

LPI contributes to panel session in the African Agribusiness Forum

Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 23 June 2014 (ECA) – The Land Policy Initiative (LPI) participated in the African Agribusiness Forum (AAF), organized on 22 June, ahead of the 23rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of African Union Heads of State and Government, and held under the theme *“Transforming Africa’s agriculture for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods: harnessing opportunities for inclusive growth and sustainable development.”*

The AAF objectives were to identify ways for achieving deeper engagement of the private sector in agriculture, agree on approaches for unlocking domestic financial investments in agricultural value chains; agree on practical strategies to ensure inclusiveness of smallholders, women, and youth; and formulate elements of a roadmap for operationalising the AU Summit commitments.

The AAF was opened by H.E. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, Commissioner, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), who encouraged stakeholders to focus on enhancing positive changes towards prosperity that directly impact on the livelihoods of African citizens through an inclusive agricultural transformation process.

The Land Policy Initiative participated in two panels, followed by break-out group sessions: *“Overview of the African agribusiness and private sector – to the next decade,”* and *“Women and youth throughout African agribusiness: opportunities in the next decade.”*

The main recommendations from the first panel session are to: further develop partnerships in agriculture; valorize agriculture and create an agribusiness fund; roll out agribusiness incubation programs across the continent through public-private partnerships; and enhance capital mobilization for long-term agricultural financing.

The second panel session recommended that the management of agricultural land investments be informed by the *Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments*, developed by the LPI and endorsed by the AU African Ministers responsible for Agriculture in April 2014, as part of the efforts to develop tools to guide the implementation of the AU Declaration on land issues and challenges in Africa. It

was also recommended that land policy and governance programmes target women as key beneficiaries to increase access, control, and ownership of land by women. The session also called for scaling up of local youth agribusiness initiatives for large scale impact across the continent.

The AAF was organized as a event in the 2014 AU Year of Agriculture and Food Security, marking the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the year anniversary since the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

The Land Policy Initiative is a joint programme of the tripartite consortium consisting of the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Its mandate is to facilitate the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa.

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