



Lawmakers benefit from training in natural resource policy and contract negotiations

Windhoek, Namibia, December 20, 2016 (IDEP) - The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) and the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI) recently jointly organized a course on “**Natural Resource Policy and Contract Negotiations**” targeting senior-level government officials involved in mineral policy formulation.

MEFMI Director, Ms. Sehliselo Mpofu, addressing participants said Africa’s natural resource wealth should be used to support poverty alleviation and inspire socially inclusive growth in the MEFMI region.

However, she said, avoiding the ‘resource curse’ in this region would require strong policies, transparency and good governance hence the training offered to senior-level government officials in natural resource policy and contract negotiations.

Ms. Mpofu said building Africa’s negotiating capacity for improved terms of engagement with the rest of the world that in turn would benefit ordinary people was crucial.

Cognisant of existing inadequate capacity in the region for proper management of the continent’s infinite and non-renewable resources, MEFMI developed a Natural Resources Management Capacity Building Programme to help build capacity within government. Training under the programme was done in partnership with IDEP.

The course was designed for senior-level officials involved in mineral policy formulation from Central Banks, Ministries of Finance and Planning and Ministries of Energy and Natural Resources in the MEFMI region with the main aim of developing a critical mass of highly-skilled middle and senior policy officials and decision-makers who would be suitably or better equipped to design and manage natural resources policies in their countries.

Natural resource policy is part of IDEP’s big themes related to mineral policy and training was structured in two parts. The first part was an overview of natural resources management. It looked at the political economy of natural resources management, institutions and governance structures for the management of natural resources, the Africa Mining Vision and its domestication, sustainability of mineral activities, the environmental dimension, corporate social responsibility and job creation, among other topics.

The second part dealt with contract negotiations with the main areas being the actors in negotiations, model contracts, environmental and social protection, fiscal policy and legal frameworks and taxation.

Guest of honour of the opening ceremony, Ms. Ericah Shafudah, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance in Namibia, said she was glad that the course sought to address challenges facing Africa in the management of natural resources.

She added building capacity in the design and management of natural resources policy and in contract negotiation was really crucial for the continent presently.

IDEP stressed the importance of the training for the continent's future growth, adding it was in line with the objectives five and 12 of Agenda 2030. The 'resource curse' discussion did not escape the training with many saying it was sad that African remained poor despite being the richest continent in the world, resource wise raising the need for appropriate policies and their efficient implementation to reduce poverty and promote sustainable growth.

Participants were eager and excited to learn, demonstrating great willingness in acquiring knowledge in the area of contract negotiations. They promised to make the most of the training by giving appropriate advice to their respective ministries and institutions on how to make communities benefit from natural resource wealth and governments to negotiate better contracts with foreign investors.

Participants from Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe attended the course under MEFMI sponsorship while IDEP supported others from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gambia, Nigeria and South Sudan. Of the 29 participants, 14 were women. The training took place from 21 to 25 November, 2016 and was held at Windhoek Country Club Resort in Namibia.

Issued by:

Communications Section

Economic Commission for Africa

PO Box 3001

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Tel: +251 11 551 5826

E-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org ^[1]

Source URL: <http://www.uneca.org/stories/lawmakers-benefit-training-natural-resource-policy-and-contract-negotiations>

Links

[1] <mailto:ecainfo@uneca.org>