



International Land Coalition

Global Assembly 2005

Land is Life

Secure Access to land helps reduce poverty

Santa Cruz, Bolivia – 19-23 March 2005

Working Groups

GROUP C

Related thematic section

Land and Territorial Development

Land is one of many interconnected factors affecting the dynamics of rural space or territory. The opportunities for poor men and women depend on how the development of the territory incorporates such interactions, such as those between the urban and rural; farm and non-farm; governmental authorities; community organizations and the private sector; social and environmental factors and the inclusiveness of agreements, and decision-making processes affecting these relationships.

Working group section

Land, Territorial Development and Collective Action

Both territorial development and collective action can improve tenure security and strengthen rights, resolve conflicts over natural resources, increase food security and improve rural livelihoods. What forms does territorial development take in practice? How can collective action reinforce or strengthen democratic processes?

Goals of working group activity

1. Participants have an active discussion and exchange of ideas.
2. An opportunity to understand both our common points and our differences in thinking style about these issues, and in our working methodologies to address them.
3. A chance to build relationships with other organizations which could help you in your work – and to understand what are challenges to maintaining relationships that could be useful for your work.
4. Identify specific actions or ways that the ILC could support communication, partnership, networking, or knowledge exchange on these themes.

What you should produce

- Your working group will give a presentation to the whole assembly; this will be a chance to share your group's ideas, points where you agreed, differences of opinion, and your recommendations and suggestions for moving forward.
- Please keep notes and make a written summary, which will help us to share your ideas with other organizations in the ILC network after the assembly. We hope that this will create alternatives for sharing knowledge and strengthening networks at both global and regional levels. Let's promote the new ways of thinking!

Participants:

1. CEDETI – Ana-Cristina Bettancourt
2. CEPES – Stefano Digessa
3. ELCI – Samuel Wawerungoto
4. FEPP – Wilson Navarro
5. SARRA – Rohini Reddy
6. FAO – Gonzalo Flores
7. APLR – Jaba Ebanoidze
8. TIERRA – Jaime Burgoa
9. CODER – Jorge Alberto Majorga
10. ALRD – Mizanour Choudhury
11. TWA – Stavri Pllaha
12. SDF – VB Rawat
13. ANGOC – Tony Quizon
14. CODECA – Mauro Vay Gonon
15. CIPRODEC – Cecilia Balderrama
16. APENOC – Eduardo Belleli
17. IMSE – Biplap Hilar
18. IFAP – David King
19. RMI – Ulfa Hidayati
20. WFP – Lubna Alaman
21. UNDP – Joel Vargas
22. CEPES - Stefano Dimessa
23. North-South Institute NSI – Stephen Baranyi
24. ILC – Barbara Codispoti

KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE WORKING GROUP:

1. Mobilizing groups around land rights may be relevant to contribute to the creation of community-based organizations (CBOs), CBOs and their formal and informal networks are essential for social cohesion through collective action.
What are the lessons learnt on this subject that you could share with other institutions?
What are the most significant challenges that you have faced?
2. Community based organizations become actors for change in their territories. How can interactions between social, cultural, economic and political actors that share the same territorial space be promoted or supported?
3. From access to land to territorial development. ¿What does this mean for you?
4. How can we work together to promote a territorial development focus and how the Coalition can support this?

FACILITATOR: Wilson Navarro - FEPP

WRITER: Cecilia Balderrama - CIPRODEC

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Initial round of presentations: Names/what does land mean for you?

Wilson Navarro: Solidarity

V.B Rawat: Information

B. Halim: Union is strength to eradicate poverty in our countries;

J.A. Mayorga: Empowerment;

U. Hidayati: Reducing rural poverty;

Cecilia Balderrama: territorial management and citizenship;

S. Mwanundu: local development;

Barbara Codispoti: Building new models from the local level, articulated with the national level. Governmental action; peasant's federation, equality

D. King: linking property rights with a sustainable management of natural resources

A. Betancourt: sustainable natural resources management. Equity and sustainability

L. Alaman: food aid; food for life, growth and work

Stevens: Conflicts: resolution and impacts

S. Di Gessa: territorial identity

E. Belelli: right to health and territory.

M.Vay Gonón: unity to fight for social change

Norma: Consolidation

R.Reddy: food right at the household level

S.W Gotho: make voices heard

Working group discussion:

Can collective action help improve access to land for poor farmers?

Yes, but a number of factors have to be taken into consideration:

- Social and collective mobilization around land is not always easy to achieve. Often, local associations are part of wider economic and social strategies.
- Social organization around land varies, depending on whether the associations focus on political, economic or productive approaches, or are promoted from the State or from the local institutions.
- In order to understand a certain local social articulation, it is important to understand the moment in history and the processes that the communities are facing, for example: processes related to access and land titling, current political situation, social stratification, participation of women, young and elderly people in the civil-society groups, etc. Indeed, the gender approach needs to be recaptured to bring women into the process and promote their rights to land.
- Land is not only an economic asset; it also represents social and political power. It is for this reason that land property rights and land user rights are often ignored or delayed by conservative elites.
- Sharing experiences of people facing similar constraints in their access to land and the solutions they applied can help building up confidence and promote action.

Regarding territorial development and actors involved, the participants made the following points:

- For an effective participation of all stakeholders, the most disadvantaged sectors, such as poor communities, need to be supported with information, training, development planning and negotiating skills so they can arrive to the negotiation table with equal opportunities.
- Involving all stakeholders in a dialogue on territorial development may need to promote parallel processes of 'citizenship building'. Often poor farmers and indigenous communities are literally excluded from the civil sphere- i.e. they have no identity cards, never held a birth certificate.
- Support to land organizations need not necessarily be in the form of very focussed interventions (technical assistance), as proposed by some donors. Rather, the issue should be approached through empowerment - although some donors are reluctant to adopt this method, considering it to be political.
- Public policies can be influenced through dialogue with the authorities/governments. Remaining at the local level should be avoided.
- There is a need to guarantee the right of territorial identity.

One of the issues emerging strongly concerned conflict around land. Participants asked the Coalition to:

- collect cases studies which show how to manage, transform, resolve and avoid land conflicts, sharing such information with members and partners.
- Build on the knowledge of different organizations, and within different countries, in order to create an international platform around land issues and conflict management.

CONCLUSIONS :

- Adopt an holistic approach to land issues
- Identify all actors involved.
- Influence needs to brought to bear in public policies
- Involve farmers in civil society movements
- Identify rights to territorial identity
- Adopt a dual-track strategy: (a) identify solutions to land issues and (b) build up capacity and citizenship among farmers and indigenous groups, often excluded from social processes.

Towards a territorial development, - The role of the Coalition

The territorial development approach goes beyond access to land; it implies having the means also to make land productive. In other words, it concerns not only the right to land but also the obligations of the state to guarantee sustainable development of both the land and communities.

Therefore, the Coalition should work with both the communities and with civil society to (a) improve access to land, and (b) influence government policies.

Concrete actions for the Coalition:

- assist in the establishment of strategic alliances for the socio-economic integration of the territory;
- share knowledge;
- study of new areas, such as conflict, collective action and public policy influencing;
- influence government policies on land;
- promote of alliances among development agencies and donors: new partners should share goals with other Land Coalition members;
- employ communication tools, such as the Land Coalition's newsletter and the website, to meet these challenges;
- identify and promote new spaces for building up dialogue and creating partnerships;
- promote new contacts and agreements through auspices of the Secretariat.