SNAPSHOT
LAND Supports Sustainable Technology

LAND mobilizes local expertize to promote sustainability.

Dr. Elias Lewi, Director of Institute of Geophysics, Space Sciences, Addis Ababa University discusses sustainable use of CORS technology

LAND is supporting development of CORS technology to support cost-effective methodologies to survey and certify property rights. LAND's efforts to improve institutional coordination and identify local expertize promotes application of sustainable technologies in the spirit of USAID Forward.

In 2007, USAID/Ethiopia and the United States Geodetic Survey assisted the Ethiopian Mapping Agency (EMA) to establish Continuously Reference Stations (CORS) in four strategic locations in Ethiopia to provide Geographic Positioning System (GPS) users with a modern 3-dimensional geo-centric spatial reference system. The Institute of Geophysics, Space Sciences and Astronomy of the Addis Ababa University also invested in CORS technology to monitor seismologic activity. A lack of institutional coordination and technical capacity to maintain the system effectively has hindered the delivery of high accuracy positioning data to public and private sector GPS users and slowed development of low-cost mapping and survey methodologies to be utilized by rural land cadastres to certify property rights and support land use planning.

On December 10, 2013, LAND organized a national conference with key stakeholders (including government-, private-, and donor-funded land administration projects) to facilitate discussion and obtain consensus on sustainable solutions for building EMA capacity to operationalize and maintain CORS and deliver online positioning user service (OPUS) in real time. The conference ended with recommendations for short-, medium-, and long-term plans to be prepared to expand the CORS network, build capacity, and promote better coordination and collaboration between stakeholder institutions.

LAND's workshop served to promote better coordination between stakeholders and identify local technical capacity that can be supported and further developed to ensure CORS and OPUS hardware and software will be properly maintained and made available beyond the life of LAND. Ato Tigistu Gebremeskal, Director of the Ethiopia's Land Administration and Use Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, expressed pleasure that the workshop brought a "high level of scientific expertise and competent technical capability" from Ethiopian experts to develop the CORS system. USAID/Ethiopia Senior Agricultural Policy Adviser and Land, Water and Climate Team Leader, Ato Zemen Haddis, noted that outside expertise will not be required to assist: "I am pleased to know that we have domestic capability in this high tech area."

LAND will provide the EMA technical assistance to implement its capacity development plans to ensure CORS is available to support low cost and sustainable survey methodologies. LAND will further promote sustainability by mobilizing local technical expertise in the spirit of USAID Forward.