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Collective Action

Natural resources are public goods. On paper, sustainable development policies aim to protect the public's long-term right to share in the benefits resulting from the use of these resources. Such policies define who has rights to use which resources, for which purposes, under which conditions and for how long. But when and where resource decisions are made by powerful parties with short-term interests, the wider population, particularly rural poor communities, are often powerless to negotiate their rights to an equitable share of the benefits. They may be further disadvantaged where political elites and the landed class are linked, if not the same.

Strong community associations and well-organized networks can equip poor men and women with collective influence and security. This is even more essential where land grabbing and intimidation is common. Collective action cannot only empower the poor to gain and

maintain their land rights, but also to access rural finance, technology, training, markets, and legal services. Collective action can also produce environmental benefits through the creation of territorial land management and by uncovering valuable local knowledge that can expand the rural economy and improve policy formulation.

Added to deeply entrenched and historic challenges, the poor must now confront the forces of globalization, with the demand for land policies favourable to direct foreign investment. Unless rural poor households are represented in policy debates by institutions under their control, their already fragile livelihoods may fall into further risk. Already documented cases of conflicts involving transnational and extractive industries provide advance warning of the need to protect the resource rights of rural communities. While foreign investment may be very important, it should be neither at the expense of

the poor, nor be allowed to affect the long-term sustainability of the resources upon which current and future generations depend.

As this edition of *Advancing Together* reports, the desire to participate in public debate is illustrated in Mali, where farmers and small-scale producer associations voiced their positions in a People's Forum (page 6) on globalization and land rights. The right of peoples' organizations to freely organize and engage in public debate without intimidation and violence by state or private institutions, is fundamental to good governance, as is the right to represent their resource rights and claims. The Land Coalition is aware of many situations where basic human rights have been violated, including the loss of life of indigenous peoples and farmers. The right to participate and the rights of free assembly are essential to the public dialogue needed for effective land policy reform.

One of the Land Coalition members also reminds us that "*freedom does not come from charity but from equal partnership in the building of society*". Indeed, collective action is often manifest in efforts to forge partnerships across institutions, as in Zambia (page 10), where a civil-society alliance worked with the government to organize district meetings so that community men and women could directly present their points of view on the proposed reforms.

Effective partnerships require that all partners not only respect each other's rights to participate in civic life, but also support their access to information so that they can participate in full awareness of the implications and consequences

involved. While the Land Coalition encourages dialogue and negotiation, it also recognizes that countervailing strength is needed to offset the wide differences in power among participants. Accordingly, collective action, in the form of strengthening the institutions of the rural poor, is one of the most essential counter-balancing requirements. Without the tools and freedom to act collectively, rural poor households lack the power to participate on an equitable footing with other interests.

Collaborative Action on Land Issues (CALI)

The International Land Coalition, IFAD and the Belgian Survival Fund have formed a tripartite relationship that is partnering with governmental and civil-society organizations in both Uganda and Niger to support pro-poor land policy formulation and implementation.

To be known as Collaborative Action on Land Issues, or CALI, this pilot project will use a multi-partner, action-research approach to deepen the understanding of the country specific land issues and develop appropriate policy and programme responses. For example, in Uganda, CALI will research and document key land issues that are central to mediating rural poverty, in order to establish the basis for their inclusion in the new policy, its regulations and related legal and operational frameworks. The research will include an assessment of community-based and institutional approaches and innovations that have the potential to be scaled-up and replicated. A Partners' Forum comprising various government agencies, CSOs, research institutes, CBOs and international partners, will be established not only to share the emerging knowledge, but also to foster improved and ongoing stakeholder collaboration, and to monitor the implementation of land policies at national, district and local levels. Discussions have also been opened with the partners in Niger to validate the conceptual framework and to establish a programme of work to operationalize CALI.

Common Property Resources Sharing Knowledge and Strengthening Policy

As a convener of diverse stakeholders, the Land Coalition provides a participatory arena for policy debate and development among its members and partners. These debates have four primary purposes. First, the debate elevates an important land policy in the public arena, drawing the need for it to receive more policy attention and operational support. Second, it provides a dialogue space for the exchange of knowledge, experience and lessons learned among members and partners. Third, it attracts new organizations to associate with the Land Coalition. And, fourth, it establishes the perspective taken by the Land Coalition in its policy development and advocacy work, knowing that the positions and opinions expressed have emerged from a consultative process within the membership.

In 2004, common property was identified as an important thematic topic for on-going discussion. Furthermore common property was selected in order to widen the public debate on land, which appeared to have a bias toward individual property rights and could be to the neglect of households dependent on other property regimes for their access to productive resources.

The resulting process involved the setting up of a global internet collaborative study on "Rural Common Property in a Perspective of Development and Modernization" which has been facilitated on a tri-partite basis by the FAO Land Tenure Service, the CGIAR's Collective Action on Property Rights initiative (CAPRI), and the International Land Coalition. The main goal of the study was to understand better the latest developments in common property, and identify lessons for strengthening common tenure regimes, as and where appropriate. In order to ensure that the results were grounded in reality, case studies were contributed by researchers, civil-society organizers and government officials from 19 countries. A synthesis paper is being finalized. It is organized by six themes; namely, (i) Tenure systems and access to common property resources (CPRs); (ii) Use, management and production of CPRs; (iii) Community organization and collective action; (iv) Conflict and conflict management; (v) Pressures, challenges and threats to CPRs; and, (vi) Innovations.

The knowledge gained from this initiative will, in the near term, provide important input to the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in Brazil in March, and the Biennial Conference of the International Association for Common Property to be held in Bali in June 2006.

A summary of the case studies is available in English, French and Spanish on the Land Coalition's website: www.landcoalition.org and the actual case studies will be published as part of the final report to be issued as a CD in early 2006. Case studies can be found on the Dgroup forum:

www.dgroups.org/groups/fao/landcoalition/index.cfm

Lessons from Experience: Addressing Challenges through Collaboration

LandNet Meeting in Nairobi

The Steering Committee meeting of LandNet East Africa (LandNet Rwanda, Kenya Land Alliance, Uganda Land Alliance, LandNet Tanzania), held in Nairobi from 28-29 October, was enriched by the presence of the Land Coalition delegation comprising LandNet West Africa, (Togo and Burkina Faso) along with other members from South Africa, Zambia and Madagascar and the Rome Secretariat.

The participants pinpointed common issues existing at country levels, such as: women's land and property rights; communal versus customary land tenure; historical land dispossession – particularly in Southern Africa; ownership and access to natural resources; conflict over land; migration; governance in the land sector (gaps between policies, laws and their implementation); privatization of public resources and trans-boundary issues.

The concurrence of common issues and challenges arising from individual presentations reinforced the need for energetic and effective regional networks to tackle these matters through the experiences of others, forming a collective vision and taking joint actions.

The discussion reflected on experiences and problems which previously caused a stall in regional network activities and, in the case of Southern Africa, the apparent collapse of the network. Lack of expertise and effective coordination, poor communication among members and the lack of "institutional memory" (a dependency on individuals), were among some of the issues raised by the participants,

The analysis of problems left ground for debate on possible solutions that ultimately flowed together into proposed work plans. In regard to the lack of information and coordination, discussion aimed at developing a comprehensive database, together with the necessary expertise, to permit members to examine regional issues and identify the choice of methodologies that could be employed.

In order to ensure network sustainability, the secretariat should assess the hosting organization's capacity to dedicate sufficient staff-time and administrative support. Moreover, to guarantee institutional life beyond individuals, established procedures and regular communication channels need to be in place.

The delicate issue of lack of resources must be managed with a comprehensive strategy encompassing: multiple source fundraising; a small membership fee to create an incentive to participate; enlargement of the future membership; and clear responsibilities to ensure participation by the members in sharing the task of making the network effective.

The meeting afforded the opportunity to build workplans for LandNet East Africa and LandNet West Africa, and to revive a Southern Africa LandNet. The idea of having a LandNet for Islands in the Indian Ocean involving Madagascar was also discussed. Finally, people examined the potential for collaboration among the different LandNet networks in Africa.

The participants had the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience during the subsequent conference "Land Rights for African Development: From Knowledge to Action", co-sponsored by UNDP and the Land Coalition (see article on page 9) where a number of the LandNet members were official speakers, panelists and presenters of country case studies.

For further information please contact Mr Peter Giampaoli - Uganda Land Alliance at ula@africaonline.co.ug

UNEP's Membership Strengthens International Land Coalition

In his letter of June 27 Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme wrote *"I am pleased to inform you that UNEP is interested in joining the International Land Coalition. I believe that UNEP's acceptance of this invitation will enhance our impact in the area of natural resources management and poverty alleviation through sustainable land and dryland management. In particular we hope that our partnership will enhance our efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, especially No.7 (Ensure environmental sustainability), No.1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) and No.3 (Promote gender equality and empower women)".*

For more information visit UNEP's website: www.unep.org

The Consortium for Agrarian Reform

Indonesian Institutions Working Together for People's Land Rights

Under 30 years of authoritarian rule, access to land in Indonesia was controlled by the state, and oriented toward commercial exploitation of natural resources. In 1994, sufficient space opened, making possible the formation of the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (*Konsorsium Pembaruan* - KPA). With the goal of achieving the fair distribution of agrarian resources for the people of Indonesia, hope was given by being able to take this crucial step toward guaranteeing prosperity for poor men and women.

A decade later, KPA has grown into a national network of NGOs and people's organizations from different sub-sectors of the agrarian justice movement. It is a channel for people's organizations to engage with government, with the result that the agrarian reform debate is back in the national policy arena, if not yet firmly on the national policy agenda.

In September 2005, KPA held its fourth national assembly in North Sumatra province, bringing together more than 100 of its member organizations from across the country. Participants affirmed KPA's mandate to use collective action to confront imbalances in power confirming key priorities to be:

- Strengthening the capacity of people's organizations to defend their rights, and engage in public campaigns and debate.
- Advocating in local and national policy arenas for the implementation of existing laws that provide for land and agrarian rights, and actively resisting policies that are contrary to the interests of peasants.
- Building a larger network in alliance, not only among supporters of agrarian reform, but also with related interests from the labour movement, urban poor, legal professionals, journalists, artists and others.
- Emphasizing that agrarian justice is a central element of broader political reform in Indonesia, as reflected in its slogan, "There will be no democracy without land reform".

In October 2005, KPA kpa@kpa.org accepted the nomination to serve as one of the eight civil-society members of the Coalition Council for a four-year period. Along with the eight CSO representatives, there are six Council members from intergovernmental organizations.

The Amerindian Peoples Association at ECOSOC

In 2005, as in the two prior years, the Land Coalition invited civil-society representatives to be partners in their delegation to the High Level Session of the UN Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC). The Land Coalition does not want to speak for its partners at these meetings, but wants to ensure that the civil society part of its membership has access to the highest levels of debate within the UN system. Martin Cheong of the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) in Guyana was a lead panellist at the 2005 Ministerial Roundtable organized at UN–NYC by the Land Coalition on the topic of "Land and Conflict".

In Guyana, the experience with land conflict reflects the uphill challenges faced by indigenous peoples worldwide. The APA saw its participation at the 2005 ECOSOC meeting as a rare occasion on which to present a "real" picture of the effects of land conflicts on indigenous peoples to the member governments of the UN system – people who can make a difference.

The Ministerial Roundtable heard the views and concerns from ministerial representatives from Brazil, South Africa and Jamaica, among others, on the need for commitment to address the critical and conflictive issue of land access. APA was emphatic in emphasizing that policies only make a difference if they are implemented, noting that the past is full of words and good intentions. It was also heartening to hear the President of IFAD, Lennart Båge, confirming his organization's commitment to empowering indigenous and other rural peoples through improved access to productive resources. The importance of effective land policies was further emphasised by Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP, who spoke of the value his organization attaches to their membership in the Land Coalition, noting the development nexus of land, conflict and the degradation of natural resources.

In the discussion paper presented to the Roundtable, the Land Coalition drew attention to the following issues:

- 1 Land conflicts have an enormous impact on the fight against hunger and poverty; on the goal to empower women; on building peace and security; on sustainable land use; and on the vision for a world where people live in a "larger freedom" — the vision put forward by the UN Secretary-General.

- 2 Land conflicts are complex because they involve many actors with vested interests; inter-connected processes; multiple authorities; biases in the rule of law; and, in the more complex situations, conflicts are an accumulation of grievances which may be embedded in wider and deeper conflicts.
- 3 The roots of conflicts are numerous; including: structural or historically-based inequalities; economic and social policies and patterns of growth and development; political or territorial disputes; communities in competition with commercial interests - particularly extractive industries; overlapping jurisdictions among government ministries; former landlords and land reform beneficiaries; intrusions onto pastoralist lands and, contradictory regulations, such as differences in legal and customary ways of managing or mediating land rights.
- 4 Land tenure institutions are inherently political, meaning that the resolution of land conflict is subject to significant power imbalances between stakeholders. This may involve different levels of political influence, ability to block negotiated agreements, moral claims on public sympathy and unequal access to legal protection during the escalation of a conflict and the resolution process. Strengthening the institutions of less powerful groups to negotiate and defend their interests with legislators and public officials is an essential pre-condition to conflict mediation.

Together We Can Make Poverty History

For the first time since the founding of the United Nations, the UN General Assembly convened a two-day Informal Interactive Hearing involving a cross-section of some 200 civil-society organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and some 1,000 observers. Mr. V.B. Rawat, from the Social Development Foundation (SDF), an NGO advocating the rights of marginalized peoples in India, represented the Land Coalition. The following is a summary of his report.

The hearings which were centred on the clusters of the SG's Report: "In Larger Freedom: freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom to live in dignity", constituted a significant new step in the way the UN relates to civil society, a constant supporter of the principles of the United Nations and of multilateralism. The moment had been long awaited by NGOs, which had worked intensively for years to enhance their participation at the United Nations.

In his opening statement the Secretary-General said that "this was an opportunity for the UN to enhance its impact in a world remarkably different from the one in which it was founded. Multi-stakeholder partnerships could help the UN devise innovative solutions to critical questions". In the same way, the "deliberations of UN meetings can become richer, more diverse, yet grounded in reality". Moreover, achievement of the MDGs called for a collaborative approach made possible through partnerships with governments and NGOs on the ground.

A wide range of issues were raised, including gender, human rights and conflict prevention, trade, and debt. Civil society called for stronger language in the draft outcome document, requested states to take bold actions at the Summit and asked for environmental issues to be integrated into strategies. The question of accountability was raised in relation to the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and compliance by States to ratified Conventions and Agreements. Civil society wanted more people-participation in decision-making by the UN and by Governments. On the subject of development, a new definition was called for because development is seen to be threatened by transnational globalization – a market centred development can not eradicate poverty.

The need to elevate human rights to the heart of the work of the UN was reflected by the support given to the proposal for a Human Rights Council and the Peace Building Commission, emphasizing the need to actively engage civil society in this process, as well as in the work of the UN more generally. The role of women was highlighted as a critical factor in peace building, conflict resolution and conflict-prevention efforts. A strong call was made for a shift from reaction to prevention of armed conflict and for the international community to react swiftly to the violation of human rights. In regard to gender mainstreaming, civil society called for greater efforts by states to implement recommendations made to them and stressed that gender equality and the empowerment of women was central to the achievement of the MDGs. A proposal was made to establish a global community learning network. Finally, regarding the environment, there can be no peace without equitable development, and no development without sustainable management.

While the UN's efforts to involve non-governmental organizations are welcomed, civil-society representatives stressed "*it cannot be ignored that 'freedom' is not charity*". Poverty must be seen from the fact that peoples' rights have been systematically eroded in the past decade. To eradicate poverty, one has to talk about

freedom – and freedom comes from an equal partnership in the building of society. Democracy and freedom are buzzwords in the west, but civil society has to go beyond rhetoric.

In summing up the Secretary-General called upon civil-society participants to keep making their voices heard in the lead-up to the September summit, as well as to holding governments accountable to implement the Summit outcomes “You are essential partners”, he said to the civil-society participants, NGO representatives and the private sector members. “Together we can make poverty history”.

Searching for Alternatives: A Parallel Summit to the G8

The People's Forum in Mali organized its fourth meeting at Fana, from 6-9 July, under the theme: "All together, let's build a world of justice and solidarity", focusing attention on the world's poorest countries and their proposed solutions for their social and economic conditions. The meeting was part of the African Social Forum and the World Social Forum, and constituted a parallel summit to the G8 meeting in Gleneagles.

Representatives of producer associations from Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Congo-DRC, discussed how the livelihoods of rural communities are being affected by global factors including input prices for seeds, global labour costs, and international market criteria, such as phyto-sanitarian requirements. Most prevalent was the concern for declining prices for their key exports, considered to be the result of subsidies granted to western and northern farmers. At the same time, adjustment policies have reduced the support received from national governments, leading to the privatization of various sectors.

The privatization of the cotton sector was used as a case to illustrate that under public management, the sector also received support to reduce illiteracy and to intensify subsistence agriculture. This is neither provided nor sustainable under privatization. Participants endorsed petitions to:

- stop the privatization process of the public cotton company of Mali;
- address the environmental impact of mining activities on local livelihoods;
- work toward global fair trade;
- stop GMO experimentation; and,

- seek debt cancellation for poor countries.

Difficulties in accessing land and insecure land tenure rights were considered to be attributable to such factors as the effects of mining, growing desertification and commercial agriculture's claims to land that could otherwise be available for peasants. The situation in the Niger River valley was highlighted due to the problems arising from the high levels of cattle rearing in an area dedicated to seasonal production. The policies to further agro-business through pro-liberal legislation was seen to defeat the pro-poor benefits of family-scale agriculture. This commercial oriented approach to agriculture is resulting in the displacement of many hundreds of households by powerful vested interests who are also the beneficiaries of the irrigation being provided.



The participants were clear in their understanding of the need for change. Experiences confirmed that an open market, conditioned by fairness, can create opportunities of benefit to poor rural households. The representative of the Burkina Faso cotton producers explained how his organization secured shares in the privatized cotton companies, making them full partners in the enterprise. LandNet also reported on the need for policy engagement with governments and international organizations in order to influence trends in land use and management.

Peasants and rural producers' unions are gaining recognition in West Africa. Their negotiating skills and capacity were proven during the WTO negotiation cycle in Cancun, when the impact on policy issues from the Peoples' Forum in Fana was evident.

For more information contact Koffi Alinon, Coordinator of LandNet-Togo kof30a1@yahoo.com

LandNet West Africa is a network of Francophone and Anglophone West African land policy experts and practitioners, from research, governmental institutions and CSOs. Copies of the report are available from: jubilecad-mali@cefib.com

Coming Together to Acquire Land

“Unless the poor are organized, they will remain politically powerless and economically disadvantaged. One of the keys to a successful fight against poverty and hunger is having well-organized farmers’ organizations working together with other partners”. This, according to the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), is essential so that farmers will have an influential voice on land policy issues.

While land issues and systems of use and ownership differ from country-to-country, farmers share a common world-wide need to advocate for land rights. In many countries, groups of farmers have come together to buy land from large land owners - often the approach in countries where land was owned by colonial farmers. Farmers collectively raised the capital to buy the farms which were later subdivided into individual land holdings and secured with land titles. These farm groups continued as farmer organizations and, in some instances, have formed companies to compliment their farming activities. The acquisition of land became the common foundation upon which their farmer organizations have been built. Today, there are many smallholder farmers forming and strengthening their associations to gain collective power to advocate for their rights to secure access to land. After acquiring the land, these associations represent important institutions to help overcome new challenges in settling onto the land and beginning the entrepreneurial processes of production and farm operations, including access to markets.

To learn more about the lessons learned by farmer organizations, and their experiences in gaining collective influence in decision-making, contact the International Federation of Agricultural Producers by visiting their web-site www.ifap.org. IFAP represents over 600 million farm families grouped in 110 national organizations in 75 countries. It is a global network in which farmers from industrialized and developing countries exchange concerns and set common priorities. IFAP has advocated farmers’ interests at the international level since 1946, was a founding member of the International Land Coalition, and is a current member of the Coalition Council.

Pastoralists Internet Discussion Forum

Pastoral systems are important to the social and economic development of many societies. They support herders with subsistence and improved incomes by providing large amounts of food and non-food products that play a vital role in ensuring food security thus contributing to the national economies of their countries. Extensive pastoral production occurs on 25 per cent of the world’s arable land, from the drylands of Africa (66 per cent of the total continent land area) to the Arabian Peninsula and to the highlands of Asia and Latin America.

It is important to understand the dependency of so many people on flexible strategies for accessing and using natural resources. The International Land Coalition is preparing a paper on *“Mobile Livelihoods, Patchy Resources and Shifting Rights: Approaching Pastoral Territories”*, with the aim of developing it into a reference tool for local, national and international policy debate and the design of programmes to address the resources rights of pastoralists. Commencing in December 2005, the Land Coalition will conduct a consultation on the paper. The consultation / Dgroup internet forum is open to all who may wish to contribute to the debate, to submit knowledge based on their experience, lessons learned, critiques, case studies and recommendations.

The moderator, Michele Nori, will animate the discussion and provide periodic summaries of the inputs received. Michele will be supported by Annalisa Mauro from the Land Coalition Secretariat, together with four regional animators, in order to incorporate elements related to pastoral territories for each region.

The objectives of the consultation are to:

- 1 finalize the working paper and reference tool; and,
- 2 identify joint objectives for future collaboration and follow-up actions.

The outcomes will also be inputs to the International Year of Deserts and Desertification in 2006 and contribute to the conference being organized by the International Livestock Research Institute (www.ilri.org) on Pastoralism and Poverty Reduction in East Africa to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. More information can be obtained from l.mauro@ifad.org



Access to Rural Land and Land Administration after Violent Conflicts

This guide on *“Access to Rural Land and Land Administration after Violent Conflicts”*, has been prepared to assist land tenure and land administration specialists involved with the reconstruction of systems of land tenure and land administration in countries emerging from violent conflict. Hard copies in English and Spanish can be ordered from www.fao.org/icatalog/inter-e.htm

Land – A Right for all Ugandans

Land issues in Uganda continue to be the main topic of discussion in the press, the bars, at family gatherings and in the home. Every adult has an opinion on land in Uganda. Discussions range from 'land grabbing' to the possibility of settling land disputes.

Uganda has made great efforts in putting in place institutions to deal with the management and control of land. From the lowest level of political administration (the village), to the highest level (the ministry), different institutions govern land, forming an institutional infrastructure the envy of many other governments. These structures are well elaborated on paper and in principle, but lacking on the ground. This is where the Uganda Land Alliance (ULA) has filled the gap, lobbying for fair land laws and policies to ensure equitable access, ownership and control of land for all Ugandans. But, as is often the case, good laws serve no purpose unless they are implemented effectively.

As part of an awareness building campaign, local and district government officials from the Ugandan government recently attended workshops, facilitated by the ULA, in Kapchowra, Kampala and Kibaale. During these sessions, local officials expressed surprise at learning of the negative affects of some aspects of Ugandan law on marriage, inheritance, and other rights.

ULA has played a major role in sensitizing local communities on their land rights, although this has not been easy given that the processes leading to the enactment of the Land Act in 1998 involved social, economic and political differences. Six years after its enactment, additional amendments were still being incorporated.

In response to the need for the public to be made aware of their land rights and obtain assistance in mediating land conflicts, ULA, in collaboration with Action Aid, opened another Land Rights Information Centre in Northern Uganda. This followed a spate of evictions by the National Forest Authority (NFA) of forest dwellers in reserves throughout Uganda. ULA is gathering information to analyze the legal status of these men and women, the manner in which evictions were carried out, and the legality of current actions by

the NFA. Alleged abuses include beatings, rape, and seizure of legally-held private land adjacent to forest reserves. Following ULA's advocacy and a subsequent presidential directive to halt evictions, the NFA is conducting an internal review of their policy. ULA hopes to develop recommendations to persuade the government to include civil society in the process of developing a strategy to address the issue of occupancy in central forest reserves.

Land Rights Information Centres have been extremely



Local council, paralegal aides, and district official participants completing a recent Land Act sensitization in Kapchowra District

effective in creating awareness, providing information on laws and policies, and fostering harmonious relations between local government and communities, and gaining clear understanding of specific land issues. Lessons learned have shown partnerships, along with communication and information sharing, to be central to successfully creating and maintaining an Information Centre.

The latest advocacy campaign on land in Uganda is the enactment of the National Land Policy. A draft policy is already in place. Civil-society organizations, led by ULA, are calling for the enactment of the policy. Indeed, ULA's new strategic plan for the period 2005 - 2010 includes the objective: "...to intensively lobby for fair national laws and policies that promote land rights of poor men, women, children and marginalized groups for poverty reduction." ULA believes that it is possible for every Ugandan to have access to land, control of land and ownership of land. It is this conviction that keeps the organization going – the struggle continues.

Esther Banyenzaki
Programme Officer, Communications and
Documentation with the Uganda Land Alliance

Land Rights for African Development: From Knowledge to Action

Conference in Nairobi

Customary systems of land ownership and use will continue to be at the centre of the land policy debate for rural poor people across vast parts of Africa. Prevailing statutory systems, while needed in many country and community situations, cannot provide the security needed for those depending on customary systems. Accordingly, pluralistic legal systems are needed to provide security under the two prevailing systems of land use in Africa.

The central importance of customary systems and the requirements for dualistic legal systems were key findings of the conference co-hosted by the International Land Coalition and the UNDP in Nairobi from 31 October to 3 November. The participants sought to expand the understandings of key land tenure issues in Africa in relation to food security, environmental sustainability, agricultural intensification, conflict reduction, peace building and broader rural development. The conference recognized the multiple land initiatives already underway and sought to forge partnerships to achieve synergies from shared knowledge. The event brought together 75 practitioners, legal experts, policy makers, development partners and civil-society representatives whose aim was to understand the range of tenure systems prevailing across Africa and suggest policy regimes and strategies for supporting country-level actions.

From the outset, the conference launched into a debate on whether tenure formalization was a necessary condition for tenure security. Representatives from the High Level Commission for the Legal Empowerment of the Poor were very helpful in opening a debate that exposed the value of seeing issues from diverse, and often new, perspectives.

The initial reaction to the “formalization” debate, also considering the effects of globalization on local realities, was a call for an African “alternative” to be built around the dual pre-conditions. The conference examined the historic, multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary and complex dimensions of the issues involved. The debate concluded that formalization and land tenure security are not necessarily the same in Africa.

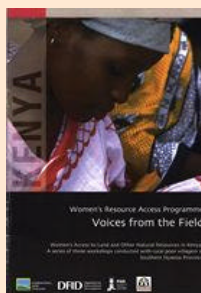
The conference illustrated clearly the

complexity of land tenure issues in Africa, underlining, for example, the critical issues of power imbalances, the advantage of planning land policy debates in broader development frameworks; the need to share and disseminate knowledge and good practices, building a critical mass of expertise and conducting mainstreaming actions.

The workshop agenda, official documents, presentations and the final report can be found on the UNDP drylands centre website at www.undp.org/drylands/ and on the Land Coalition website at www.landcoalition.org.

Developing an African Land Policy Framework

An African-led consortium comprising three of Africa’s regional institutions namely, the African Union/NEPAD (AU/NEPAD), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank (ADB), under the leadership of the African Union Commission (AUC), have formed a partnership with a view to developing a land policy and land reform framework in Africa. Following discussion in Addis Ababa, the International Land Coalition accepted to become a partner upon learning of the high level of commitment within these three partner organizations to develop a land policy framework that will be created, led, owned and implemented by African institutions. The International Land Coalition is often called upon to act as a facilitator or convener of land policy processes where its mandate is to assist governments to work with representatives of non-state organizations, primarily civil society, private sector and international partners, to establish country relevant land policies and processes.



Women’s Resource Access Programme – Voices from the Field

The fifth edition in the WRAP series shares stories from three workshops conducted with rural poor villagers in Southern Nyanza Province, Kenya that focused on land issues. Now available in hardcopy from the Land Coalition, or www.landcoalition.org/program/wrapreports.htm

Zambia – Challenges of Land Policy Reforms

Land and property are major assets in the modern and traditional sectors of Zambia where, as in many developing countries, for poor people land remains the primary source of their livelihood. It represents a vehicle for investment, accumulation of wealth, and asset transfer to future generations. The manner in which land access is regulated and land conflict resolved in Zambia therefore has broad social implications, which represent a serious challenge to any land policy reform.

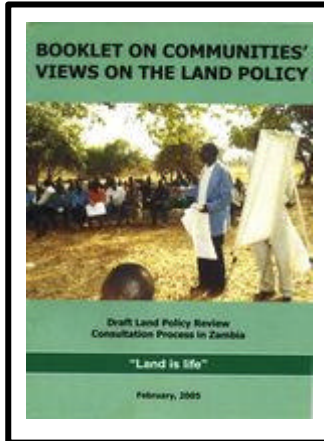
The current land policy review process in Zambia began in 1993, and since then there has been heated debate and controversy, resulting in the withdrawal of the initial Lands Bill from Parliament. The subsequent Lands Act of 1995, which constituted a very controversial piece of legislation – generation of foreign capital through greater access to land for foreign investors – was passed hurriedly, but without broad-based consultations or support from the concerned and affected groups. The act has provoked much resentment and consequently has been very difficult for the government to implement.

The Ministry of Lands therefore decided to initiate a country-wide land policy review process. Sixteen civil-society organizations formed the Civil Society Land Policy Review Committee under the Zambia Land Alliance – ZLA, (a network of NGOs whose goal is the equitable access, ownership and control of land by rural and urban poor families), who lobbied actively for a joint partnership with government.

This led to the setting up of a Land Policy Technical Committee in which civil society was not only represented, but spearheaded the process. Public workshops and meetings were held in all provinces with traditional leaders, rural and urban communities, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and various government departments, and other concerned groups. A National Report has been produced which will form the basis of a Draft Land Policy to be presented to a National Conference for debate, amendment and approval.

The response to the consultation process was overwhelming. Participants supported the initiative, particularly the partnership of government and civil society as a means of good governance and transparency. A booklet entitled “Draft Land Policy Review Consultation Process in Zambia” has been

produced by ZLA, which documents the views and ambitions of communities and traditional leaders and has been disseminated to the general public. The book is a tool for sharing information and provides feedback to communities and traditional leaders. It is expected to assist the Ministry of Lands and other stakeholders in formulating a pro-poor Land Policy.



This process was a first of its kind in Zambia to involve all the key actors in land administration through community and district workshops. Poor people and marginalized groups from remote areas participated freely and presented their views. However, a number of contentious issues still remain outstanding, such as: (a) vested land, (b) customary versus statutory tenure, (c) gender equity, (d) title deeds on customary land, and (e) allocation of land to non-Zambians. These and other questions pose a serious challenge to the land reform process in Zambia and will require careful attention.

The joint civil-society - government partnership will undertake international comparative studies to exchange ideas, experiences and information, from countries such as South Africa, Uganda, Botswana and Ghana. Furthermore, a national stakeholders' conference has been proposed to ensure that the review process will generate a policy document reflecting the concerns and aspirations of the poor and marginalized groups. The Zambia Land Alliance, and the organizations they represent, have affirmed their role as partners and advisors to the government on the formulation of the legislation, laws and regulations.

To learn more contact Joseph Mbingi at: land@coppernet.zm. The Land Coalition has supported ZLA through the Community Empowerment Facility.



Empowerment in Action

A visit was recently undertaken by Barbara Codispoti from the Land Coalition Secretariat and Peter Giampaoli, a Fellow with the Congressional Hunger Foundation, working with the Uganda Land Alliance (ULA), to the Mau Forest Complex in the Rift Valley Province, Kenya. The Mau Community Forest Association - MACOFA, an umbrella organization with a membership of community-based organizations, is implementing their project with the support of the Land Coalition's Community Empowerment Facility (CEF). The project involves developing strategies to address issues of forest access and management of natural resources. Communities are empowered to assume a lead role and take initiatives in natural resource-management, as well as assisting marginalized people to participate in decision-making affecting their livelihoods.

What is the main problem regarding the Mau Forest Complex in relation to adjacent communities?

The Mau Forest Complex, covering an area of over 400,000 ha, is the largest remaining montane¹ forest in East Africa, containing one of the country's five main water reservoirs. The complex is also rich in biodiversity. Communities living adjacent to the Mau Forest Complex collect indigenous vegetables, honey, food, firewood, pasture, and building materials. Cultural ceremonies and rituals take place in its sacred sites.

In March 2004 the government discontinued the forest management system known as 'Shamba', where peasant farmers were allowed to cultivate subsistence crops while tending tree seedlings in reforestation areas. This decision negatively affected the livelihoods of the forest users and necessitated the intervention of MACOFA, who engaged the Forest Department in an effort to rescind the decision and to adopt a forest management system involving community participation.

You are establishing local structures as a platform for negotiating and advocating for rights of marginalized people. Could you explain what are the Community Resource Management Units, and the Regional Chapters?

MACOFA is mobilizing community groups to form Community Resource Management Units (CREMU) to negotiate and advocate for their rights and participate in the management of forest resources, as provided for in the new Forest Bill of 2005 to be regulated by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS). CREMUs can give the

¹ A biographic zone made up of relatively cool, moist upland slopes, characterized by the presence of large evergreen trees.

communities a voice on issues of resource access at the local level. Regional Chapters are being set up by the CREMUs to further this agenda. This structure will ensure the flow of communication to and from the grassroots. The issue will be pursued at the national level by MACOFA.

What is MACOFA's strategy for working with the communities to reduce pressure on the existing forest?

MACOFA is encouraging community participation in forest management in order to establish ownership and responsibility for safeguarding the forests. It is also promoting farm forestry, (the incorporation of commercial tree growing into farming systems).

What external factors hinder the safeguarding of the forest complex?

The Mau forest complex is threatened by the activities of indiscriminate logging by companies whose only interest is in exploiting resources to maximize profit with no consideration for the multi-functional role of the forest.



How is MACOFA conducting the negotiation with the local officers of the Forest Department? What new elements are being introduced by this project?

MACOFA has successfully created a rapport with the forest officers by engaging them as resource persons in the community empowerment workshops. In the past, forest officers viewed community members as forest destroyers and intruders. The project is therefore changing the attitude and cultivating a healthy relationship between the community and officials in preparation for the Participatory Forest Management (PFM) process between the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and communities. The negotiating process has helped to defuse the negative attitude and reduce the gap between government representatives and the community, as well as developing a common understanding on ways to enhance resource management as teams.

What other MACOFA initiatives help communities to enhance their livelihood?

MACOFA is also supporting the raising of tree seedlings and planting trees through the community tree farming scheme to make available forest products at the farm level. The African Plum (*prunus Africana*) is being domesticated as a high value crop used in the treatment of prostate cancer. Members are also trained in organic farming practices and indigenous food crops for food security at the household level.



Finally, what is community empowerment for MACOFA? What do the communities you work with consider to be empowerment indicators?

MACOFA's perception of community empowerment is creating an opportunity for reflection on the challenges, causes and possible solutions, based on local situations and potential. In this way MACOFA mobilizes community members into creating a platform to discuss, reflect, lobby and negotiate. The ability to exercise their rights, meet their basic needs and influence decision-making in their communities, represents basic community empowerment indicators.

To know more about the project and MACOFA activities please contact the chairman Mr Clement Kariuki or the programme coordinator Mr Karangathi Njoroge at mauforesta@yahoo.com or macofa@wananchi.com

Mapping for Change

International Conference on Participatory Spatial Information, Management and Communication

The conference, which was held in Nairobi from 7-10 September 2005, was sponsored in part by the Land Coalition and brought together people from over 50 countries with extensive practical experience in Participatory GIS (PGIS) and community mapping in developing countries. The conference represented the latest event in a series of initiatives which, during previous years, had endeavoured to enhance the understanding and use of GIS as a development tool.

The event shared experiences and defined practices for making geographic information technologies available to less-favoured groups in society to increase their capacity to generate and use spatial information in the context of: ancestral land and resource rights; management of lands and natural resources; promoting equity (ethnicity, culture, gender) and ameliorating conflicts. Community mapping extends the power of maps by bridging research and action. It is a process, a product and a tool for change. It provides a creative means for local people to affirm and locate the historical, cultural, social, ecological and spiritual assets of the place they live.

Our partners' experiences show that there is a growing interest, need and possible space for pro-poor land registration as a means for communities to better defend and manage their rights. The conference helped partners not only to share their own experiences, but to gain information on new ways to manage these issues through geo-referenced information systems.



From the plethora of participatory mapping practices, the conference mainly concentrated on 3D modelling and Participatory GIS (PGIS), highlighting the evolution in the applications and techniques, from standard sketch mapping and time consuming scale mapping – where preference

is given to eliciting indigenous knowledge and utilizing local community dynamics - to the latest spatial information management and communication technologies.

Working in multi-level partnerships, transparency and accountability to local communities, and having the appropriate legal framework, were some of the recurring themes. Many stressed the need to involve governments and local communities from the onset to ensure ownership and acceptance of the results, in addition to recognizing the importance of training to overcome technical barriers. However, the absence of clear and common definitions of PGIS, coupled with a vague donor interest, was considered to be constraints to the further development of GIS mapping. During the Plenary Session, the issue was raised regarding PGIS projects being socially development-oriented with technical components, rather than purely technology transfer projects.

development needs, all critical aspects of successful community mapping.

Through regional discussion groups the following points emerged: identification of regional resource centres for training and documentation; development of best practice protocols; and, expansion of the PGIS community.

For further information visit <http://pgis2005.cta.int/>

International Forum

February 2006 will see the start-up in Guatemala of an international forum to debate social cohesion and economic competitiveness around the issue of land. The event, organized by the International Land Coalition within the framework of the LAND Partnership Programme, will share with Guatemala some valuable experiences from Asia to Europe. The aim is to contribute new ideas to the current debate on agrarian policies.

The event will focus on discussing proposals for rural development in Guatemala and identifying common features upon which new scenarios can be crafted. The event is being organized with the Vice-President of Guatemala, Eduardo Stein. Representatives from the social and economic sectors are involved in formulating the agenda in order to build-up the broadest possible process of co-ownership for the event in order to achieve positive objectives and results.

Al comienzo de Febrero se realizará en Guatemala una conferencia internacional, organizada por la Coalición Internacional para el Acceso a la Tierra en el marco del programa de Alianzas entorno a la tierra, sobre el tema de cohesión y competitividad. El evento lleva a Guatemala distintas experiencias de otros países desde Asia hasta Europa para contribuir con nuevos elementos, al debate actual sobre políticas agrarias.

La segunda sección del evento se centrará sobre la posibilidad de compartir las propuestas vinculadas al desarrollo rural para encontrar convergencias sobre las cuales construir nuevos escenarios. El evento ha sido ideado con el Vicepresidente de Guatemala, Eduardo Stein. Los sectores sociales y económicos han sido involucrados en la definición de la agenda para favorecer la construcción de un proceso, lo más amplio posible, de apropiación de la idea y de los resultados esperados.



The stories of the Land Coalition's participating partners, (Acción Contra, El Hambre (Nicaragua), and PAFID (The Philippines), and those of other participants, highlighted the fact that when PGIS and 3D modelling are applied to land issues, they constitute a valuable comprehensive tool through which a consensus building mechanism can be constructed. Combining new technology with traditional methods of community mapping can strengthen the capacity of communities to accurately map their land for registration and resource management and thus help reduce land conflicts, thereby creating a less conflictive environment and achieving multi-stakeholder recognition of the results. The role of each actor must be defined and monitored and a continuous assessment made of the complexity of issues. In this way a balance will be achieved between mapping technology opportunities and community

Andean Forum

The Andean Forum, to take place in Lima, Peru from 13-15 February, will bring together representatives from Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela, to discuss the link between agrarian reform and rural development, access to land and natural resources for farmers' communities and indigenous peoples, the linkages between illegal cultivations and rural development, and rural development in the context of globalization. The objective is to build an Andean vision on the relevance of rural areas both for the present and the future. The results of the Andean Forum will be presented to ICARRD. The Forum is being supported by the Land Coalition.

En Lima el Foro Andino

A partir del 13 de febrero hasta el 15 se realizará en Lima el Foro Andino. En el evento se reunirán representantes de Perú, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia y Venezuela para discutir sobre las relaciones entre reforma agraria y desarrollo rural, el acceso a la tierra así como a otros recursos naturales por parte de comunidades campesinas y pueblos indígenas, las relaciones entre cultivos ilícitos y desarrollo rural y el desarrollo rural en el marco de la globalización. El objetivo es lo de construir una visión andina sobre la importancia de las áreas rurales en nuestra. El Foro es apoyado por parte de la Coalición Internacional para el Acceso a la Tierra.

Organization for the Right to Land

Poverty in Guatemala has many causes - unjust distribution of land, poor management of productive land, exploitation of rural workers and a lack of public policies to tackle the highly conflictive and difficult situation rural poor families experience. Pro-land farmers groups are emerging to address the many difficulties including bureaucratic impediments. The Land Fund, for example, has conditions that are often outside the farmers' reach. For many, the difficulties cannot be overcome. As a result some farmers turn to land invasions, a fact that leads to increased tension with forced land evictions and violent confrontations.

Organización por el derecho a la tierra

El alto grado de pobreza y la discriminación en que vive la gran mayoría de Guatemaltecos como producto de la injusta distribución de la tierra y el mal manejo de quienes la poseen, así como la explotación a los trabajadores del campo y faltas de políticas públicas del gobierno para solventar situaciones difíciles de las familias rurales y campesinas han sido razones para las familias campesinas en ver como necesidad la organización para la unión de fuerzas y la lucha por la búsqueda de un pedazo de tierra para cultivar y vivir.

Hasta el momento la realidad nos enseña que quienes se han apoderado de las tierras se han apoderado también de otros recursos importantes para la sociedad como el agua y los bosques a los cuales los han destruido a su manera dejando pérdidas irreversibles de los recursos para la sociedad.

Los grupos pro-tierras se organizan para acceder a la tierra como para resolver sus problemas de linderos ó demarcaciones y los relativos conflictos, se organizan para legalizar sus tierras, ninguno de estos objetivos se logra fácilmente.

La forma de organización de los campesinos por la tierra es muy diversa pues se basa en su situación, es decir que quienes no tienen tierra se organizan en comités locales para iniciar procesos de gestión en el Fondo de Tierras para que este compre una finca y sea dividida colectivamente en el grupo. Esta práctica en la mayoría de las ocasiones se ve frustrada pues en el Fondo de Tierras no existe la voluntad de dar respuesta a estos objetivos de los grupos porque existen requisitos fuera del alcance de los grupos campesinos.

La paciencia es fundamental frente a los tiempos burocráticos y las voluntades contrarias. Cuando se logra conseguir una oferta de finca (requisito indispensable para adquirir tierras mediante el Fondo de Tierras pero difícil de conseguirla) esta tiene un determinado plazo (6 meses ó un año) y este plazo vence y el Fondo de Tierras no logra concretar la compra, de ahí hay que iniciar otra vez el proceso de búsqueda de ofertas y pasa el tiempo sin que se solventa el problema. Esta situación desespera a algunos grupos que optan por la toma ó ocupación de fincas y de aquí ya surgen otras consecuencias graves como los casos de violencias en los desalojos.

El agua trae información en Huaral

El día 26 de Septiembre, aprovechando de la presencia en Roma de Maicu Alvarado Villanueva –coordinador, en el valle de Huaral en Perú, de un proyecto de CEPES, institución miembro de la Coalición-, se ha llevado a cabo un encuentro informal en el secretariado para que varias personas del FIDA así como de la FAO tuviesen la oportunidad de conocer mejor el proyecto a través de las palabras de su coordinador y el trabajo que CEPES lleva adelante en tratar de juntar el uso de tecnología a las dinámicas de desarrollo rural. Que se propone el proyecto?

Hace un año se inició la operación de un Sistema de Información Agraria local en el valle de Huaral, Perú, que genera y administra información para la toma de decisiones de la comunidad de productores agrarios de la zona, para que tengan un mayor poder de negociación que permita transacciones comerciales sostenibles. La iniciativa de este proyecto partió de los pequeños agricultores organizados en la Junta de Usuarios de Riego de Huaral, que agrupa a los agricultores del valle organizados en 17 Comisiones de Regantes que conducen en conjunto 21,000 hectáreas de cultivo; en asociación con el Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales - CEPES.

Los beneficiarios directos del proyecto son 6,000 agricultores, la mayoría de pequeña propiedad y actualmente con una economía de subsistencia. El objetivo es facilitar una ventajosa participación en el mercado de la comunidad de agricultores y simultáneamente fortalecer la institucionalidad de sus organizaciones de riego, mediante la utilización de modernas tecnologías de información y comunicación. Los pequeños agricultores en el Perú carecen de información suficiente y de calidad sobre el precio de los insumos, el precio de los productos y tienen un acceso limitado a ofertas tecnológicas. El sistema los está apoyando en la toma de sus decisiones técnicas y comerciales para incrementar sus ingresos.

La participación de la población beneficiaria y de las instituciones locales en el desarrollo del proyecto es un aspecto central de la estrategia del mismo. Este entusiasmo ha incentivado a otras organizaciones de agricultores del país, e incluso a instituciones públicas, a visitar la experiencia buscando su réplica.

La infraestructura instalada sobre la base de tecnologías “abiertas” (Wi-Fi y software libre), ofrece espacio para la información comercial y técnica dirigida a los agricultores y permite una articulación dinámica entre las organizaciones de riego de cada centro poblado. El valle de Huaral tiene un sistema de riego

irregular, dependiente del agua de lagunas andinas, la interconexión de sus organizaciones de regantes soporta un nuevo sistema de planificación para una más eficiente distribución del riego y la prevención de los problemas asociados a la presencia de fenómenos naturales.

Además, la infraestructura de telecomunicaciones e Internet se encuentra a disposición de la población rural en general. Por eso mismo la población beneficiaria indirecta suma aproximadamente 14,000 habitantes y está compuesta principalmente por los pobladores rurales de 15 a 40 años de edad (la mayoría de ellos no son agricultores miembros de la Junta de Usuarios).

Web: www.huaral.org e-mail: tides@cepes.org.pe

Information comes with water in the Huaral Valley - Peru

An informal seminar at the Secretariat in Rome was held on 26 September where Mr Alvarado, Coordinator of a CEPES project in Huaral – a valley in Peru, some 200 km north to Lima - shared with IFAD and FAO, their experience in merging information management and institutional strengthening with Water Users' Associations (WUA). The project involved the creation of a local database system of agrarian information that generates and manages information useful to small farmers' in their decision-making. Being developed in collaboration between CEPES and the WUA of the valley, the system helps increase the market bargaining power of small farmers and their institutions. It is benefiting over 6000 farmers cultivating a 21000 hectare area. The combination of open source technology (free of charge) with proper training to guarantee adequate technology transfer, has turned the project into a success story. It is being visited by many other peasant organizations and institutions in the country to learn how it may be replicated in their area.



Can land funds work for the poor?

The FEPP experience in land redistribution offers relevant lessons, including its experience in land fund management. This experience has been analyzed, documented and published in March 2005 for the International Land Coalition and the International Fund for Agriculture Department (IFAD). The study was carried out by Manuel Chiriboga and Carlos Jara. Now Available in English.

Land Coalition Publications

Email us for an order form for the following publications :

Land Alliances for National Development 18 pp En/Sp

The International Land Coalition 68 pp Ar/En/Fr/Sp

Towards a Common Platform on Access to Land 20 pp En/Sp

Voices from the Field – WRAP Women's Resource Access Programme – English only
 Cambodia 16 pg, India 16 pp
 Indonesia 12 pg, Nepal 12 pp
 Kenya 20 pp

Whose Land? 253 pp English

Rural Women's Access to Land and Property in Selected Countries (CEDAW) 60 pp

El costo de la tierra Sp 63 pp
The cost of land En 60 pp

International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

New Challenges and Options for Revitalizing Rural Communities

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Brazil, are convening an international conference to review agrarian reform and rural development issues worldwide and to identify sustainable rural development options that can contribute to rural poverty and hunger reduction. To be convened Porto Alegre, Brazil from March 7-10, the conference will analyze agrarian reform and rural development experiences in different countries and identify policies, practices and lessons learnt that can bring about a new rural development paradigm based on social inclusion, environmental sustainability and livelihood security for the poor.

The Conference will discuss the following questions:

- Which policies and experiences have improved access to resources for the poorest populations?
- How can local institutions be empowered and planning and management of resources be improved?
- How can the concepts of agrarian reform, social justice and sustainable development be combined?
- How can the concept of food sovereignty ensure more equitable access to resources?

The International Land Coalition considers this event to be one of the singular most important events in the coming year. Governments from the world will debate policies and foster stronger practical commitments to rural development and the central role of secure land access in addressing the Millennium Development Goals. FAO is a founding member of the International Land Coalition and a member of the governing body, the Coalition Council. The Land Coalition is supporting the ICARRD as a member of the Technical and Policy Panel, by supporting the preparation and financing of a number of country case studies, supporting the Andean Forum, and organizing one or more special forums for the conference on key thematic subjects.

For more information visit the ICARRD website: <http://www.icarrd.org>

The Mission

The **International Land Coalition** (ILC) is a global alliance of intergovernmental organizations, governments and civil society. The Land Coalition works together with the rural poor to increase their secure access to natural resources, especially land, and to enable them to participate directly in policy and decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods at local, national, regional and international levels. For more information, please contact the ILC secretariat in Rome at coalition@ifad.org

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Newsletter Editorial Committee

Advancing Together is published three times a year. Copies can be seen on our website. Please distribute copies of our newsletter to interested parties.

This edition has been compiled by our editorial committee – Bruce, Andrew, Norma and Julie. Contributions from members and partners for our Jan-April 2006 edition are welcome and must be received **before 1 February 2006**. Please keep articles to a maximum of 350 words. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit submitted articles. Please email us at coalition@ifad.org with comments, articles and relevant photos.