



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Published on *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa* (<https://www.uneca.org>)

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Accra, Ghana, 20 July 2017 (ECA) – The Land Policy Initiative (LPI) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) today unveiled a Monitoring and Evaluation of Land in Africa (MELA) project to track progress in the implementation of the African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in 12 African countries.

The pilot project was launched at an inception workshop in Accra, a day after Africa's Land Commissions completed their own workshop on securing community land rights on the continent.

It aims to develop a comprehensive baseline database that will form the basis for future tracking of progress in implementing the AU Declaration on land in Africa.

In her opening remarks to the workshop, Janet Edeme, Head of Rural Division in the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture at the AUC, said: "We recognize that we are to a large extent in uncharted waters given many of our member states have not monitored land governance processes in the past. Even at the global and regional levels, M&E of land governance is still a developing area."

"That is why we are pleased that all of you are here as experts and as institutions also involved in advancing land governance monitoring to assist us as the LPI together with IFPRI which has partnered with us on this journey."

Ms. Edeme said they were hopeful as the LPI, a joint programme of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), "that with your commitment and support to implement this project will facilitate achievement of the call by our Heads of States to put in place mechanisms to track progress" in land governance on the continent.

"We hope this project will enhance your own activities in monitoring how well we are addressing land issues in the land, agricultural and other sectors," she said.

The Declaration

The AU agenda on land as summarised in the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa (2009), commits AU Heads of State to prioritise and lead in land policy review or development processes, support appropriate institutional mechanisms, and budgetary resources for processes of development and implementation of policies.