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**IFAD****INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT****Governing Council – Twenty-Eighth Session**

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## **REPORT ON LESSONS LEARNED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION: ADVANCING THE LAND RIGHTS OF THE RURAL POOR**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The International Land Coalition (ILC) is a global alliance of intergovernmental, governmental and civil society organizations. The Coalition works together with the rural poor to increase their secure access to natural resources, especially land, and enable them to participate directly in policy and decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods at local, national, regional and international levels. The ILC is hosted at IFAD but is governed independently by six intergovernmental and eight civil society organizations. In 2004, two new members joined the Coalition Council (ILC's governing body) – the International Food Policy Research Institute (the sixth intergovernmental organization) and LandNet West Africa – thus widening the reach of the ILC into West Africa.

### **II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE ILC IN ACTION**

2. In 2004, the Coalition Council approved the strategic plan for the period ending December 2006 and amended the governance framework, as directed by the Assembly of Members at its meeting in February 2003. The strategic framework identifies the two primary objectives of the ILC: first, to enhance the capacity of its members and partners to assist poor men and women in gaining and maintaining secure access to land, including through access to related support services; and second, to create opportunities to influence public policy decisions at the national and international level through strategies that, among other things, strengthen the capacity of communities, exchange knowledge, and open up and expand spaces for dialogue.

3. The ILC is not a project-funding organization in the classical form. It uses projects as a means to exchange knowledge, strengthen networks of civil society organizations, and test innovations that can widen the understanding of ways where by the rural poor can obtain secure access to land and related support services.

4. In 2004, the ILC assisted farmers' organizations and landless people's and civil society movements in 36 countries with the goal of building strategic partnerships to more effectively shape land policies and support community-based programmes. ILC's scope has grown significantly during the past year. At present, it is involved in 6 knowledge projects, 10 network support programmes, 37 community empowerment projects, and 5 women's resource access programmes.

5. Examples of these programmes include:

- Supporting a local organization in Cameroon – Organisme de développement, d'étude, de formation et de conseils (ODECO) – in a pilot project to build awareness of land rights and support beneficiaries in obtaining property title deeds. A guide on the registration of land rights will be distributed through local and international networks.
- Supporting the Zambia Land Alliance (ZLA) in establishing and implementing a participatory process involving villagers, governmental institutions and other stakeholders in a revision of the land law. Recommendations have been presented by the ZLA-coordinated Policy Review Committee to the Zambian Constitutional Review Commission.
- Supporting LandNet West Africa for capacity-building of this regional network and to facilitate participation in country-led processes to prepare poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) in Malawi, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Strengthening the South African Development Community's Platform on Women's Land and Water Rights through research and assessment in Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Strengthening the Association for Protection of Landowners' Rights (APLR) in Georgia. APLR is an organization actively involved in supporting civil society in establishing community-based organizations.
- Supporting the land rights of forest dwellers in Albania and facilitating the transfer of land titles from the state to communities. The local organization – Transborder Wildlife Association (TWA) strengthened the social network so that their interests could be presented to policy-makers.
- Providing leadership training for farmers in West Java, Indonesia, to facilitate their participation in land-policy formulation on equal footing with local governments and legislatures.
- Supporting fishing families in India to secure their access rights to the lake upon which their livelihoods depend.
- Working with its Bolivian partner – Centro de Investigación, Promoción y Desarrollo de la Ciudad (CIPRODEC) – to successfully recuperate land for landless residents along the Arque River in the municipality of Cochabamba. This initiative increased food security and generated indigenous people's income.

6. Further to these activities, the ILC undertook a number of other actions designed to open up space for dialogue. These activities ranged from the national level to the international level. National-level activities included:

- Establishment of Land Alliance for National Development (LAND) partnerships, which aim to create national round-table forums where government and civil society actors can

work together to develop policies and strategies for more equitable access to land and related productive factors.

- In 2004, the LAND Partnership in The Philippines resulted in the Second National Round Table, attended by participants representing a cross section of ministries and civil society organizations dealing with land issues. The outcome of the round table was a joint plan of action that established a collaborative work programme.
- In South Africa, an agreement with the Department of Land Affairs and three NGO partner organizations of the ILC will result in participatory consultation processes for formulating a national implementation strategy for national land reform policies.
- In Indonesia, ILC staff members have worked with local NGO partners and government officials to devise a plan of action and seek consensus for establishing national-level partnerships. The agreements established in 2004 will result in the first National Round Table in February 2005.
- In Guatemala, an agreement was established among various actors for the preparation of a workshop to bring experiences from around the Latin American region to the attention of decision-makers in Guatemala. By sharing these strategies, it is felt that some of the difficulties and challenges facing the country may be overcome.
- Further to the initial four pilot countries for land partnerships, the ILC has developed programmes with NGO partners, IFAD and BSF, and has conducted country missions that will lead to the establishment in 2005 of national round tables in Bolivia and in Benin. Similar activities in Burkina Faso, Niger and Uganda are expected to commence shortly.

7. At the international level, the ILC is increasingly being turned to as a convening body for discussion and idea-sharing.

- In 2004, the ILC co-chaired the session on securing access to land at the Shanghai Conference on Scaling Up Poverty Reduction, sponsored by the World Bank and the People's Republic of China.
- In June 2004, the ILC co-convened – together with the President of Benin – the Ministerial Round-Table Discussion on 'Turning Assets into Usable Capital in LDCs', under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council at UN headquarters in New York.
- In February and March 2004, the ILC convened an electronic consultation on the draft Land Policy Guidelines of the European Union (EU), at the request of the EU's Land Policy Task Force. This process generated comments and recommendations from over 30 civil society and intergovernmental organizations around the world, including IFAD, which were used to revise the policy paper before resubmission to the EU Council. This was recognized by the European Commission as important input for finalization of the paper, which was subsequently approved by the European Union. The Member States will now be requested to incorporate this policy into their own national legislations.
- The role of the ILC has been acquiring a heightened profile within the UN system, resulting in an invitation from the United Nations Development Programme to co-convene a global workshop, together with the System-Wide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), in Nairobi in February 2005. The workshop will examine land policies and programmes in dryland areas and common-property systems, with a view to ensuring that lessons learned are reflected in broader national land policies.
- The ILC case study from The Philippines examined potential for scaling up and illustrated how work with its partner organizations at the community level in The Philippines has created a countrywide network whose voice is now being heard in national policy dialogue through the ILC-supported Land Partnership Programme. The ILC is also drawing on the community-based and national experiences of its partners to provide an analysis of global land policy issues.

- In 2004, the ILC published – in conjunction with IFAD and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – a progress report on rural women’s access to land and property in selected countries, based upon governments’ compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This report has been very much in demand as governments and civil society find its analysis useful in their policy development work.
- In India, for instance, the report has been translated into five local languages by national women’s networks in preparation for their advocacy campaigns with their government, as part of the ten-year review of the Women’s Platform for Action. The process was replicated in Nepal and Pakistan. These processes have been facilitated by the ILC and will lead to a joint IFAD/ILC side event to the Beijing+10 meeting in New York in March 2005.
- The ILC’s analysis has also addressed the key challenge of financing access to land. In this respect, land funds are reappearing as a mechanism receiving consideration by both donors and governments alike. The ILC has undertaken an analysis of IFAD’s land fund experience in Ecuador to serve as an example for other donors in designing future land fund programmes.
- The ILC is increasingly being called upon by its other international partners to join in the development and implementation of country-focus programmes. Within countries, the ILC’s relations with civil society are often an asset to its intergovernmental partners. The convening role of the ILC is also an important contribution.

### **III. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

8. The ILC aims to become an alliance characterized by shared opportunities and shared contributions of the resources needed to implement its strategic plan. While support to the ILC has come from various sources, IFAD’s support has been essential. The ILC would neither have achieved its goals to date nor would it be able to go forward were it not for the prior and current contributions from IFAD. For example, IFAD’s grant in December 2003 of USD 500 000 provided, in large measure, the administrative and programme support for 2004. Similarly, the grant approved in September 2004 of USD 900 000 is supporting the 2005 operations. The ILC also has other important sources of support. Funds from the World Bank continue to support the Community Empowerment Facility programme. The Government of the Netherlands supports the LAND Partnerships programme. Negotiations are nearing completion with Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), for the first of what is expected to become an annual contribution. Belgium has indicated that funding approval is soon expected for a pilot programme that may, if successful, result in further funding. Discussions to establish annual contributions from several other donors are also under way.

### **IV. CONCLUSION**

9. The activities of 2004 illustrate the efforts being undertaken by the ILC to implement the founding vision that the improvement of secure access to productive resources by the rural poor requires the enabling policies and programmes of governments, the effective participation of the many organizations of civil society and the encouragement and support of the international community.