



Youth should seize the moment and invest in land

By Christabel Ligame

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Printed by ECA's
Printing and Publishing
Unit

Africa should seize the opportunity to invest in its land, through strategies and interventions that focus on the bulk of the continent's population - the youth, according to sentiments echoed at the opening of the Conference on Land Policy 2017 in Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

While welcoming conference participants, Janet Edeme of the African Union Commission (AUC) lauded the work being undertaken by the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC), formerly the Land Policy Initiative (LPI), in supporting African Union (AU) Member States to develop land policies that protect the rights of communities, women and marginalized communities. She urged participants to explore solutions to land governance in order to contribute to the transformation of the continent.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Deputy Executive Secretary Abdalla Hamdok said equitable access and utilization of land and its resources is vital for sustainable economic growth, increased agricultural productivity and the development of a robust agribusiness on the continent.

"Land forms the basis for agriculture, forestry, mining, industry, tourism and urban development. But to maximize on the benefits of land and its resources, inclusion of land users in decision making on how land is governed and managed is crucial," said Mr. Hamdok, adding that access to land by the youth means

economic empowerment.

"Africa ought to see land as a major resource to enhance food security, peace and security and ensure environmental protection. By developing inclusive land policies, we create an opportunity for investment while simultaneously protecting the interests of the African people," he stressed.

He said that thousands of Africans have been swallowed by the sea or abandoned in the desert, in pursuit of a decent life because they believe there is no hope at home. They testify to the urgent need to act.

Rachael Mwikali, youth and women representative, said young women and men on the continent need to secure land rights as many of them live in rural areas and urban areas but have limited access to land.

However, inheritance and customary practices make transfer of land to women a challenge. This is a challenge for sustainable agriculture.

"Why would you put extra efforts to develop land that is not yours and that you won't be able to pass on to your children?" Ms Mwikali asked. Other people at the Conference have argued that youth are more concerned about accessing land for use as a major priority other than private ownership.

More than 70% of African population is made up by youth. "Why are our voices neglected then?" ask young people in Africa.



The theme of the Africa land policy conference is aligned with the African Union Declaration of 2017 as African's Year of Youth as agents for socioeconomic transformation

Gabriel Negatu, Director General, Africa Development Bank – Eastern Africa said that in Africa, land is not only an economical asset. It is also a social and cultural resource as well as sign for religious and Political identity

“Without proper management of African natural resources it will be difficult to achieve,” said Mr Negatu

“The challenge of policy going forward is to compensate those that are marginalized even as we involve private sector in land use,” he emphasized.

Mathias Schauer, German Deputy Ambassador noted that there is no doubt that land is central to livelihoods and sustainable development”

“Used wisely, Africa’s abundant natural resources and land can help halt youth migration,” he said.

“The key question is how young people can gain inclusive and equitable access to land? Over 70% population of sub-Saharan Africa is below 30 years?”

All speakers agreed that the challenge of policy going forward is to compensate those that are marginalized even as we involve private sector in land use Well-managed and used, resources in the African continent can transform lives and reduce conflicts

Africa is home to 30% of the world’s natural resource wealth. - 12% of oil reserves in the world - 40% of global gold reserves and - 60% of uncultivated lands are in Africa. These resources ought to be used to transform the lives of African people.

Integrated implementation of UN and AU guidelines improves land tenure governance in Africa

The 6th Capitalization Meeting of the European Union-funded Land Governance Program kicked off on 8th November 2017 as part of key pre-events organized in advance of the 14-17 November, Land Policy Conference in Addis Ababa.

Organized by the African Land Policy Center (formerly Land Policy Initiative), the multistakeholder conference is holding on the theme: “The Africa We Want: Achieving socioeconomic transformation through inclusive and equitable access to land by the youth.” This theme supports the declaration of 2017 by the African Union as the Year of Youth under the theme “Harnessing Africa’s Demographic Dividend through Investment in youth”.

Organized by the Land Governance Programme, implementers from 10 African countries and Pakistan attended the meeting to share experiences and implementation challenges on key issues such as the elimination of hunger, poverty, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

The EU-supported land governance programme contributes to the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges. The programme also integrates the application of the AU Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (F&G), as well as 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 support through a joint partnership between the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Alaina 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, the 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. These tools are aimed at encouraging 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.

Ethiopian minister urges IGAD Member States to strengthen dialogue on land governance

A two-day Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) land dialogue opened in Addis Ababa Wednesday, 8th of November, with Ethiopia's State Minister for Natural Resources, Kaba Urgessa, urging IGAD member States to use the platform to share experiences and challenges related to effective land administration. The dialogue was held on the theme, 'Good governance in land administration in IGAD region'.

Mr. Urgessa said land is one critical resource on which Africa's socio-economic development is anchored and therefore should be properly managed.

He noted that the establishment of the regional dialogue is one of the successful achievements of the IGAD member States and development partners and said the platform is an outcome of one of the calls made in the AU Declaration on Land.

"This is the start, we have to continue strengthening the regional dialogue platform to share our best practices and challenges in the land sector and in particular, land harmonizing and integration agenda in the IGAD region," he added.

Governance

For his part, ECA's Capacity Development Division Director, Stephen Karingi, urged Africa to optimally leverage its land resources for its people, stressing that land plays a crucial role in Africa's socio-economic development, hence the need for the continent to optimally use the resource.

"We are all aware that many of our countries continue to face challeng-

es, which are surmountable, including poverty, food and nutrition insecurity and natural and environmental degradation; with serious consequences for our people, especially the most vulnerable," said he said.

Mr. Karingi said one of the root causes was the inefficient and non-inclusive use of the land resources, adding such dialogues would help member States address these challenges.

The ECA Director said the challenges are compounded by the reality that many land administration systems are not informed by rigorous research.

"The result is a system with poor governance and accountability, and as a consequence they do not guarantee security of tenure for the majority of the population including women and vulnerable groups," said Mr. Karingi, adding this should not be the case for a continent with nearly 60 percent of the world's arable uncultivated land.

He said that Africa is yet to optimally leverage its land resources for its people and this is why land governance and administration are important. "It is imperative for member States to develop and put in place efficient land administration systems with high quality of service," he added.

Policies

For his part, Mohamed Moussa, Director of Agriculture and Environment Division at IGAD, said given the importance of land to economic and social development and to ensuring peace and security, the majority of African governments have embarked on land policy and institutional reforms to address land

issues in the context of national development.

"The key issues that need to be addressed in this context are securing land rights to improve livelihoods and facilitate economic development; the centrality of urban land delivery and urban land development; natural resource access and sustaining common property resources; property rights and environmental sustainability; equitable land distribution and restoring wasted and alienated land; land and gender issues; and land and conflict," he told participants.

Swiss Support

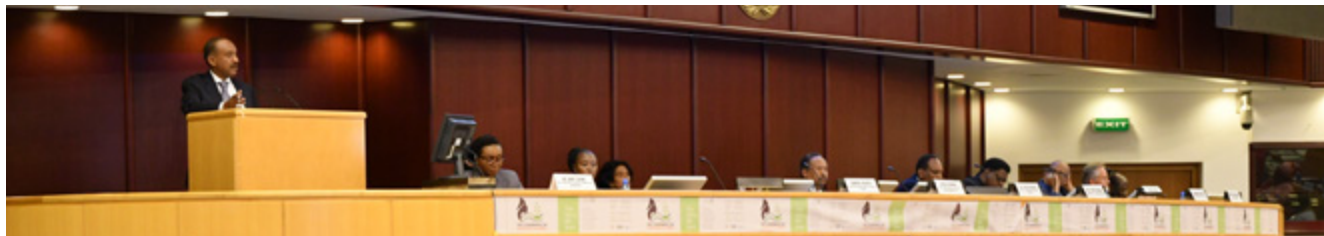
Peter Sidler, from the Embassy of Switzerland in Ethiopia's Swiss Cooperation Office, said Switzerland collaborates with the African Land Policy Centre in supporting African countries and Regional Economic Communities in integrating both, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, known as the VGGT, and the AU Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa into national legislation.

"This regional dialogue platform is a very important step in this regard. On the one hand, the African Union Declaration on Land issues and Challenges requests the RECs together with ECA, the AfDB, and the AUC to establish appropriate institutional frameworks to provide coordination of activities and facilitate mutual learning by member States and convene periodic regional platforms," said Mr. Sidler.



By 2050, Africa's youthful population will reach 1.2 billion. What futures will they have?

Mologadi Makwela



The African Union declared 2017 as Africa's year of youth as agents for socioeconomic transformation. Inclusive participation in decision making and empowerment through access to land and other natural resources can help unlock the Africa's economic potential by harnessing the creativity of the continent's youthful population.

Against this background, the Conference on Land Policy in Africa kicked off on Tuesday, 14 November 2017, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia under the theme The Africa We Want: Achieving socioeconomic transformation through inclusive and equitable access to land by the youth. The conference runs until 17 November 2017.

Youth account for the largest share of Africa's population, yet they have limited access to land, a reality made worse by laws and customary practice which in some countries, make land transfer problematic. Therefore, the AU declaration calling for prioritizing youth and women development to achieve inclusive development through securing land rights for this marginalized group is a welcome and much needed call.

Throughout the continent, women have limited access to markets; made

even more difficult due to the growing influence and strict supply chain control by multinationals, said Youth Representative, Rachel Mwikali.

Moreover, policy fails to account for the diverse needs of women to improve their access to land. For Mwikali, better packaging and dissemination of research and information can help to attract, encourage and empower the youth and women to identify opportunities for participation in agriculture.

Africa is setting its own land policy agenda. However, there remain challenges to Africa's women and youth accessing land to secure livelihoods. In her welcome address, Conference Chair, Dr Janet Edeme of the African Union Commission, warned that implementing land reform policy to ensure tenure security to give access to women and youth cannot be delayed.

This is because giving youth access to land has potential not only to help address rising levels of youth unemployment, but also to mitigate against poverty and its associated social ills such as crime and civil conflict. Both of which are issues many parts of the continent continue to grapple with.

Land an answer to growing continental demands?

The European experience offers numerous examples of how access to land has been a cause for war and civil unrest for centuries. According to Matthias Schauer, German Deputy Ambassador, "Russia's October revolution is an historic example of the devastating consequences of land reforms that failed to account for tradition, culture and economic equity."

Implementing policy to improve access to land, can offer solutions to the growing demands on the African continent, particularly for marginalized groups such as a disgruntled and disillusioned youth population.

Harnessing and nurturing Africa's enormous potential found within its youthful population, could help accelerate economic inclusion. Schauer also warned that "deferring land reform to the future, is an implicit decision to do nothing. It means accepting Africa's position as a subordinate in the community of nations. Therefore it is imperative to act now to secure Africa's future."

Land governance policy is key to sustainable development

Echoing Schauer's sentiments, Mr Gabriel Negatu, Director General of the African Development Bank (Eastern Africa), said without proper governance of natural resources, it will be difficult for African governments to achieve sustainable and equitable development.

Negatu also observed that land in Africa is not just an economic or environmental asset, but equally about social and cultural identity formation. At the center of generational conflicts that shaped access, control and utilisation of land, are social and cultural issues. These





that not all parts of land on the continent are arable. Large parts of land are desert like and not farming conducive. Demand exceeds supply and this can lead to degradation. Therefore it is imperative that policy re-examine and re-structure existing land laws to anchor them within the context of sustainable development.

"A strong and efficient land policy regime in Africa is an idea whose time has come," concluded Negatu. The case is strong for such policy action, and the time to act is now!"

Can we realise the African Union Agenda 2063?

Participants at the Conference believe that the continent is undergoing an economic awakening. To exploit the opportunities that this period has to offer, the continent's 420 million strong youth must be included in strategies to explore and reap the benefits of our natural resources. Their creativity and ability to use opportunities, supported by emerging technology will see Africa thrive.

According to Dr Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Africa accounts for at least 30% of global natural resources, and 60% of uncultivated land is in Africa. If resources are put to good use they can secure livelihoods, reduce conflict and improve lives.

Private investment and infrastructure development has been long touted

as a way to boost economic productivity and competitiveness. However, within the African context, enhancing economic growth should go hand-in-hand with interventions focused on empowering the majority of the continent's population i.e. the youth. To do so, African countries need to develop short to long-term strategies to support and advance women and youth rights to ensure they are not left behind as the continent charges forward.

Africa's leaders would also do well to tap into and exploit opportunities created by rapid technological advancements, in order to explore viable solutions to diversify our economies and expand employment opportunities for the youth.

Creating an inclusive environment is key to bringing about overdue and necessary reforms. Our success as a continent will be boosted by the convergence of researchers, policy makers and civil society actors. The continent's development strategies must be driven by evidence, lived experience and knowledge.

Working together, it is possible to implement land governance policies that are responsible, sustainable and equitable; and to achieve the AU Agenda 2063.

Effective land policy with appropriate implementation can ensure inclusivity of small-scale farmers, women, youth and the sustainability of livelihoods.

are key attributes that development of any national land policy must address.

Emerging global trends of large-scale land invasion for mining, agriculture etc. add to the complexities of addressing continental challenges of land reform. This is because despite growing reverence paid to land reform interventions, patriarchy has colluded with law to discriminate against women and youth accessing land and other natural resources. Laws that entrench patriarchy reinforce the practice of subjugating women and youth. To this end, the challenge for land reform policy is to promote equity, ensure sustainability and at the same time, give rise to legal complexities that can adequately address equitable land use governance.

Similarly, deliberations about the land question in Africa must recognise



Transfer Land to Youth, Governments Urged

Christabel Ligami

“Decisions on land use in Africa are made by the elderly, rarely involving the youth. This leaves young people with no real management responsibilities and few opportunities for investment and economic growth,” says Edson Mpyisi, Chief Financial Economist and Coordinator of ENABLE Youth at African Development Bank Group during the breakout sessions on access to land for women and youth and environment management at the ongoing Conference on Land policy (CLPA 2017) in Addis Ababa.

Due to land scarcity and population pressure, subdivisions of land are taking place across the continent. However important, though, the subdivision of land amongst a large number of siblings can lead to fragmented and unviable land parcels – leaving young people landless or becoming secondary rights users.

In other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in arid and semi-arid areas, land is considered communal property – with little if no fragmentation. In those circumstances, young people are often treated as farm hands or unpaid family workers in the rangelands.

“In Africa, land management system is predominantly customary based. This implies that land and property rights are frequently weak and unclear – inheritance of land is often the preeminent mechanism by which young people obtain access to land,” said Mpyisi.

Moreover, young people in Africa often perceive corruption in land administration as an insurmountable obstacle to the entrepreneurial spirit and access to employment.

The CLPA 2017 emphasizes the youth as agents of change in Africa

Speakers at the conference note that the transfer of land to young people is complex and this limits access which must change.

“The 420 million young people aged between 15-35 years can be gainfully involved in the exploitation of these resources especially through agriculture, manufacturing and industrial sectors”, said Dr Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist of ECA.

Chrispin Matenga, a lecturer at the Department of Development Studies University of Zambia said young people

particularly those who are educated, do not see their future in farming, especially not within the outgrower and plantation models.

South Africa was cited as an example where land issue is at centre of current political and economic discourses.

“Youth in South Africa are at the centre of land issues, with political parties pushing for youth as vanguards of radical economic transformation,” said Admire Nyamwanza of Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Cape Town.

To ensure that the youth are included in land matters, it was recommended that the youth should have a strong voice in land-related policy decisions and implementation. Furthermore, youth-oriented advocacy is needed to improve youth awareness and empowerment. Additionally, land sales and rental markets need to be adapted to the circumstances of the youth, and such arrangements as sharecropping should be facilitated as mechanisms for providing access to land.

The Bank’s ENABLE Youth Program is empowering Youth to establish and run their own agribusiness enterprises along the whole Agricultural Value Chain.

“The key components of the program is to improve the Enabling Environment for decent youth employment

in member countries, dDevelop Agribusiness Incubation, facilitate Access to Finance for the youth agripreneurs and encourages enterprises along the whole food system,” said Mpyisi.

“Over 30 countries have expressed interest in Bank support to implement ENABLE Youth projects in their countries. Six projects (in 6 countries) addressing ENABLE Youth were approved by the Bank for a total of over US \$500 million.”

Data shows that every between 11 and 12 million youth are entering the job market in Africa – whereas only 3 million jobs are created annually – leaving a shortfall of between 8 and 9 million youth.

Also the youth are 2 to 3 times more likely than adults to be unemployed. The majority of working youth are poor and employed in vulnerable, low quality jobs, in the informal sector.

Today, 35% of Africa’s youth, amounting to 143 million people, are either underemployed, unemployed or inactive. By 2025, there will be 181 million young people without stable employment.

If harnessed properly, a growing working age population could support increased productivity and stronger economic growth. If not addressed - they could be a threat.



IGAD Regional Dialogue stresses local solutions for land challenges

IGAD member States have been urged to find solutions to Africa's land challenges through engaging local experts and exploring synergies with research and training institutions.

The dialogue, which concluded on 10th November was held in advance of the 14-17 November Conference on Land Policy in Africa to serve as the launching pad for a platform that would create an enabling environment for member states, regional institutions, development partners, CSOs, private sector and other stakeholders to learn from each other and identify possible areas of collaboration and convergence in taking forward the land policy reform agenda at country and regional level.

The meeting focused on pathways in land administration in the IGAD region in response to the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa.

South Sudan's Land Commission Chairperson, Robert Ladu Luki, thanked the IGAD Secretariat, the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) for organizing the regional dialogue on land governance in the IGAD region.

He said experiences shared were invaluable and would help the Member States in developing policies that would ensure land is optimally used for the benefit of every citizen.

AUC's Jonathan Nyarko Ocran said: "Our knowledge on land issues in the IGAD region has been deepened by the dialogue through sharing experiences. I firmly believe that these efforts will lead to the rapid socio-economic development of the region."

Speaking on behalf of Joan Kagwanja, Coordinator of the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC – formerly the LPI), Belay Demissie Yazew said it was great to have member States' representatives and development partners working tirelessly to come up with a great outcome document that should allow IGAD countries to continue sharing and discussing land issues in their region.

"The impact and results of this dialogue no doubt will also help to inform debate and dialogue in other regional economic communities (RECs) on the continent as they seek to fulfill what is required of them by the AU declaration on land issues and challenges," said Mr. Yazew.

Peter Sidler of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Addis Ababa said: "We are very happy that the inaugural dialogue was such a success. Now we are looking forward to the next dialogue and hope this will inspire other Regional Economic Communities – RECs - to live up to the AU call have these periodic regional platforms to facilitate experience sharing, dissemination of best practices in land policy formulation, implementation and monitoring and related issues."

Mohamed Moussa, Director of Agriculture and Environment Division at IGAD said, "This was an interesting first step which can pave the way for more successful dialogues in the future," he said, adding the wave of land governance reforms in the region needs to be supported by finding new ways of doing business and learning from each other thereby increasing efficiency in managing change and also amplifying the impact of the reforms.

Regional Dialogue Highlights: IGAD and the African Land Policy Center

Participants recommended that the IGAD Secretariat and the African Land Policy Center (ALPC), should, among other things, research into and invest in land use management and land protection for enhanced livelihood options and reversal of land degradation in the region. IGAD should also:

- Explore mechanisms to integrate capacity development in its land governance programs in a manner that supports skills enhancement of Member States; package land information in simple understandable ways to increase visibility and create an online platform for knowledge sharing on land governance.
- Explore mechanisms to engage the private sector on land more strategically to support land



administration in the IGAD region; use existing capacities within the centres of excellence on land governance and convene periodic regional platforms to facilitate experience sharing, lessons learnt and dissemination of best practices in land policy formulation, implementation and monitoring based on member States experiences.

- Strengthen the regional dialogue platform to share best practices and challenges in the land sector, in particular land harmonizing and integration agenda in the IGAD region; undertake learning on how National Engagement Strategies have functioned in order to inform the establishment and sustainability of the IGAD regional multi-stakeholder Platform on Land Governance and

coordinate knowledge exchange and research capacity according to member States' needs.

The dialogue was attended by representatives of the following member States: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. In addition, representatives of the IGAD Secretariat and the Economic Commission for Africa, Africa Union Commission also attended. Bilateral/multilateral agencies were also represented, including UN-Habitat, RCMRD Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (MCMRD), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), USAID and SDC.

