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LANDLINKS

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*Correction: Due to a technical glitch yesterday the story [Zambia's House of Chiefs Speak Up for Gender Equality](#) contained the wrong preview text. You are receiving the newsletter again with the corrected text next to the story below.*

# #LandMatters Newsletter February 2022

## Strengthening Women's Land Rights

Dear Readers,

I would personally like to welcome you to our February edition of the LandMatters newsletter, which showcases recent programmatic highlights from USAID's Land and Resource Governance Division. As we look forward to celebrating International Women's Day in early March and UN-Women's sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66), our newsletter theme this month focuses on our Division's work to strengthen women's land rights and remove barriers to gender-equitable laws and policies around the access, use, management and ownership of land. Please read below to learn about how we are using innovative tools to advance information campaigns to promote women's land rights in Liberia, helping to develop gender-transformative guidelines for Chiefs in Zambia, and how this month's USAID Women's Land Rights Champion, Mulbah Forkpa from USAID/Liberia, has helped increase access to land rights for women. We hope that you enjoy reading it!

Stephen Brooks  
Director, USAID Land and Resource Governance Division

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## **Talking Books Spread the Word About Women’s Land Rights in Liberia**

Read how USAID is piloting an information campaign on women’s land rights in 31 rural communities using Talking Books. Talking Books are simple, hand-held audio players that deliver audio messages in local languages to low-literacy populations in areas without consistent electricity and/or internet connection. The activity is funded through USAID’s Land Evidence for Economic Rights, Gender, and Equality (LEVERAGE) Activity and implemented in partnership with Landesa.



## **Zambia’s House of Chiefs Speak Up for Gender Equality**

In November 2021, the House of Chiefs launched the Gender Guidelines for Traditional Leaders in the Management of Natural Resources in their Chiefdoms. The guidelines are a set of practices for strengthening women’s land and resource rights within Zambia's 288 chiefdoms. They provide traditional leaders with tools to encourage gender equality in policies and activities at the local level. The guidelines are the result of a multi-year partnership between the USAID Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) program and the Zambia House of Chiefs.



## [Check out the newest project featured on LandLinks: Improving Land Access for Women \(ILAW\)](#)

ILAW's core goal is to increase social cohesion, reduce land conflicts, and empower women to contribute to their communities economically by strengthening their legal access to land in the Northern and Western regions of Côte d'Ivoire. Investing in women's access to land supports Côte d'Ivoire's private sector growth and creates economic opportunity for its people.

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## Meet the USAID Women's Land Rights Champions

Each month, we feature a Women's Land Rights Champion within USAID to spotlight work advancing women's land rights. This month's Champion is Mulbah Forkpa, USAID/Liberia's Land Governance Specialist in the Economic Development Office. In this interview, Mulbah shares about his work with USAID helping to establish a Gender Unit within the Liberia Land Authority to promote women's equal rights to land as part of Liberia's customary land formalization process under Liberia's Land Rights Act.



**[F. Mulbah Zig Forkpa, Jr., USAID/Liberia](#)** - *"There is an important relationship between improved women's land rights and a better society. Since the essence of USAID's work is to ensure an improved and more secure society, the obvious choice must be made to enhance women's secure access to land and resources."*

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All these blogs and related resources can be found on the [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment page](#) on Land-Links.org



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## USAID Land Project Highlights



USAID's [Integrated Land and Resource Governance](#) program is a flexible field support mechanism that works with USAID Missions to provide both short- and long-term assistance. Read more about what they have learned piloting fee-for-service customary land documentation in Zambia. [Lessons Learned from Pilot Fee-for-Service Customary Land Documentation in Zambia.](#)



USAID's [Integrated Natural Resource Management](#) activity provides on-demand support services and technical assistance for USAID Missions, Bureaus, and Independent Offices across a wide array of environmental and natural resource management issues, with a focus on gender equality and social inclusion. Read some of their recent publications to learn more.

- **Report:** [Governance, Land Use Change, and Mitigating Viral Zoonotic Emergence at the Human-Environment Interface](#)
- **Research:** [The Relationship Between Medium-Scale Farms and Deforestation in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)
- **Factsheet:** [Mining Horizon](#) activity in Colombia



The USAID-funded [Land for Prosperity](#) activity supports the Government of Colombia in improving the conditions of rural households to achieve licit economic development through land tenure strengthening. Read more in some of their recent Exposure posts:

- ["Women need to know we also have rights to our property deeds."](#)
- [Land: where women get the lead role](#)
- [The Incentive of Land Ownership](#)



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