

# Press Release



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## **USAID Announces Launch of Ethiopian Land Research and Development Network Housed at Bahir Dar University**

### ***Academic Network to Focus Ethiopian Research on Land Issues for National Development***

***Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, November 25, 2014*** -- USAID Acting Mission Director, Gary Linden joined President of Bahir Dar University, Dr. Bayile Damte, researchers of the Institute for Land Administration, and academics from around Ethiopia to launch the Ethiopian Land Research and Development Network (ETHIOLANDNET) to close gaps in policy research on land.

Despite the strategic importance of land for Ethiopia's socio-economic progress, the country does not have sufficient field-based evidence informing formulation of policy and development in the land sector. The new network will provide a forum where findings of research and development efforts on land are discussed, debated and published. Ethiopian universities, research institutes, government and non-governmental organizations will participate in ETHIOLANDNET whose establishment is supported by USAID's LAND program, part of the [U.S. Feed the Future Initiative](#).

ETHIOLANDNET will work to promote and disseminate research outputs on land to address development of the country and the largely rural population. Housed at Bahir Dar University, the network will also serve as a national repository of data and research findings on the land sector.

Founding members of ETHIOLANDNET comprise many of the leading academic and research institutions in Ethiopia: Bahir Dar University; Haramaya University; Hawassa University; Mekelle University; Addis Ababa University; Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI); Ethiopian Economic Professionals Association; Forum for Social Studies (FSS); Ethiopian Land Administration Association; Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research; Federal Ministry of Agriculture and The Federal Ministry of Urban Development and Construction.

The network is open for admission to new members and associates of Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian institutions, associations and other networks engaged in the land sector.

In his opening remarks, Acting Mission Director Gary Linden noted the significance of the research network for enhancing land governance: "The success of this network, of your work, will be measured when research results inform the development or the reform of land policies in keeping with the goals of the national Growth and Transformation Plan. I urge you all to seize this opportunity to contribute to learning and the development of this great country whose economic, social and peaceful transformation will advance with able, sustainable, and equitable governance of its vast land resources."

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