



FIG Working Week 2024

19-24 May

Accra, Ghana

Your World, Our World:
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Traditional Leaders, Africa: Governance Connectivity Challenges and Positive Impacts of Technology

Innovations for securing tenure rights on customary lands through traditional authorities:
experiences from Chamuka Chiefdom, Zambia

*His Royal Highness
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Chamuka Royal Establishment
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Monday, 20 May, 2024

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Country Context

- Zambia is a landlocked country in southern Africa
- Zambia has two land tenure systems namely; statutory/leasehold and customary with the latter accounting for **over two-thirds** of all land.
- Customary land is administered by the Chiefs using the African customary laws applicable to each chiefdom.
- Under the leasehold tenure system, land is controlled by the State.



Map of Zambia



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Customary Land Governance in Zambia

- Land in customary areas is administered under customary law by chiefs who are the custodians of the land on behalf of the communities within their jurisdictions.
- Zambia has 288 chiefdoms.
- Dependency on agriculture in customary lands is threatened by market forces, rapid urbanization, and increased demands for land from urban elite and foreign investors
- The situation is aggravated by the **lack of documentation of land rights**.
- Inhabitants of customary land are vulnerable to forced displacements, and frequent land disputes among individual villagers, headpersons and even chiefs pertaining to boundaries.
- Women and girls **suffer MOST due** to the cultural and patriarchal nature of this land administration in customary areas
- A significant **but unknown portion** of customary land has been converted to statutory tenure both by individuals and the state since 1995 with the emergence of the Land Act (cap 184)

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Chamuka Chieftdom

- Chamuka chieftdom is one of 288 chieftdoms that form the country's rural landscape.
- The Chieftdom is located in Chisamba district in Central province and is one of the 7 Chieftdoms in the Lenje Establishment.
- The chieftdom covers a spatial extent of approximately three hundred thousand (300,000) hectares and is divided into 207 villages.
- The central authority in Chamuka is the Chief, while the spatially defined villages are under headmen, or a headwomen traditionally known as *Indunas*.
- The Chief oversees the administration of all land in the Chieftdom, and has the discretion to allocate land to individuals, families, and investors.



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Documentation of land rights in Chamuka Chieftdom

- **Beginning July 2016**, Chamuka Chieftdom under the leadership of H.R.H Chief Chamuka began piloting innovative land tools and approaches to document the land rights of all subjects in Chamuka Chieftdom.
- These tools included the **Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM)**, the **Gender Evaluation Criteria (GEC)** and **Participatory Enumerations**, developed by the **Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)** as facilitated by **UN-Habitat**.
- The project was locally led by **People's Process on Housing and Poverty in Zambia (PPHPZ)** and its grassroots alliance partner the **Zambia Homeless and Poor People's Federation, (ZHPPF)**, in collaboration with **Chamuka Royal Establishment**
- The project targeted 11 villages in the Chieftdom. This has since expanded to **cover 57 villages in the Chieftdom (2016-2022)**

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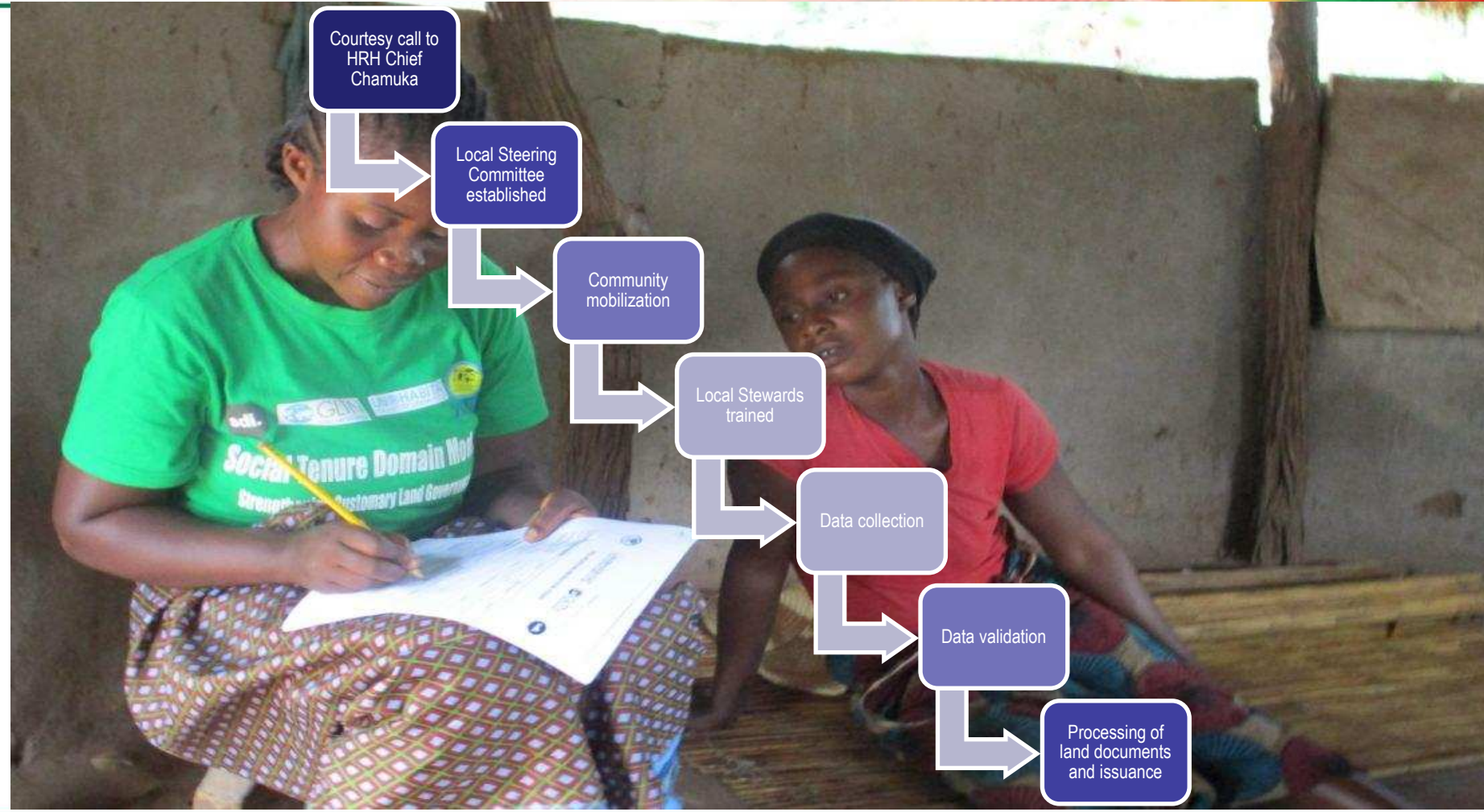
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The Process...



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Outcomes

- The process has provided **invaluable information** to help identify the developmental constraints and opportunities, that exist in Chamuka Chiefdom.
- A total of **57 villages in Chamuka (out of 207 villages)** have been mapped and enumerated using innovative land tools
- Certificates of Customary Land Occupancy have been issued **to 4,752 households** (1,518 females, 2,033 males, 1,201 joint ownership) which translates to a population of about 29,216 people.
- A total of **73 community stewards** have been trained to collect geo-spatial information and are well conversant with the STDM tool as well as the others.
- During the implementation of the project, a total of **536 land disputes** were identified and successfully resolved.
- An **STDM resource centre was also constructed** and is operational, electrified and equipped with the computers to act an anchor of all STDM activities in the Chiefdom as well as a learning hub for other chiefdoms

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Impacts since 2016

- Chamuka has become a **learning centre on the use of innovative fit-for-purpose land administration tools**, nationally and abroad, as a point of reference for organizations working in the land sector across the globe, particularly in relation to **indigenous communities, customary land and women's land rights**.
- The community has been empowered and **has a voice to protect their interests on their land** (negotiations with investors- solar investment firm, manganese processing plant negotiations etc.)
- To promote gender equality, Chamuka chieftom has approved guidelines to allocate 50% of all available land to women. Also, joint registration of certificates of occupancy is **MANDATORY** where both spouses exist.
- Community in Chamuka has been able to **engage with development partners and stakeholders** regarding the decentralization policy guided by the data from their community- led to the rehabilitation of **a 65 km-long road from Chisamba to Kabwe**, which cuts across the Chamuka chieftom.

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Impacts since 2016 CONT'D

- **Local empowerment**; communities have been empowered to interact with the innovative land tools contrary to the perception that handling of computerized data is the sole preserve of professionals. Community para-surveyors have been conducting the land documentation processes with minimal supervision from PPHPZ and GLTN.
- The land certification initiative in Chamuka Chiefdom contributed immensely to the discussions of administration of customary lands in Zambia **during the development of the Zambia National Land Policy of 2021**. (The lessons and experiences reflected in the NLP 2021!)
- There has **been a drastic reduction in land disputes** and as such peaceful co-existence in Chamuka's (536 land disputes were identified and successfully resolved in the 57 villages)
- The process has helped to amplify **voices of women and youth in the land governance discourse** through their participation in the process and issuance of the certificates. (e.g., in Ndililwa village, a young man set up a fish farm on 7 hectares of land allocated by the Chief after the STDM survey, and after receiving funding for the farm from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, which supports young people involved in aquaculture)

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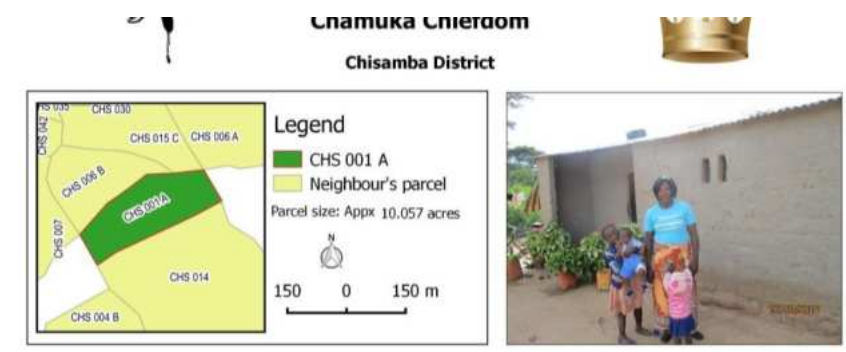
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The persons listed below are the bonafide occupants of parcel number: **CHS 001 A** highlighted in the map above.





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Land Governance and climate change mitigation

- The climate crisis is causing devastating loss and damage around the world: loss of lands, housing, livelihoods, loss of life, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, biodiversity and Indigenous territories etc.
- Impacts of climate change are felt **most acutely by marginalized groups** and people living in vulnerable conditions
- There exists a strong linkage between **tenure insecurity and climate vulnerability**
- Documenting land rights is key to **achieving climate resilience**.

Recent Initiative

Chief Chamuka is collaborating with the One Acre Fund to support **agro-forestry in Chamuka**, working with recipients of Certificates of Customary Land Occupancy.

- The trees isolate carbon, helping to fight climate change, and boost soil health keeping crops healthy, boosting crop harvest and providing shade for animals from extreme heat.
- Also, these smallholder farmers are paid to look after the trees by One Acre Fund.

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Lessons Learned

- High precision and technical cadastral surveys are not the only answer to land tenure challenges. Rather recognizing and protecting people's rights to land within their context is key to fulfilling land tenure needs which vary considerably.
- Community driven initiatives are key in strengthening customary land governance.
- Further, the use of innovative land tools (STDM, Participatory Enumerations, GEC) to document land has provided evidence that it is possible to formalize customary land using fit-for-purpose land tools.
- The case of Chamuka provides an example for local authorities and other stakeholders to work with rural communities to achieve sustainable land use management.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

International Federation of Surveyors supports the Sustainable Development Goals

Commission 7

Commission's name

Serving Society for the Benefit of People and Planet



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