

## Bridging Talent and Systems for Delivery

### Empowering Rwanda's Next Generation of Land Professionals

In Rwanda, land is more than a record, it is security, identity, and the foundation on which families build their future. Ensuring that the systems governing land function effectively requires skilled and committed professionals, yet the demand for land services continues to grow faster than the workforce that serves them.

During the 2024/2025 financial year alone, the National Land Authority (NLA) received and approved 757,740 land title update applications, an average of more than 63,000 applications every month, alongside 183 land dispute appeal cases. At the present, the institution is still working to clear a backlog of 24,000 pending land applications and 34 unresolved land dispute cases, underscoring the urgency of sustained capacity.

To help address this challenge, GanzAfrica exist to provide institutional capacity strengthening to enhance efficiency in service delivery. Through a partnership with the Aubrey Barker Fund, GanzAfrica trained, and deployed five young graduates over the past year. Their role is to bridge capacity gaps and enhance land administration and surveying efficiency, ensuring that service delivery keeps pace with the growing demand for land services. By leveraging the energy and skills of young graduates, the initiative not only strengthens institutional capacity and expedites service delivery, but also equips these young graduates with valuable professional experience.

In just one year, the partnership has yielded significant benefits for the NLA, the fellows, and the communities. Fellows were quickly entrusted with complex land services including boundary corrections, subdivision, parcel merging, rights transfer, GIS processing, dispute resolution, and inspection of private surveyors. In particular, they were assigned to work closely with NLA's legal team to utilize their surveying and mapping skills to resolve boundary disputes. Across these services, the fellows ensured data accuracy and integrity while introducing innovations to strengthen the long-term efficiency of service delivery processes.

Working alongside experienced land officers created a strong mentorship bridge and facilitated intergenerational exchange of ideas. To date, the fellows have contributed to resolving 80% of the 183 dispute cases received over the year, and 12000 cases involving subdivisions, boundary corrections, merging, first registration and transfer of rights across 22 districts. This support has significantly reduced backlogs, giving families and communities the opportunity to access efficient services that strengthen the security of their land rights.

Sylvain Muyombano, Head of Land Administration Department at NLA, reflected on how the fellows strengthened service delivery and built capacity: *"Beyond the routine transactions, the Fellows have supported 80% of the dispute resolution cases over the year and played a key role in land clinics, helping resolve over 6,700 cases. Their innovative mindset, agility and speed in delivery, professionalism, fresh ideas, and dedication complement our staff, while directly strengthening service delivery and community trust."*

Yvonne Akimana, Director of the Land Survey and Mapping Unit at NLA, also shared: *"Together with the Fellows, we've achieved significant milestones that contribute to modernizing Rwanda's surveying and mapping systems. We have inspected over 300 private surveyors across the country and we are*

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*currently developing a standardized national surveying procedure manual. We plan to continue these inspections and collaborate on updating Rwanda's cadastral plan. The fellows' impact is undeniable."*

The Land Survey Fellows have found the fellowship to be transformative in ways they did not anticipate.

Serge reflects: *"I work on GIS processing every day, supporting inspections across the country, and attending field visits during boundary dispute resolution. Each task matters, and I can see the real impact of what we are doing. It isn't just information on a screen, it's data and evidence helping families feel secure about their land. This makes every challenge worth it. This experience has given me skills, confidence, and a sense that I'm truly contributing and giving back to the communities that raised me."*

Espoir adds: *"This experience has made me more confident, more responsible, and proud to be contributing in a way that actually changes things on the ground."*

Divine also saw beyond the data: *"I helped people navigate complex land issues, and sometimes I could see the relief or gratitude on their faces when their concerns were addressed... Our work is about trust, fairness, and making a real difference in people's lives. Being part of this team has shown me how much young professionals can contribute when given the chance."*

The Fellows have grown in skill and confidence while simultaneously strengthening capacity within the National Land Authority. By supporting critical processes, improving data accuracy, clearing backlogs, and accelerating service delivery, they have strengthened the institution's response to rising demand, leaving an impact that extends well beyond individual achievements.

Beyond operational contributions, the Fellows consolidated their lessons and experiences to establish feedback loops with institutions of higher learning, helping to shape Land Survey and Land Management curricula to better reflect the practical skills required in the workplace. A partnership with Rwanda's leading land administration and surveying institution, INES Ruhengeri, supported the development of a future-focused training guide that emphasizes coding and automation skills for land survey professionals. The guide will prepare successive cohorts of GanzAfrica Fellows for secondment to the National Land Authority.

GanzAfrica's Land Survey Fellows have proven that skill, responsibility, and commitment can impact not only individuals, but entire institutions. Their contribution to realizing the vision for reliable, fair, and accessible land services is a testament to what happens when talent meets opportunity, and when ambition is paired with purpose. Building on this momentum, GanzAfrica is committed to expanding this fellowship into a sustainable pipeline that continues equipping young land professionals with the expertise needed to strengthen and future-proof Rwanda's land governance systems.





