

Women realize their Land Rights



As a result of the access to land rights initiative, 40 Income, Saving and Lending groups, 10 groups with small livestock production, 2 baking groups and cow dip making, and 6 nutrition gardening projects were realized. This has led to increased financial independency for women and decision making at household level during COVID-19.

Whilst progress has been made for more women to gain secure joint ownership land tenure, challenges remain during the COVID-19 pandemic. Much is required to ensure policies and strategies are addressing these gaps, to ensure resilience and recovery by women in the rural areas.

Thus, the commemoration of the International Day of Rural Women is an ideal opportunity to reflect on their crucial role in agriculture, food security and nutrition, and management of pandemics at the community level.

Ntengwe for Community Development is calling for strengthening of rural women's sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

This International Day of Rural Women is important for all stakeholders to support rural women and girls to not only rebuild their lives after COVID-19 but increase their resilience to be better prepared to face future crises.



EMPOWERING WOMEN

Building rural women's resilience in the wake of COVID-19 to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty





Introduction

Rural women of all ages spend much of their day engaged in domestic chores, including collecting water and firewood, processing and preparing food, travelling and transporting, and care giving. These tasks are unpaid and restrict a woman's time and mobility.

Moreover, the drudgery can cause poor health and nutrition for a woman's entire family. These domestic chores are a major constraint to the ability of smallholder farmers to increase agricultural productivity and achieve food and nutrition security.

The Ministry of Women Affairs, Small and Medium Enterprises and Community Development recorded over 120 cases of gender-based violence against women and girls during the lockdown period.

The socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic is showing a deepening of inequalities and persistent violations of the rights of women and further exposed acutely disadvantageous conditions that make women more vulnerable to withstand the effects of natural disasters.



Lupane district joins hands with United Nations in commemorating the International Day of Rural Women in Lupanda, Kanablock and Chimwara with the aim of strengthening rural women's sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing.

This year marks 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which set out 12 critical areas of action aimed at removing the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life.



Ntengwe for Community Development flagged urgent actions which were needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women. I also laid out concrete ways to bring about change.

One such change was the implementation of Ntengwe's Pathway to Economic Justice on Women's Land Rights Programme. Over the past two years, this programme worked in partnership with Local Government, Women Affairs, Agritex, Kusile Rural District Council and Social Development to facilitate women's access to land in Lupanda, Kanablock and Chimwara wards.

Women often lack rights to land. Land rights tend to be held by men, controlled by men, and women have access mainly through her husband or male relative. Even then, women are routinely obliged to hand over the proceeds of any farm sales to a male and have little say over how those earnings are used.

A total of 224 women received their joint land tenure documents with the facilitation of Ntengwe in conjunction with the Ministry of Lands, it fulfilled the Deeds Registry Act chapter 20.05 which supports the joint land ownership by spouses. Joint occupancy is a good option for couples as it protects the woman's rights if her husband dies and reduces land disputes within families. Through joint ownership, women have collateral security and can access credit from financial institutions.

