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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 8 November 2017 (ECA) – The 6th Capitalization Meeting of the European Union-funded Land Governance Program opened in Addis Ababa Wednesday with project implementers meeting to address implementation challenges and advance their knowledge and skills.

The three-day meeting will allow participants to discuss land governance issues in Africa and related issues like the elimination of hunger, poverty, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

These issues depend heavily on how communities gain access to and manage these resources to sustain themselves.

Many people around the world have unequitable access to land, fisheries, forests, and other natural resources, making it difficult to achieve food security.

The traditional and cultural precedents of land ownership and rights present challenges in many countries to achieve food security and sustainable development goals.

Project implementers attending the meeting from 17 countries seek to address implementation challenges affecting the programme and advance their knowledge and skills through sharing experiences.

The EU-supported land governance programme contributes to the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges by integrating application of the AU Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (F&G) and the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) at country level.

The programme receives transversal support through a joint partnership between African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The meeting was attended by project implementers from 10 African countries and Pakistan. It included the sharing of experiences from country level projects in Angola, Malawi and Ivory Coast.

The theme of the three presentations focused on the use of the law in each country to improve the governance of land tenure.

Lalaina Ravelomanantsoa and Sisay Yeshanew from the FAO Legal Office gave presentations on using the law to improve governance of tenure and the VGGT Legal Assessment Framework respectively.

Mr. Sisay noted that the VGGT “provides internationally accepted standards on tenure rights by providing assessments, checking compliance of a country’s laws, and identifying ambiguity in those laws”.

This is done by assessing legal, political, and institutional frameworks that lead to the creation, revision, and implementation of policies and laws by states, government agencies, civil society, private sector, and academia.

The two most used tools for legal assessment are the General Legal Assessment Tool and the Gender Equitable Land Tenure Assessment Tool.

The LAT and the GELAT encourage countries to incorporate legal based indicators into their national legal frameworks to ensure that the laws meet the required standards that promote good governance of tenure.

The meeting, which is part of the upcoming 2nd biennial Conference on Land Policy in Africa (CLPA-2017), ends November 10.

Issued by:

Communications Section
Economic Commission for Africa
PO Box 3001
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel: +251 11 551 5826
E-mail: eca-info@un.org ^[1]

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