Teresinha. “You should do this, no matter what.” Many agree. Alberto stands up and explains that in his family, work is indeed shared. The conversation continues and more examples of changes in household division of labor are given by both women and men.

These changes in division of labor of unpaid care work were the direct result of the systematic roll-out of participatory gender sessions with land associations and communities. Observed changes go beyond the division of household labor, extending to a visible increase in the status of women in public spaces and the home. “Now we all sit on chairs, next to each other – women and men are mixing freely. This would have never happened before. But now we know that we all have the same value,” says Joana. Charlotte Antonia agrees and happily exclaims “Yes, this is so true! You see, in our culture women used to never eat the good part of the chicken – it was reserved for men. Now we share it! And I am telling you, it is delicious!” The group laughs and all clap in agreement.

3.4.3 DIVISION OF LABOR

These initial shifts in attitudes and beliefs about gender roles led to changes in the division of labor in the household. Unpaid household and care work is seen as women’s responsibility across all countries. The gender norms dialogues in Ghana, India, and Malawi focused on how this impacts women’s wellbeing, men’s engagement with their children, household harmony, and women’s ability to engage in income-generating activities and land governance.

Most men and women participating in the gender norms dialogues in India reported a changed belief that household tasks are the sole responsibility of women. Women reported that their husbands have started to share household responsibilities, allowing them to have more time to rest and participate in potato farming, which was acknowledged by men as a benefit to the whole family. As women took on additional training and farm work, some men and other household members adjusted their schedules and assumed a greater share of unpaid household and caring responsibilities. In more restrictive communities (e.g., Muslim majority communities where gender norms around household division of labor were more ingrained), women reported more incremental changes in household roles; for example, women would prepare food for the family before they left for the fields, but men would serve themselves, which was a new behavior. However, changes in household division of labor are not yet observed in all target families or across the communities more broadly. Pushback was also observed, with some men expressing resentment that women were committing increased time to farming work and growing more independent.

In Mozambique, women said their husbands used to abuse and humiliate them, and men said they realized the intensive nature of household and care work that provided women with much less time for rest. Some men started to share household tasks such as starting the fire for cooking and washing clothes. In Ghana, farmers shared the belief that men have more opportunities to be successful in their cocoa farming business than women, and linked this to competing demands on women's time, as unpaid household tasks are considered women's responsibility. After the gender norms dialogues there was an emerging change in beliefs and behaviors related to the division of labor in the household. The endline survey with men and women farmers showed that agreement that household tasks are mainly a woman's job decreased from 38 to 28 percent among men and from 41 to 33 percent among women. The rate of people saying they equally share household work and childcare with their spouse increased from 65 to 82 percent for men and from 53 to 70 percent for women. Many men reported that they started to perform various household chores, proudly talking about how they now cook and take care of the children, noting this has reduced the burden on their wives. This freed up women's time to attend extension and other training. Women started to acknowledge their role in supporting the family financially to reduce the burden on men. Several families reported that a more equal distribution of both household and cocoa farming tasks was a positive change, improving harmony in the household and improving productivity. Some cocoa farming families shared that better division of labor led to increased yields.

"It is not that I didn't know how to cook, but I had this mindset that cooking was women's job. I can cook, but I thought she should do it. With the [cooking] competition I asked myself, 'If I can cook, why am I not doing it?' It was a mindset shift. When I am in the kitchen the children help and ask questions, I have more interactions with them."

Emmanuel Oboery, Asamankese, Ghana

In all countries, men who started to take on household and care tasks said they experienced negative remarks and mockery from relatives and other men in the communities. They were laughed at and accused of being charmed or bewitched. When asked about how they responded to this pushback, men explained that they chose to ignore the remarks or explain how their wives were happier and the household was more peaceful. In some cases, other men in the communities started to admire, accept, and in some cases follow their example. It is noteworthy though that these changes in division of labor were limited to some households among those participating in gender norms dialogues. Even among couples who adopted new behaviors, these shifts may not represent deeper changes in gender norms around men's and women's work. Indeed, men still referred to "helping their wives" or doing "women's work" when taking on additional household responsibilities. This shows how gender norms related to women's and men's roles and responsibilities are deep-seated and likely to take a long time to shift.

3.4.4 RECOGNITION OF WOMEN AS FARMERS

Although women contribute to most farming tasks, men, women, and stakeholders in agricultural value chains identified a prevailing gender norm that associates subsistence crops with women and commercial or cash crops with men. Women are often not acknowledged as farmers, but as "farmer's wives" or "farmers' helpers," which is closely linked to the perception – and reality – of men being the main landowners in most rural communities. PepsiCo employees admitted their initial hesitation in engaging with women farmers, seeing men as lead farmers, but gradually exhibited greater confidence in women's abilities. At the end of the project, following repeated sensitization, engagement of key men as champions, and agronomy training for women, there was greater recognition of women's abilities to perform on par with men farmers. This led to new behaviors, including increased engagement of

“I thought cocoa farming was for only men but now I have different thoughts. I thought it was only the responsibility for men to provide for the house, but I think differently now.”

Man farmer in Assin Fosu

company agronomists with women during farm visits. Qualitative data showed a marked shift in women considering themselves as farmers, and many felt recognized as such by others in their household. However, both men and women felt that this change was limited to the families involved in ILRG activities, and significant portions of the communities still do not believe that women can be considered farmers. Recognition as farmers has important benefits for women, increasing the likelihood of being named in official supplier lists and being able to access government schemes for farmers and join farmers’ cooperatives.

Similarly, women in Ghana said they did not view themselves as cocoa farmers and were not recognized as such in their households and communities. In less than one year between baseline and endline, there have been changes in the perception that women can actively engage in all stages of the cocoa value chain and lead cocoa farms, with larger shifts among men and smaller shifts among women (Figure 7). However, views that certain activities like pruning, spraying, and harvesting are not appropriate for women persist.

FIGURE 7. PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN’S ABILITIES IN COCOA FARMING IN GHANA



With better recognition as farmers, access to skills training, and an emerging equitable division of labor in households, women gained confidence in themselves, interest in attending extension training, and felt more comfortable interacting with others in the value chain. In India, the share of women who felt confident to manage or lead a farm increased from 68 to 92 percent, and the share of women who felt confident to interact with male agronomists increased from 66 to 82 percent. Women’s increased engagement in potato farming served as a role model to younger women and girls, who became more interested in farming as a livelihood. In Ghana, women’s confidence to interact with extension agents also increased: 82 percent of women felt comfortable interacting with men agents (from 74 at baseline) and 83 percent with women agents (from 77 at baseline). In Ghana, India, and Mozambique, Mozambique, qualitative data strongly suggests that women extension agents or field officers were critical for effectively reaching women farmers, as they helped counteract harmful gender norms and ensured the provision of inclusive extension services. Gender norms restrict women’s ability to engage with men outside of their families, and they frequently feel more intimidated by male extension agents, asking fewer questions and missing out on opportunities for more comprehensive learning.

“Today, I am not just a potato farmer, but also a trainer and a motivator. I understand gender dynamics and how they deter women’s empowerment in my community. My example will encourage more and more women in my village to come forward.”

Sujata Pramanik, woman farmer and Community Agronomist

3.4.5 ATTITUDES TOWARDS GBV

The initial gender analyses found that GBV is pervasive in all five countries and naturalized or justified. In most rural areas where ILRG worked, there were few resources and services available for people experiencing GBV, making it difficult to establish referral pathways for GBV response. The program integrated GBV prevention and mitigation throughout work on land documentation, resource governance, and women's participation in land-based supply chains. This was done through the inclusion of GBV content in training for all stakeholders and in norms-shifting interventions. Gender norms dialogues at the household level and for traditional leaders, skills training for women, 'edutainment,' and sensitization/organized diffusion efforts all included content on GBV, particularly as it relates to land and resource governance. Denial of land ownership, access, and benefit-sharing is a form of economic GBV, while at the same time physical, emotional, sexual, and social violence can be used as a tool to prevent women from accessing and owning land. Moreover, women who take on non-traditional roles in land and resource governance or farming are at a greater risk of experiencing several forms of GBV at the household, community, and institutional levels.¹⁴

In Zambia, traditional leaders were key agents of change. At the national level, GBV was incorporated into the Gender Guidelines issued by the House of Chiefs and some chiefs have declared GBV bans in their areas. At the local level, traditional leaders who attended gender norms dialogues adopted stiffer rules for punishing GBV perpetrators. This included punishment for traditional leaders involved in GBV and could result in demotion from leadership roles. In Muwezwa Chiefdom, the Chieftainess collaborated with a local NGO, International Crane Foundation, to facilitate training for headpersons on GBV. In Mphuka Chiefdom, the Chief implemented measures to decrease economic GBV and increase

"As a man I challenge my fellow men on issues of masculinity and norms. They open up and listen to me. I present myself as a role model."

Frackson Sakala, Senior Human Wildlife Co-Existence Officer, Conservation South Luangwa, Zambia

women's control over income, establishing a reporting mechanism and punishment for misuse of family income. Women can now report when their husband withholds or misuses household funds, and a woman representative was included in the Chief's Advisory Council to make it easier for women to report such cases. The traditional authorities in both Chiefdoms banned the practice of child and early marriage and unions, although this move was highly contentious. The traditional leaders started a register of families at high risk of practicing child and early marriage, and collaborated with an NGO, Child Fund, to support vulnerable families.

Emerging shifts in attitudes toward GBV were also observed in Mozambique. During endline discussions, men and women explicitly stated that women's public participation in land and resource governance associations with men who are not from their family would most likely have resulted in increased intimate partner violence, had it not been for the project's sensitization efforts. Notably, a woman in the Buzi district in Sofala Province noted that, "Yes, now we can sit next to men during meetings. Before the training, my husband would have beaten me if he knew I had been sitting next to a strange man."

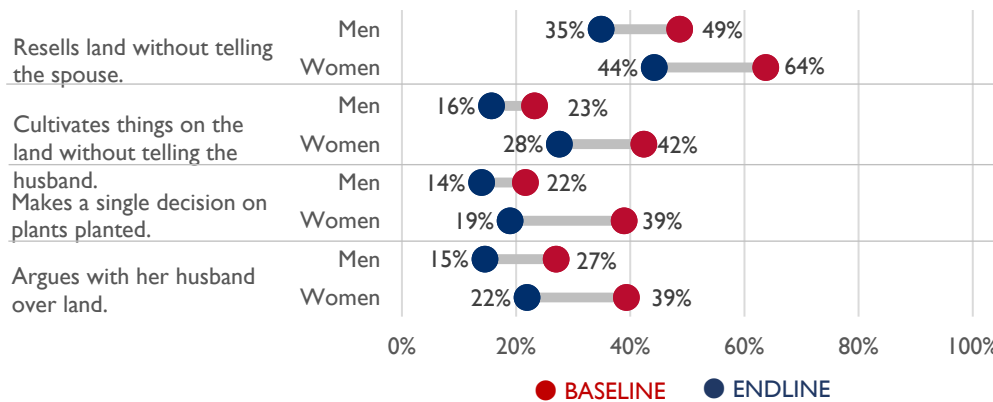
In Ghana, because gender norms dialogues focused on promoting greater collaboration (and as a result less conflict) within households, several farmers reported that GBV decreased in the communities. The endline survey showed that the share of people agreeing that there are some instances where husbands are justified to use violence against their wives decreased from 16 to five percent for men, and from 17

¹⁴ ILRG produced two briefs on GBV, "[Gender-Based Violence and Land Documentation & Administration in Zambia: Emerging Lessons from Implementation](#)" and "[Gender-Based Violence in the Natural Resource Sector in Zambia](#)".

to seven percent for women from baseline. In interviews and FGDs, both men and women frequently recalled the dialogue session on the four types of power and GBV, and they expressed a high level of consciousness about the negative consequences of GBV for women, families, and communities at large. Several participants mentioned how they changed their approach to conflict resolution, now opting for dialogue, but remarked that this understanding is not widespread in their communities.

In Malawi, the baseline and endline surveys also revealed initial shifts in attitudes and beliefs related to GBV (Figure 9). However, across all countries these changes were confined to some participants engaged in ILRG activities, and the overall understanding of GBV by community members and other stakeholders remained focused on physical violence compared to other forms of violence such as social, economic, psychological, verbal, and sexual.

FIGURE 9. SHARE OF RESPONDENTS IN MALAWI WHO AGREE THAT GBV IS JUSTIFIED IF A WOMAN



4.0 LEARNING AND THE WAY FORWARD

4.1 CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

There were several challenges in implementing norms-shifting interventions – some across all countries and others context-specific. The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in planned activities in several countries and particularly impacted the planned gender norms dialogues in India. There were long time gaps between the different stages of the GALS process that caused some participants to lose interest and required additional investment in refresher sessions. As such, the number of people reached was smaller than planned, and organized diffusion was more limited. Based on this experience, in other countries ILRG adapted gender norms dialogue methodologies to not only adapt to the local context but also to maximize the time and resources available, allowing for contingencies in case of unexpected events.

Another challenge was that some activities, such as gender norms dialogues, were oftentimes considered quite abstract by participants, who did not see an immediate gain and return for their time invested, compared to other training on more tangible topics such as land rights, farming practices, or financial literacy. One strategy to overcome this challenge was to layer gender norms interventions with other activities or use strategic entry points such as pairing gender norms dialogues with other training and initiatives like VSLAs or producers' clubs. Similarly, private sector partners showed different levels of interest and commitment to gender norms change interventions – some were skeptical of the relevance to their business case and hence the return on their time and resource commitment, whereas others were more open to how harmful gender norms directly and indirectly impacted their bottom line and supply base. Continued sensitization of private sector partners at all levels – from global teams and country management to field officers – is essential to obtain and sustain buy-in.

Maintaining participants' engagement, especially for activities such as organized diffusion, was also challenging. Although ILRG offered small allowances for transportation and refreshments for dialogue and training sessions, there was a level of volunteer fatigue and issues related to the expectation of compensation. In general, more women than men were engaged in sensitization and organized diffusion efforts, which could indicate a high interest on their part. Nonetheless, there is also a risk that these types of gatherings increase women's time poverty given the many demands on women's time. Women receiving messages on harmful gender norms is paramount but could lead to feminization of responsibility and increase their vulnerability to GBV. Indeed, some women noted difficulties in explaining the relevance of training or sensitization sessions and the content to their spouses or other male relatives. A key lesson is the importance of reaching men and women in the same household. ILRG found that household gender norms dialogues presented a unique opportunity for this type of couple engagement. Without direct outreach to men in equal proportion to women, change is unlikely, as men are still the main decision-makers on land.

ILRG's approach to gender norms change was evidence-based and drew from existing methodologies and approaches, particularly for the gender norms dialogues. Although these approaches were adapted to varying country contexts and topical focuses (land rights, resource governance, and land-based value chains), they were still very much centered on gender equality, women's land rights, and women's economic security. The interventions lacked a broader focus on social inclusion and social norms affecting other marginalized groups. Similarly, attention to intersecting identities and vulnerabilities and to specific sub-groups of women (e.g., young women, women in informal or polygamous unions, etc.)

was limited. Expanding norms-shifting interventions to focus on norms beyond gender and enhancing intersectionality have the potential to secure the land rights and economic security of other marginalized groups such as youth, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, and people with disabilities, among others.

Another challenge was linked to the timing of certain interventions. The approach was adaptive and new activities were added on an ongoing basis based on identified gaps/needs. For instance, the radio programming and community gender champions work in Malawi were added after the team identified the gap and opportunity for an 'edutainment' campaign and organized diffusion. However, many community members complained that the messages and conversations with champions came late in the land registration process, saying they would have been more beneficial before the registration process began (most of this work took place during the public display phase of the documentation process, when community members came forward to view community maps and make any needed corrections to their parcel registration information). This could have helped more people, especially women, to be included on land certificates during the initial documentation phase. Moreover, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors change when there is a critical mass, so norm-shifting interventions are ideally done well in advance of (instead of in parallel with) land registration and other land and resource activities.

Gender norms are part of the social fabric of any culture, and as such change is likely to encounter resistance. Even though the process was participatory and community-led, there was pushback and resistance from community members, government officers, company staff, and traditional leaders. In many cases, people expressed a strong attachment to their current beliefs and attitudes, oftentimes referring to tradition, religion, or a rejection of Western values. Although traditional leaders are key actors and can be an important ally for shifting gender norms, they can also act as a hindrance. In Malawi, community members reported that many traditional leaders were historically involved in land grabbing and other violations of women's land rights, and some still interfered during the registration process because they had interests in specific parcels of land. In Malawi and Zambia, while some traditional leaders were supportive of implementing the agreed-upon gender equality actions, some were resistant and advised against altering traditional practices. In Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia, traditional leaders have a strong say in the functioning of community land and resource governance structures, and members appointed by them frequently favored the leader's interests over collective interests. ILRG's strategy was to adopt a locally-led approach so local actors identified the prevailing harmful norms themselves, increasing ownership and decreasing feelings that gender norms activities were an attack on their culture. Since resistance is to be expected, and projects are unlikely to engage with everyone given the time and resources available, ILRG concentrated on positive deviants, i.e., those willing to reflect on the harms of certain norms and commit to new behaviors. It is crucial though to devise proactive mitigation and prevention strategies to protect vulnerable people and positive deviants from harm or violence.

Gender norms are ingrained, and change is a complex, long-term, multi-generational process that extends beyond the timeframe of any single project. The initial outcomes described in the previous sections were restricted to a portion of participants of norms-shifting interventions, and have not yet spread to all target groups or communities. Although role-modeling from participants can influence non-participants, it is important to bear in mind the limited nature of these results and that broader change will take time. It requires continued effort on multiple fronts to create critical mass for sustained change, which has resource implications. The emerging changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors detailed in this report are promising, but most of them are still at the individual level and have not yet grown to collective or norms level change. ILRG was a five-year program and most of the country activities were

implemented during a shorter timeframe, so it was not reasonable to expect in-depth changes in gender norms. However, changes in individual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to land ownership, access, and control, as well as in broader norms on division of labor, decision-making, and GBV can be a significant first step to catalyze shifts in the harmful norms that limit women's land rights and economic security. This is evidenced by some of the concrete results achieved by the program in terms of the percentage of women named in land documents, participating in governance, and accessing land-based value chains.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The ILRG experience shows encouraging results that adopting a community-led process to identify harmful norms, followed by providing space and tools for dialogue, engaging different stakeholders (particularly influential men), supporting organized diffusion, and encouraging positive role modeling can lead to positive shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in the short term. Addressing gender norms simultaneously on multiple fronts seems to yield positive results, with different stakeholders pushing change within their own spheres of influence. This approach shows that bringing men and women together to discuss harmful gender norms and land rights can lead to new behaviors that strengthen women's land rights and economic security. This is extremely important for women because land ownership is intertwined with being perceived and recognized as a farmer, which unlocks access to other resources like commercial contracts, training/extension services, and credit. Based on the approaches, results, challenges, and lessons shared above, below are the major recommendations for future programming on gender equality and social inclusion in the land and natural resource sector.

- Carry out a robust, locally-led, and participatory gender analysis at an early stage of the activity to inform project design, and identify stakeholders, key norms, and entry points, but bear in mind that norms identification is an iterative process that will be refined during implementation.
- Use holistic, gender-transformative, and community-led approaches for land documentation, resource governance, and land-based investment. Gender norms change should be part of a comprehensive package of interventions.
- Consider both norms directly related to land and natural resources and broader gender norms that influence them. However, follow the communities' lead on which norms are most pressing or "low-hanging fruits," as a single project is unlikely to be able to address several norms at once.
- Draw from evidence-based approaches and methodologies but adapt them to local contexts and types of intervention (i.e., make them directly relatable to land and resource governance).
- Engage local facilitators who are experienced in gender equality and participatory facilitation and extremely familiar with the local context and culture. Be mindful that facilitators will likely hold some of their own individual attitudes and beliefs that inform harmful norms, so maintain an open line of dialogue and space for self-reflection.
- Identify entry points and layer gender norms interventions with complementary activities to increase participants' interest and continued engagement. For instance, offer gender norms change dialogues through land associations or farmers groups or cooperatives, and link the dialogues to other tangible activities such as land registration and extension services or to skills training (sustainable farming practices, socioemotional skills, financial literacy, etc.).

- Reach men and women in the same household to diminish the burden of change on women and increase uptake.
- Consider different approaches, including organized diffusion and ‘edutainment’ campaigns to increase reach and complement resource-intensive interventions such as gender norms dialogues at the household level or with other key stakeholders.
- Set expectations early on with participants and volunteers regarding time commitments and compensation but be respectful of people’s time and efforts and mitigate practical barriers for the participation of women and other marginalized people. Offer allowances for food and transportation, and as possible, for their time. Consult volunteers about what they need to be set up for success. For instance, volunteers may prefer to have shirts or other forms of identification when carrying out door-to-door sensitization.
- Understand the motivations and priorities of each [private sector partner](#) and use data available to link how harmful gender norms in communities where they invest or supply from can affect their business model or bottom line. Engage company staff at multiple levels in continued sensitization and capacity strengthening and share results often in a format that is appropriate to the private sector communication style. This recommendation is relevant for all partners/stakeholders, including government, traditional leaders, and other partners involved in implementation.
- Expect resistance and focus limited resources on positive deviants, devising appropriate strategies to identify, monitor, prevent, and mitigate potential harm or violence, including GBV. Monitor GBV risks during land documentation and in situations where women and defying well-established norms and entering male-dominated spaces. Strengthen partners’ capacity on GBV so they can monitor GBV cases and refer survivors for support through referral pathways.
- Set realistic expectations for changing harmful gender norms within the project timeframe and devise appropriate metrics to assess shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors linked to gender norms. Use quantitative and qualitative data for a comprehensive assessment of emerging impacts.

ANNEX I. KEY TERMS

Social norms	Unwritten or informal rules about what is typical or appropriate <i>“When lodging a dispute with the local land clerk, people are expected to wait in line”</i>
Gender norms	Unwritten or informal rules about how people should behave based on expected gender roles <i>“Men are the head of households and landowners”</i>
Attitude	How an individual evaluates a behavior, idea, object, person, or situation favorably, unfavorably, or neutral <i>“I think women should not participate in community land committees”</i>
Belief	A feeling, opinion, assumption, or conviction that a person holds to be true, whether proven or unproven <i>“I believe that women are unable to make decisions about land”</i>
Behavior	The actions performed by an individual <i>“I will pass my land only to my sons and not to my daughters”</i>
Descriptive norms	Perceptions about what behavior is typical in a setting, also known as empirical expectation (“what I think others do”) <i>“Men make decisions about how the family’s land is used”</i>
Injunctive norms	Perceptions about what is appropriate in a setting, also known as an injunctive expectation (“what I believe others think I should do”) <i>“Women should move to their husbands’ family land after marriage”</i>
Reference groups	People whose behaviors and beliefs shape an individual’s behaviors and beliefs; networks of people with whom a person identifies and to whom they compare themselves <i>“My in-laws expect me to leave the family’s land if I get divorced or my husband passes away”</i>
Sanction or reward	The perceived consequences for engaging in a behavior, either negative (sanction) or positive (reward) <i>“I will be judged and mocked by other men in the community if I include my wife’s name on my land title”</i>

ANNEX 2. GENDER NORMS RELATED TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

For all norms, the **reference groups**, i.e., people whose opinions matter and who can enforce sanctions, include extended families (especially in-laws and male relatives), other community members, and traditional leaders. Those challenging norms face negative consequences or **sanctions**. For men, these include ridicule, stigmatization, and social ostracism, while women experience different forms of gender-based violence (physical, psychological/emotional, sexual, social, and economic).

Gender Norms <i>unwritten rules about how things are perceived to be or should be</i>	Type of norm <i>descriptive (what other people do) or normative (what people expect one to do)</i>	Beliefs <i>feelings, opinions, or assumptions a person holds to be true, whether proven or unproven</i>	Behaviors <i>the actions that are informed by a mix of personal beliefs and social rules</i>
Gender Norms About Land and Natural Resources			
Land Ownership/Inheritance			
The land is titled in the name of men	Normative	The man is the head of the household, so land should be in his name If a woman asks her husband to include her name in the land title it is a sign of disrespect	Men do not include women in land titles Women do not show interest or see value in participating in the land documentation process
Women do not own or inherit land in their husbands' village ¹⁵	Descriptive	Women are "outsiders" in the village of their husbands, no matter how long they live there Land belongs to the family or clan	Families do not include women or girls in land documents
Women do not acquire land on their own	Descriptive	Women are not capable of understanding land transactions and related processes Women need protection and guidance from a male relative (uncle, brother, adult son, etc.)	Even when women have the resources to acquire land, the transaction and titling are done by men
Land Access			
Women are not considered for customary land allocation, either in	Descriptive	Women access land through men/ marriage	When customary land is allocated, it is distributed to men only

¹⁵ Note that the same apply to men who move to their wives' village upon marriage.

Gender Norms <i>unwritten rules about how things are perceived to be or should be</i>	Type of norm <i>descriptive (what other people do) or normative (what people expect one to do)</i>	Beliefs <i>feelings, opinions, or assumptions a person holds to be true, whether proven or unproven</i>	Behaviors <i>the actions that are informed by a mix of personal beliefs and social rules</i>
their natal or marriage village		When girls grow up, they will marry and move outside of the village, so they do not need to be allocated land in their natal village Women are “outsiders” in the village of their husbands, no matter how long they live there Land belongs to the family or clan	Women do not have rights to land either at their natal village or at their husbands’ village
Widowed or divorced women cannot stay in the land of their deceased/ former husbands, or stay only if they remain unmarried and/or have children	Normative	Women access land through men/marriage Women are “outsiders” in the village of their husbands, no matter how long they live there Land belongs to the family or clan	The extended family of a deceased husband chase the widow away from the land Rights to the land a widow is cultivating belong to her children, often male children Former husband and/or his extended family chase a woman away from the land after divorce
Land Control/ Decision-Making and Benefit-Sharing			
Men make decisions related to land in the household (buy, sell, rent, register, names in the certificate, inheritance, land use)	Descriptive	The man is the head of the household and the landowner Women are not capable of understanding land transactions and related processes Women need protection and guidance from a male relative	Women have limited or no influence over land transactions and need to consult their husbands before any decision; men do not need to consult their wives before carrying out land transactions
Men make decisions about the sale of produce from the land and related income	Descriptive	As landowners, men also own the products of the land Women lack the knowledge and capacity to deal with financial matters	Women have no or limited visibility into income made from the land and limited or no say on how it is used
Land Governance			

Gender Norms <i>unwritten rules about how things are perceived to be or should be</i>	Type of norm <i>descriptive (what other people do) or normative (what people expect one to do)</i>	Beliefs <i>feelings, opinions, or assumptions a person holds to be true, whether proven or unproven</i>	Behaviors <i>the actions that are informed by a mix of personal beliefs and social rules</i>
<p>Men make decisions about land and natural resources in the community</p>	<p>Normative/ Descriptive</p>	<p>Leadership and public speaking are a preserve of men</p> <p>Women should remain quiet and be deferential to men in public</p> <p>Active involvement in community service for married women is disrespect and insubordination to their husbands</p>	<p>Women do not hold positions of power in community structures</p> <p>Women are not easily accepted as leaders</p> <p>Women do not participate in land and natural resources community associations</p> <p>Even when women are elected or appointed, they remain quiet and defer to men's decisions</p>
<p>Women cannot bring land disputes to traditional leaders or conflict resolution structures (unless accompanied by or through a man)</p>	<p>Normative</p>	<p>Women should remain quiet and be deferential to men in public</p> <p>Women are not capable of understanding land transactions and related processes</p> <p>Women need protection and guidance from a male relative</p>	<p>Women are not aware of conflict resolution mechanisms</p> <p>Women experiencing land encroachment or grabbing do not access proper redress or are vulnerable to further violence</p> <p>Women experience gender-based violence such as sexual harassment and abuse to access dispute mechanisms</p>

ANNEX 3. ILRG TRAINING MANUALS AND RESOURCES

GENDER NORMS DIALOGUES

- [ECOM Ghana Good Social Practices and Gender Norms Training Manual](#): Guide to facilitate gender norms dialogues at the household level that bring men and women together to discuss harmful norms related to access to resources, gendered division of labor, gendered decision-making, and gender-based violence.
- [Training Manual for Household Dialogues on Gender Norms in the Context of Land Rights in Malawi](#): Guide to facilitate gender norms dialogues at the household level that bring men and women together to discuss harmful norms related to access to resources, gendered division of labor, gendered decision-making, and gender-based violence. Focus on ownership, access, control, and disposal (including inheritance) of land.
- [Simplified Training on Gender Norms Dialogue Sessions for Customary Land Committee Members in Malawi](#): Guide to facilitate light-touch dialogues on harmful gender norms with women and men elected to land governance structures.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP

- [Gender Norms Dialogue for Traditional Leaders in Malawi Training Manual](#): Guide to facilitate a three-part dialogue process with traditional leaders so they can identify harmful norms that hinder women's land rights and devise their own solutions to start shifting these norms.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

- [ECOM Ghana Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Training Manual for Women in Cocoa Farming Communities](#): Facilitation guide for providing participatory training on empowerment skills, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy for women.
- [Women's Empowerment and Leadership Training Manual for Women in Customary Land Committees in Malawi](#): Facilitation manual to deliver participatory training for women in leadership positions in land governance structures. The curriculum focuses on technical and socioemotional skills to enable women to effectively and meaningfully exercise leadership.
- [Women's Leadership and Empowerment Training Manual for Community Natural Resource Governance in Zambia](#): Manual to facilitate participatory training for women in leadership positions in the natural resource sector. The curriculum focuses on technical and socioemotional skills to enable women to effectively and meaningfully exercise leadership in community resource governance and management. The manual is targeted at community facilitators to support women in community leadership positions.

GENDER INTEGRATION IN LAND DOCUMENTATION

- Practical Implementation Guide on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Customary Land Registration in [Malawi](#) and [Zambia](#): Practical resource on how to promote gender equality and social inclusion in customary land documentation processes. The target audience for the guide is all stakeholders directly involved in customary land documentation, including government officers, traditional leaders, and international organizations and donors. The document provides

a series of short practical technical guidance on gender equality and social inclusion for each specific step of the process, from planning to land certificate distribution.

- Gender-Responsive Land Administration for Local Authorities in Zambia ([Simplified Practice Notes](#), [Full Practice Notes](#)): The practice notes provide a set of practical tools for inclusive standard land administration practices that are also gender-responsive. They can serve as a resource to help Local Authorities in the country implement inclusive and effective land allocation and enhance service delivery.

ANNEX 4. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES ON GENDER NORMS AND LAND AND RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

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