

## Mauricio Sulila - Mozambique

*Mauricio Sulila is National Programme officer for SDC in Mozambique. He has been intensively involved in the country study conducted by IDS in May 2016 during the A+FS Network's learning journey "Inclusive Land Governance – road to a better life". The country study analysed the competing interests of different land users and land uses. What has Mauricio learned during this process?*

*(Interview in Portuguese and translated by Beverly Wenger Trayner)*



I enjoyed this initiative. I liked the way it allowed us to go as a group to a rural area and talk to different stakeholders.

We had meetings with local government, the private sector, NGOs, and with local communities about the question of inclusive land governance. We read many reports from our partners, we heard a lot from the media and the community about the conflicts in the region. And we wanted to look into it.

The first thing we noticed was that, contrary to what we see in the media, the government is not as closed as it seems. So it was good to speak to the local government and to see that they are aware that there is a lot of space for improvement. It was also interesting to speak with the private sector, to hear that they recognize that they don't do consultation well and they have problems in implementing their programs. So there is recognition on their part that they need to have a multi-sectoral dialog about land governance in this country.

So my eyes were opened on this visit to seeing that things are not as bad as they seem.

When we got back we started looking at our partner's reports a bit more critically. We realized that while they were good at managing their relationship with the community they were not very good in their dealings with local government and the private sector. Our three main partners were with us on this visit and we started a more critical dialog with them about how they have to engage better with district and municipal governors. With the private sector they need to create a structure for a more sustainable conversation.

Since then we have seen one of our partners, who previously had many problems with the district government, including intimidation and physical threats, now has a more constructive dialog. The partner now sees the district government as an ally rather than an opponent and they have developed a real partnership. We also see that our partners can give their technical team some training that will help them become more active.

We think we are on the right track and this motivates and encourages us to keep going even in very difficult circumstances.