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“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:
New Drive for Rural Development”

Making National Reforms Work by Building on Pan African Exchange - The Africa Forum Contributing to the Land Reform Process in Namibia

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Abstract

Commitment to pro-poor rural growth is a vital factor to ensure sustainable development in African countries. The Africa Forum, which was established in 1997, brings together representatives from government, the private sector, NGOs, civil society, regional economic communities and donors, in order to provide a platform for discussion to lay the foundation for a more specific sector analysis of the drivers affecting pro-poor rural growth. During the annual Africa Forum meetings, African decision makers exchange experiences on policy and programmes in agriculture and rural development. Findings of these ‘peer-learning’ discussions represent a valued contribution to the international debate on programmes in agriculture and rural development.

As a result of last year’s Africa Forum held in Accra, Ghana, three priority issues driving pro-poor rural growth could be identified for Namibia: harmonising and aligning donor support, good governance and infrastructure development. In Namibia the existing Land Reform Action Plan serves as the guiding programme and the discussions at the Africa Forum revolved around how to support its implementation. A Country Team with representatives from the different ministries involved in Land Reform as well as representatives from the farmer unions and NGOs was established. It is committed to address the priority issues identified during the Africa Forum, as part of the process towards land reform in commercial and communal areas; and in support of pro-poor rural growth.

In Southern Africa, where about 70% of the population is dependent on agriculture, the access to land represents an issue of livelihood. Using the example of land reform in Namibia, this presentation will focus on how the priority issues identified during the Africa Forum are put into practice and which policies have been developed, in order to ensure that the land reform will lead to pro-poor rural growth.

Keywords: Africa forum, land reform, Namibia, programme based approach