**Comenius University / International Journal of Clinical Legal Education Conference**

**ENCLE - IJCLE 2019 Improving the Future: Using Clinical Legal Education to Educate Lawyers for a Just Society**

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| Lead Presenter First Name | Getachew |
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| Organisation of Lead Presenter | Addis Ababa University |
| Name/s and details of other presenters |  |
| Title of Proposal  | Bridging the ‘modern’ and the ‘traditional’ in the Ethiopian Legal System: the role of clinical legal education  |
| Summary of Proposal | Based on the notion of legal pluralism by theorists like John Griffiths, this paper explains the nascent endeavours of clinical legal education in Ethiopia in blending customary and formal laws to ensure access to justice to the poor and vulnerable sections of the society. It argues that more space need to be afforded to customary institutions of justice in order to create multiple points of dispute resolution and thereby ensuring better access to justice.  |
| Abstract Proposal | Ethiopia adopted European based modern codes in the 1950s and 60s which were drafted by comparative law experts such as Rene David of France. The main goal of the legal transplantation was to ‘modernize’ legal transactions and relations. The legal modernization drive aimed at completely disbanding the customary law of the society and creating a uniform legal system based on the Western laws. More than half a century after that attempt, customary law is as vibrant as it has ever been. Since 1991, some customary laws such as customary family and personal laws are now recognized by the Constitution. In most other areas like criminal law, although the law does not formally recognize customary law, de facto they are used by the society. Thus, there is a different degree of both de facto and de jure legal pluralism in Ethiopia at present. Legal education in Ethiopia pays attention to customary dispute resolution system alongside the modern state based laws.  |