

REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON LAND GOVERNANCE, 03-04 SEPTEMBER 2019, NUST HOTEL SCHOOL, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA.

By: Theodor Muduva (Advisor: GIZ-SLGA)

The Namibia University of Science and Technology was selected as the Southern African Node for the Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA). The NELGA Project at NUST was operational since June 2017 and was launched on 19 February 2018.

The Southern African NELGA node at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) held their Regional Land Governance Symposium on 3-4 September 2019 at the NUST Hotel School in Windhoek, Namibia. This symposium is part of the on-going NELGA activity carried out by the Node called “collaborative research”. Fourteen (14) academic institutions from eight (8) Southern African a Regional Scoping Study on Land Governance in 2018.

These academic institutions and respective countries are as follows; 1)Namibia: Namibia University of Science and Technology and University of Namibia, 2)South Africa: University of Venda, University of the Western Cape and University of Pretoria, 3)Zambia: University of Zambia, University of Lusaka and Copperbelt University, 4)Zimbabwe: University of Zimbabwe, 5)Lesotho: National University of Lesotho, 6)Eswatini: University of Eswatini, 7)Botswana: University of Botswana and Ba Isago University and 8) Malawi: University of Malawi and Polytechnic University of Malawi.

The main objectives of the symposium were; a) to identify and discuss land governance challenges and policy implications in Southern Africa, b) To identify opportunities for future research and improvement to land governance in the region.

The symposium was attended by 53 people (including 14 women) mainly from academia but also a few from government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s) and the media. Regional Country Scoping Study Reports from the eight (8) countries were presented and discussed. A draft synthesis report, which is a summary of the regional key issues has been completed and is available on the Symposium page (Visit <http://landsymposium.nust.na>) found on our regional website (<http://nelga.nust.na>). All individual country outputs (abstract, presentations and reports) are also available on the symposium page.

Main speakers at the Symposium were; Dr. Rolf Becker (Dean: Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences, NUST), who gave the welcoming and opening remarks, Dr. Thomas Kirsch (Country Director: GIZ Namibia) delivered the message from partners, Mr. Robert Kahimise (CEO: City of Windhoek), gave the key note address and Prof Mutjinde Katjiua (NELGA Node Coordinator and HOD: Department of Land and Property Studies, NUST) presented the objectives and expected outcomes of the symposium.

On his part Dr. Kirsch highlighted the achievements of NELGA Southern Africa node through the leadership of NUST since its inception in June 2017. This includes the identification of over 20 NELGA partner academic institutions, land governance training, curriculum development,

newspaper opinion pieces on land governance, Hosting DAAD scholarships, academic exchange and policy dialogues. He stated that “GIZ is proud to be a founding partner of NELGA along with the African Land Policy Centre and the World Bank”. Dr Kirsch informed the participants that this particular symposium and research project stems from NELGA’s initiative of promoting demand driven research on land policy issues and connecting scholars and researchers across Africa through academic networks. He further stated that “the efforts of the NELGA through the leadership of NUST in striving to improve the quality of education and research in the area of land governance in the region is visible” Dr. Kirsch concluded that “a symposium like this has a potential to contribute to effective land administration and to find solutions to long standing land-related challenges”.