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**IFAD**  
**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Executive Board – Eighty-Sixth Session**  
Rome, 12-13 December 2005

**REPORT ON LESSONS LEARNED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Since its creation in 1995, the International Land Coalition has served as a forum for policy dialogue and a convenor of joint programmes and activities involving intergovernmental, governmental and civil society organizations, to improve the rural poor's access to land and related productive assets. The Land Coalition is hosted at IFAD but is independently governed by an Assembly of Members, which meets once every two years, most recently in 2005 in Bolivia, and a Coalition Council comprised of six intergovernmental and eight civil society organizations, which meets twice each year.
2. The Land Coalition operates according to a strategic framework approved by its Assembly. The 2005 Assembly reviewed the progress being achieved and confirmed that the 2004-2006 framework should continue as the basis for the annual programme of work. In so deciding, it acknowledged the results being achieved at global levels and supported the plan to complement this work by strengthening the focus on regional and country-level activities in the period through December 2006.
3. The strategic framework sets out the two key objectives of the Land Coalition: (i) to enhance the capacities of its members and partners to assist poor men and women in gaining and maintaining secure access to land and related support services; and (ii) to create opportunities to influence public policies at national, regional and international levels, through strategies to strengthen the capacity of communities, exchange knowledge, and open or expand spaces for dialogue.
4. The strategic framework puts six strategic thrusts at the core of the Land Coalition's action programme: (i) building coalitions and networks; (ii) creating space for dialogue; (iii) carrying out advocacy; (iv) promoting collective empowerment and capacity-building; (v) documenting and sharing knowledge; and (vi) scaling up civil society experiences. The Land Coalition uses these work areas to exchange knowledge, strengthen networks of civil society organizations and test innovations that can expand the knowledge and elaborate methodologies for use by its members and partners. As such, the Land Coalition is not a project-funding organization in the classical form.

## II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE LAND COALITION IN ACTION

5. The meeting of the Assembly of Members in Bolivia in March 2005 was the year's focal point. It brought together members and partners from 40 countries to share their best practices and to guide the strategic and operational activities of the Land Coalition over the next biennium. This was the first time that the Assembly was convened outside of Rome. The delegates concurred that the experience had been positive and should be replicated in other regions: the Bolivia venue had made field visits possible; brought increased international attention to the issue of agrarian reform, with over 100 media stories and appearances; and provided international solidarity to the President of the Republic and his government and to civil society organizations in support of their joint efforts to overcome the challenges they faced in advancing the land reform agenda in their country. The Assembly's "Declaration for Collective Action" will provide the foundation for the policy and advocacy work of the Land Coalition until the next Assembly in 2007.

6. The Assembly identified ten key lessons learned by Land Coalition members and partners that could guide other organizations in planning agrarian reform programmes: (i) situate access to land in a socio-political framework; (ii) create multi-stakeholder spaces for dialogue; (iii) strengthen the role of communities in policy-making; (iv) promote a precautionary principle for the use of land as collateral; (v) support and protect common property and group rights to land; (vi) advocate for the legal protection of the resource rights of poor households; (vii) encourage government compliance with international commitments to land reform; (viii) support strategies to prevent and resolve resource-based conflicts; (ix) encourage countries to establish inclusive decision-making processes; and (x) use information technology to strengthen collective action.

7. In its report to the IFAD Governing Council in February 2004, the Land Coalition cited nine examples of community-based programmes; six examples of projects where it is supporting policy dialogue within countries; and nine examples of activities undertaken to convene stakeholders and influence international debates and initiatives. These 2004 activities are ongoing, thus requiring support, monitoring and financing by the Secretariat of the Land Coalition during 2005.

8. In 2005, the Land Coalition was active in 62 projects. These included 41 active community empowerment projects in 21 countries, 11 projects within the Knowledge Programme and 10 projects within the Network Support Programme. It also appraised 15 new community empowerment requests.

9. Examples of community empowerment projects include:

- In Brazil, with the Comissão pró Índio do Acre, it promoted environmentally sustainable technologies for managing the agroforestry resources in the territories of 17 indigenous communities.
- In Chile, the Land Coalition worked with the Corporación Privada de Desarrollo Social to provide landless farmers with technical and legal assistance and support to access government credit programmes and production support services in order to strengthen their land rights and raise their levels of production.
- In Guyana, in collaboration with the Amerindian Peoples Association, it supported eight indigenous communities in the Upper Mazaruni River basin to secure their land, forest, water and resource rights by undertaking mapping to demarcate their lands and pursuing litigation to achieve legal recognition of their rights.
- In India, with the Chitrakoot Seva Ashram, it carried out activities to protect and promote land rights in Manikpur Block of Chitrakoot District of Uttar Pradesh.
- In Indonesia, with Yayasan Tanah Merdeka, it worked to resolve conflicts over competing land claims in the communities of Besoa and Pekurehua and in Central Lore, District Poso, Central Sulawesi Province.

- In Madagascar, with a Land Coalition partner, Harmonisation des actions pour la réalisation d'un développement intégré (HARDI), it supported the piloting phase of the national land tenure programme and its decentralization strategy. HARDI is now positioned to play a leadership role with the Government in the next stages of implementation.
- In Nicaragua, with the Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Agropecuarias y Agroindustriales, it supported the Cooperativa de Ahorro y Servicios Múltiples "Mujeres Campesinas de Rivas", a women's cooperative, in strengthening the property rights of women and access to the related productive services needed to improve their livelihoods.
- In South Africa, with the Association for Rural Advancement, it helped strengthen the capacities of farming communities in KwaZulu, Natal enabling them to become active partners in policy and decision-making process affecting their security of tenure.
- In Zambia, in a joint programme involving civil society (the Zambia Land Alliance) and the Government (the Ministry of Lands), it undertook a participatory process for drafting the national land law involving community- and district-level institutions and traditional chiefs.

10. Examples of the knowledge topics being generated and shared globally by the Land Coalition include:

- in Asia, Asian NGO Perspective on Agrarian Reform and Access to Land;
- in Latin America, Territorial Development and Social Pacts;
- in Southern and Eastern Africa, Toward a Common Agenda: Resource Based Conflicts in East and Southern Africa – Politics, Policy and Law;
- in Bolivia, *12 Years of Rural Development – Fundación TIERRA in Bolivia*;
- in Ecuador, *The Cost of Land – Can Land Funds Work for the Poor? A Learning Experience from Ecuador*. This is a case study of an IFAD innovation;
- in Guatemala, Knowledge Management for Building "Defensorías Campesinas";
- in Indonesia, Traditional Natural Resources Management in West Kalimantan;
- in Mali, Analyse du Decret d'Application de la Loi Portant Charte Pastorale en Republique Mali;
- in Peru, Social Organizations and Extractive Industries: Existing Conflicts on Subsoil Resources;
- in the Philippines, Action Research Towards the Reform of Sugarlands; and
- in Uganda, Land Rights Information Center.

11. Examples of Network Support Programme activities include:

- in Central America, regional seminar on overcoming rural poverty in the new global reality;
- in East Africa, supporting the regional dialogue in East Africa between civil society and governments;
- in Southern Africa, undertaking an assessment of gender, land and water rights in the Southern African Development Community region;
- in West Africa, strengthening the regional network on land issues and poverty reduction;
- in Bolivia, establishing a common platform for land access;
- in Cambodia, providing network support to create provincial-NGO linkages;
- in Honduras, assessing agricultural policies and strengthening farmer organizations;
- in Nepal, building a Nepalese land alliance;
- in Nicaragua, reinforcing the rural sector's capacity to influence policies; and
- in Peru, developing a national land watch on the land rights of farmer communities.

12. In pursuing the goal of opening spaces for dialogue at country, regional and global levels, the Land Coalition carried out the following activities in 2005, among others:

- chairing, for the third consecutive year, the Ministerial Round Table on land at the United Nations Economic and Social Council High-Level Segment in New York. The topic for 2005 was land and conflict;
- convening a side event with IFAD at the Beijing + 10 Summit in New York;
- presenting the joint IFAD-Land Coalition study on the lessons learned in establishing land funds to participants at the World Bank Rural Week;
- convening an experts workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, in February 2005 on land tenure issues in the drylands, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Common Property Initiative of the International Food Policy Research Institute (a Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research [CGIAR] centre). Workshop outputs provided the basis for an October 2005 conference on land rights for African development, co-convened by the Land Coalition and UNDP in Nairobi, involving representatives of governments, international organizations, civil society, and academics in Nairobi;
- supporting the preparations for the conference held by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to be held in March 2006 on agrarian reform and rural development, by cofinancing a number of country-level round tables and preparing papers on thematic issues; and
- advancing the formation of national forums for policy dialogues (LAND Partnerships) involving governmental, civil society, private sector, multilateral and bilateral organizations in Benin, Bolivia, Guatemala, Indonesia, the Philippines and South Africa.

### III. COMMUNICATION

13. Communication is central to the activities cited in this report. Sharing lessons learned and knowledge, strengthening networks, shaping public policies and advocacy depend on the capacity of the Land Coalition and its members to effectively interact – in person, electronically and through printed communications.

14. The Secretariat's communication functions are embedded in all of its activities. This is achieved by updating and enhancing the web site, expanding distribution of the newsletter (produced three times per year), releasing new publications, and producing compact discs to make the resources of the Land Coalition and its members available to one another and in the public domain.

15. The website is one, among various, indicators of the growing value that others place on the resources of the Land Coalition. The number of visitors per month has grown significantly, from 2 500 in August 2004 to 15 000 in September 2005. Even more significant has been the increase, over the same period, in the number of downloaded files: from 3 500 to 30 000 files per month. This demand and use indicator for the knowledge available through the Land Coalition confirms the importance of effective communication tools and systems.

### IV. NEW PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS

16. In 2005, Belgium confirmed the funding of USD 500 000 for the implementation of the Collaborative Action on Land Issues programme in Niger and Uganda. And, with support of USD 200 000 from Switzerland, the Land Coalition is starting additional programmes in Benin and Madagascar.

## V. NEW POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

17. Contributing to the development of public policy by generating new and additional knowledge, best practices, community-based experiences and normative work is an important component of the way the Land Coalition adds value to its membership and positions important land themes in its advocacy and on the agendas of international, regional and national events. In 2005, it undertook work, in collaboration with both intergovernmental and civil society partners, in five areas: (i) conflicts over land; (ii) common property; (iii) tenure issues and pastoralists; (iv) the cost of land: can land funds work for the poor; and (v) a comparative review of multilateral and bilateral land policies and programmes. Published results are available from the Secretariat.

## VI. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

18. Sharing in the benefits of a coalition must also involve sharing in securing the required resources. IFAD's support has been and remains essential. The Land Coalition could not have achieved the results it has, nor would it be able to move forward without the support of IFAD, which in 2005 amounted to USD 900 000 and in 2006 will be USD 965 000.

19. The Land Coalition has other and expanding sources of additional funding. The World Bank continues to support the Community Empowerment Facility and the Netherlands multi-year contribution continues to finance the LAND Partnership programme. The Canadian International Development Agency provided CAD 225 000 for 2005, and discussions are under way for this to be renewed for 2006 and for 2007. Contributions in 2005 from Switzerland of USD 200 000 and from Belgium of USD 500 000 have added to the funding diversification of the Land Coalition.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

20. The accomplishments in 2005 reflect positively on the expanding ownership, initiatives and roles of members and partners in implementing the actions, and joining forces to achieve the objectives, of the Land Coalition. This growing participation reflects the value that others attach to the Land Coalition.