



Land Administration to Nurture Development (LAND)

UPDATE No. 2

December 2014

Journey to Improve Pastoral Land Use Rights

Pastoralists' livelihood is under immense pressure from climate change, population growth and expansion of other land uses such as development of public and private irrigated agriculture, establishment of wildlife reserves, encroachment of farming by smallholders in the highlands and expansion of townships. The growing pastoral population is being squeezed into shrinking rangelands, resulting in overstocking and degradation of the range resources. Secure land rights of pastoralists as well as those of farmers is guaranteed under the Ethiopian Constitution. However, while the land use rights of farmers are secured via land registration and certification, this has not been done for pastoralists.

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Amha Getachew, LAND

Doye Dulecha, Abba Dheeda (Traditional leader) said "The weakening of customary institutions causes loss of traditional access to communal rangeland resources and increases the frequency of conflicts and needs an immediate solution."

Ethiopian Land Research and Development Network launched

The Ethiopian Land Research and Development Network (ETHIOLANDNET) was established and launched on 25 November 2014 at Bahir Dar University to close gaps in land administration and development research. Dr. Bayile Damte, President of Bahir Dar University, Dr. Amsaya Anteneh, Advisor to the President of the Amhara National Regional State and Mr. Gary Linden, Acting Director of USAID/Ethiopia Mission, were the keynote speakers at the launch. Dr. Tesfaye Shiferaw, Vice President of Bahir Dar University gave the closing remarks.

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Kibnesh Chala, LAND

Mr. Gary Linden Acting Mission Director USAID Ethiopia, remarked, "The success of this network, of your work, will be measured when research results inform the development or the reform of land policies in keeping with the goals of the national Growth and Transformation Plan."

Summer Course for Land Administration Professionals



Kibnesh Chala, LAND

Forty-two experts were enrolled at Bahir Dar University, Institute of Land Administration for a M.Sc. degree in Land Administration and Land Use Planning. Five of them were women.

There are only a couple of universities in Ethiopia that offer graduate curriculum in Land Administration and Land Use. One may wonder how the country meets its large demand of professionals in the land sector. Well, it does not. Because of this shortage the federal and regional agencies of land administration have employed other professionals mostly in the fields of agriculture and natural resources to fill this void.

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Land Administration to Nurture Development

LAND

2013-2018

Prepared by Tetra Tech for the Land Administration to Nurture Development (LAND) Project

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Ethiopian Land Research and Development Network launched

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Despite the vast contributions of land to Ethiopia’s socio economic growth, the country does not have sufficient field-based evidence informing formulation of policy and development in the land sector. In addition, there is a limitation in archiving research and development works related to land and making them easily accessible. These challenges call for a forum, where findings of research and development efforts on land are discussed, debated and published. Hence, Ethiopian universities, research institutes, government and non-government organizations formed ETHIOLANDNET to address such gaps by promoting and disseminating research on land tenure, land administration and land management in Ethiopia.



Dr. Bayile Damte, President of Bahir Dar University was among the key note speakers at the launch of ETHIOLANDNET.

ETHIOLANDNET will work to promote and disseminate research outputs on land to address development of the country and the largely rural population. Housed at Bahir Dar University, the network will also serve as a national repository of data and research findings on the land sector.

In his opening remarks, Acting Mission Director Gary Linden noted the significance of the research network for enhancing land governance: *“The success of this network, of your work, will be measured when research results inform the development or the reform of land policies in keeping with the goals of the national Growth and Transformation Plan. I urge you all to seize this opportunity to contribute to learning and the development of this great country whose economic, social and peaceful transformation will advance with able, sustainable, and equitable governance of its vast land resources”.*

Founding members of ETHIOLANDNET comprise many of the leading academic and research institutions in Ethiopia: Bahir Dar University; Haramaya University; Hawassa University; Mekelle University; Addis Ababa University; Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI); Ethiopian Economic Professionals Association; Forum for Social Studies (FSS); Ethiopian Land Administration Association; Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research; Federal Ministry of Agriculture and The Federal Ministry of Urban Development and Construction.



ETHIOLANDNET founding members signed their Memorandum of Association and elected the Executive Committee during the general assembly held on 24 November 2014.

The network conducted its general assembly prior to the official launch, when the members signed the Memorandum of Association and elected the Executive Committee, which includes Woldiya University (Ato Said Hussein) Chair, Hawassa University (Dr. Alemayehu Regassa) Vice Chair, Bahir Dar University (Dr. Tadesse Amsalu) Secretary and Haramaya University, the Institute of Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Urban Development and Construction as members

ETHIOLANDNET is open for admission to new members and associate members of Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian institutions, associations and other networks engaged in research and development in the land sector.

Summer Course for Land Administration Professionals

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LAND started to work on closing this capacity gap sponsoring federal and regional experts to join the Institute of Land administration of Bahir Dar University (ILA/BDU) to be trained in land administration and land use planning at the masters’ degree level. The training is given in two summers and one take-home assignment. Forty-two experts (five are women) from the ministries of Agriculture and Urban Development and Construction, eight regional states eight technical vocational education and training institutes and the city administrations of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa completed their first summer training in September 2014.

Mr. Biel Keat and Mr. Muhyadin Mohammed are among the experts who got the opportunity to join the program. Biel is environmental protection coordinator for Gambella region’s land administration and environmental protection agency. He has a B.A. degree in Global Studies with a major in international and political economics and minor in environmental journalism. He had worked for the Gambella town administration and region’s communications affairs bureau.

He said it was challenging to work as a grass root professional having only general conceptual information about land resources, *“I had no idea when it comes to the specifics of land administration, land use planning and land valuation, what I had was oral information and it was not sufficient.”*

Muhyadin is the land administration and use case team leader in Somali region livestock, crop and rural development bureau. He has a B.Sc. in natural resources management. He said the region doesn’t have experts trained in land administration, hence it



Kibnesh Chala, LAND

Biel Keat, “The best thing about the program is learning from the different experiences of good practice from other regions and globally.”

hires professionals with natural resource management background instead.

In their first summer course, students covered courses including Urban and Rural Land Use Planning, Land Development, Land Administration, and Geographical Information System. They were given various group projects and assignments. They were also made to present the experience of their region in these fields. Reflecting on the program, Biel said *“The program helps me a lot, I now feel like I am a land use planner; I know how land could be developed, administered and obtain added value from it. When I go back, I will put this into practice.”*

Muhyadin also said *“The program was well organized. I learnt good lessons, mainly on the importance of land*

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The Institute of Land Administration offers the M.Sc. degree program with well-equipped facility.

Summer Course...

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administration and management for a country like Ethiopia where its main resource is land."

It appears that in addition to lack of trained professionals, the regional states face similar challenge, the absence of land use planning in their regions. Biel explained, *"Land use planning is missing in our region. We need a land use plan to develop the land. We have more than 1000 investors in the region and without a land use plan what we may end up doing is destroying the land resource."*

"If we don't use land properly, the resource will be depleted. As the population is rapidly growing, they need food and shelter whose source is the land. My plan is to teach the community and the leadership at the regional level about the importance of land use planning."

According to Muhyadin, his region has a different kind of challenge as land is controlled by clans and this type of landholding is affecting the way the land is developed. *"We do not have local land use planning and we cannot copy the practice from other parts of the country as the context is different. There is no experience in land use planning in pastoral areas."*

Both Biel and Muhyadin agree that the challenges could be overcome by strengthening the land administration structure, and through public awareness raising activities. Muhyadin wants to strengthen his team so that they fulfill the modern land administration function using the lessons from the summer training program. He believes that the community will benefit from proper land use planning because it improves land tenure security, develop infrastructure, protect land from degradation and reduce conflict.

Biel argues that land administration needs to get better emphasis at the national level and it should have its own ministry. He also stressed on the gap between the state and customary law in his region. He said, *"There is a need to bring politicians and the community together to discuss and reach consensus and experts like me can be mediators."*

LAND has been closely monitoring progress of the summer M.Sc. training program. Its staff visited ILA/BDU and reviewed progress of the training program via discussions with ILA/BDU officials, instructors and the students. The team took up the various issues and improvement needs raised by the students with the teachers and senior management of Bahir Dar University that took immediate steps to rectify the

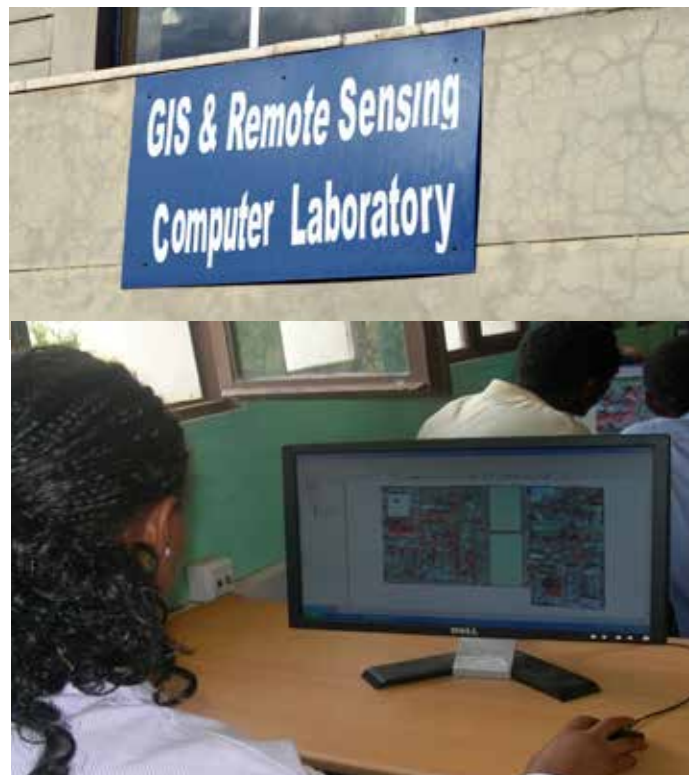


Kibnesh Chala, LAND

Muhyadin Mohammed, "I want to see people taking care of their land and benefiting from it."

issues.

LAND plans to support additional 42 experts in the 2015 summer intake. It also aims to increase the number of female candidates with more robust sensitization work with the regions.



The Institute of Land Administration arranged for M.Sc. students to use its computer lab until 10pm.

Journey to Improve Pastoral Land Use Rights

(Continued from page 1) Farmers are the owners of their land use rights and can rent out their land holdings and derive income from it. They are consulted in case their landholdings are needed for public purposes and compensated accordingly. Currently, pastoralists do not benefit in similar fashion nor are their land use rights secured. There are many instances whereby their land has been allocated to other uses without their consent and in some cases without compensation being paid for the land they lose, thus increasing their land use right insecurity.

At the invitation of the Oromia Region Bureau of Rural Lands and Environmental Protection (OBRLEP), LAND is providing technical and financial assistance to pilot ways and means of securing pastoral land use rights in Borana and Guji zones. A Regional Oromia Pastoralist Advisory Committee (ROPAC) has been established to advise and facilitate implementation of planned activities of LAND as well as those of a sister USAID supported Pastoral Resiliency Improvement through Market Expansion (PRIME) Project that is implementing interventions that are designed to improve pastoralists' access to markets and improve their livelihoods. Members of the ROPAC are the Ministry of Agriculture (Directorates of Rural Land Administration and Use and Directorate of Pastoral Development), OBRLEP, Oromia Pastoral Development Commission, Oromia Pastoral Association and representatives of the LAND and PRIME projects and their supervisors from the USAID/Ethiopia Mission. The ROPAC was formed in February 2014 and has been meeting on a quarterly basis. Decision was made by the ROPAC to form similar committees in Borana and Guji zones called zonal Oromia pastoralist advisory committees (ZOPACs). In addition to the representatives of the organizations in the ROPAC, zonal administrators and pastoral community leaders are also included in the ZOPACs.

A field visit of ROPAC members to Borana and Guji zones was arranged by the LAND and PRIME projects from 27 October to 5 November 2014. The purpose of the visit was four-fold. First, it was intended to bring together the regional and zonal OPAC members to know one another better and to make formation of the committees' official. Second, it was essential to discuss the terms of



Abera Ayele Administrator of Borana Zone (L) and Abba Gada, Guyyo Gobba, Chief traditional leader of the Borana, Zonal and woreda officials and community leaders from all the grazing units in Borana Zone were represented in the meeting held in Yabello town.



Aman Muda, Deputy Head of Oromia Rural Lands and Environmental Protection Bureau(R), "Certification has the advantage of securing pastoral land use rights and minimizing conflicts. If it is not done very carefully, land certification can lead to a disastrous outcome. However, if it is done properly and with utmost care, it can have huge benefits."

reference of the OPACs and how they work together to achieve their common goals. Third, it was deemed necessary to create a common understanding among all the stakeholders on the objectives and activities of the LAND and PRIME projects and how the participation of the government agencies and the communities they represent feature in the implementation of both projects. Fourth, it was considered important to visit the field and discuss with pastoral community leaders and government officials on their opinions about pastoral land use security and rangeland resources administration and management

Three major meetings and

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discussions were held during the visit. The first one was held in Hawassa town for the ROPAC members on October 27, 2014. LAND staff briefed the meeting on the: (i) Purpose of the ROPAC field visit; (ii) Importance of securing pastoral land use rights; (iii) International experience in securing pastoral land use rights; (iv) Ethiopian experience in securing communal land use rights; (v) Resource Mapping of Grazing Units in Borana and Guji zones by PLI-2 and PRIME projects; (vi) Assessment of Customary Rangelands Governing Entities in Borana and Guji Zones; (vii) Preliminary findings of an assessment of customary administration and management of rangelands in Oromia Region, a joint study by the Institute of Pastoral and Agro-pastoral Studies of Haramaya University and LAND; (viii) The LAND and PRIME projects and their planned interventions in Borana and Guji zones.

The second meeting and discussion took place at Yabello town on October 29 and continued on October 30, 2014. This was a joint meeting of ROPAC and ZOPAC members. A briefing similar to the one in Hawassa but much shortened was given to the newly formed Borana ZOPAC members and on the roles and functions of the ROPAC and ZOPACs. The Chief Aba Gadda of the Borana, Guyyo Gobba, and his successor-designate as well as Aba dheedas of all the five Borana grazing units attended the meeting. A field visit was made to the two Dheedas where community elders explained how they administer and manage their rangelands and the problems they face. Participants had an opportunity to visit a Borana deep well, a crater, a dumping ground, and a wildlife sanctuary. The third meeting was held at Negelle Borana town with the Guji ZOPAC. A briefing similar to the one at Yabello town was given to members of the Guji ZOPAC. Again Aba Dheedas of all the grazing units in the Guji zone attended the meeting.

The ROPAC field visit gave pastoralists a forum to articulate their demand for securing their land use rights to the regional government representatives.

In the discussions held in both Borana and Guji zones, pastoral community elders repeatedly questioned why government is taking long to certify pastoral lands and when it will actually happen. One of the leaders, Konsicha Huqa, said *“our request for certification of pastoral land use rights has been ignored for a long time. We have no security or guarantee unless we are granted this right. We are really suffering because of lack of land rights protection, and there are times when we clash with investors as things are not going in the right direction.”*



Amha Getachew, LAND

Part of Borana rangeland wasted after a quarry was excavated for road building and left without refilling. No compensation was paid to the rangeland users.

Mr. Aman Muda, Deputy Head of Oromia Rural Lands and Environmental Protection Bureau, addressed concerns of elders in Borana and Guji, *“both the Ethiopian constitution and the regional and federal land proclamations contain articles that recognize pastoral land rights. Therefore, it should not be perceived as if there are no provisions that respect pastoralists’ rights. The problem is with implementing the existing laws on the ground. We started land use rights certifications in the highland farming areas and now we are starting in the lowland pastoral areas.”* He added, *“Certification has the advantage of securing pastoral land use rights and minimizing conflicts. If it is not done very carefully, land certification can lead to a disastrous outcome. However, if it is done properly and with utmost care, it can have huge benefits.”*

There are experiences of certifying communal lands in the highlands. However, the LAND project is the first to initiate such an effort of securing pastoral land use rights in Ethiopia. The stakeholders recognize that the process is challenging and need caution and the full participation of all stakeholders, i.e. federal, regional and local government officials, community elders and development project staff, to work together in unison to bring about the desired result.

The trip was successful in achieving its objectives. It was observed that pastoralists’ have very strong demand for land use right certificates similar to those given to farmers and a consensus was reached on the need to implement the program of pastoral land use rights, registration and certification. LAND will continue to closely work with ROPAC and ZOPACs to facilitate securing pastoral land rights. A technical workshop, which brings together officials and experts from OBRLEP is already scheduled for the beginning of January 2015 to discuss and agree on the way forward.