A Global Movement for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

‘Land is Life’, the theme of the Second Global Assembly of the International Land Coalition, provided a holistic view of human development. The stories of members and partners who gathered in Santa Cruz, Bolivia from March 19 to 23, highlighted the complex factors of development: history, culture, ethnicity, gender, social relations, politics, economics, power and, in particular, the multi-faceted issues and systemic causes of poverty.

Secure access to land is essential to reducing rural poverty. The majority of the poor are rural dwellers who, while working in agriculture, lack security over the land on which their livelihoods depend. Secure resource rights are directly linked to food security and sustainable natural resource management. For women, land rights means empowerment. For indigenous peoples, it is the basis of their identity, portraying to the outside world that land is much more than an economic asset, that ‘land is life’. For vast numbers of poor households, the land is how they maintain their identity, culture and socio-familial relations. It is also the option to migrating to urban areas where those who do so, most often, add to the swelling barrios.

But access to land alone will not reduce poverty. Poverty is the manifestation of more than just a lack of economic assets; it is linked to exclusion from political processes and decision-making through the marginalization of the institutions of rural peoples, their culture and identity.

Carlos Mesa, President of Bolivia, at the time we celebrated the Assembly, explained clearly: The conflicts that Bolivia and many other countries are facing now will not end until we acknowledge and resolve the structural problems of social injustice and exclusion of large sectors of the population.

Another future is not only possible; it is necessary, and being called for. The Assembly called for a renewed agrarian reform agenda reflective of the national and global realities of today. The vision of the Assembly was that rural sector reform will be based on participatory national strategies that define who has the right to use which land, for which purposes, under which conditions and for how long. And finally, strategies should be based on a territorial development approach that takes into account not only the economic value of land, but also its symbolic, historical, environmental and social value.

The Assembly is the major venue of the Land Coalition for strengthening the land rights movement. It is a unique moment where, once every two years, the civil-society, governmental and intergovernmental members and partners come together to establish a common agenda for action.

The stories we heard and the challenges we identified reaffirmed that now, more than ever, an alliance of civil-society, governmental and the international organizations is needed to revive the agrarian agenda.

The Maasai of East Africa do not have a word for knowledge; they use the word “listening”. In listening to the participants from 40 countries, we gained the knowledge that can contribute to an expanding global movement for agrarian reform and rural development. This special report aims to share this knowledge with all who are interested in human development.

Bruce Moore, Director
International Land Coalition
Ten Years of History to Build Upon

Since its creation in 1995, the Land Coalition has served as a forum for discussion and a convener of intergovernmental and civil-society organizations, to improve the rural poor’s secure access to land and productive assets.

Ten years of activities with 35 member and 90 partner organizations have enabled the Land Coalition to identify the main challenges to achieving a more equitable distribution of productive resources to increase the assets and incomes of the poor, and improve their future.

During the Assembly three main themes emerged as important areas for further collaboration. Lively debate afforded an opportunity for participants to share their experiences on these topics:

- land and territorial development
- resource rights and land-related conflicts
- civil-society participation in the formulation of land-related policies

The choice of Bolivia was very pertinent as the topics discussed in the Assembly were mirrored by the situation in the host country. The participants had the opportunity to apprise themselves of the complexity of land-related issues in this Andean country through contact with local small-scale farmer organizations and indigenous groups. The Opening Ceremony gave voice to a wide range of economic and social organizations, from land owners to landless movements. The focus on land in the inaugural address by the President of Bolivia, Carlos Mesa, was particularly significant, land tenure being a contentious development issue in the country.

The Assembly was co-convened in solidarity with Fundación TIERRA, its Director Miguel Urioste and his staff, as a sign of international support to the struggle by poor Bolivian men and women to gain the resource rights which are essential to the improved well-being of their families.

Areas for Action

The Assembly programme was organized around three thematic sessions:

Session 1, was devoted to defining fundamental concepts, such as land and territorial development and the linkages between them.

Participants emphasized that land is not just a physical asset or a factor of production. Rather, they said, “Land refers to families and communities linked together in a complex web of relations, history, markets, social structures and a common ecology, connecting people and processes in a given territory.”

They noted that too much emphasis has been placed on productivity and competitiveness, while very little attention has been given to concerns, such as culture, where land is essential to personal dignity, a sense of belonging, collective identity and culture.

The concept of land as culture was highlighted by Roberto Haudry, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Programme Manager for the Andean Region. According to Haudry, “culture needs to be seen not just as a ‘right’ but also as a ‘force’ for change and transformation. Territorial identity and traditional knowledge must be an asset for development, not a barrier.” He also referred to innovative experiences concerning territorial development, such as participatory community mapping systems, where communities not only plan for their future, but ‘dream’ their future based on their cultural values and unique needs.

Rohini Reddy from South Asia Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA), India, emphasized that land alone was not the answer for the resource-poor. She indicated the importance of linking farms with livelihoods and enterprises in order to promote local sustainable development. In addition, she stressed the need to build on people’s innate capacities. “The focus of development should not be on delivery but more on how to release people’s capacities and help them to overcome obstacles and disabilities.” she said.

Reddy described rural women as a powerful force for rural transformation, if social barriers are broken down and their innate capacities released. According to her, “In India, two two-thirds of women depend on agriculture but have little access to land, resources, education and services.”
Land is life. An idea full of complexities. To earn a living from land means making it productive, and thus more than just the land is required. This apparent play on words was one of the major topics of discussion.

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 development of the territory incorporates the interactions of different interests (urban and rural; farm and non-farm; government, community organizations and the private sector), and the social and environmental implications of how land is used and administered. It follows that the regulations, agreements and decision-making processes for managing these relationships require negotiation and compliance.

The need to expand the idea of access to land to include a territorial approach to development was widely recognized.

Territorial development is a process that incorporates the land's symbolic, historical, environmental, social and economic value. Territorial development is also a process that takes into account the relationships among the persons who live in a defined territory and their use of and access to productive assets, especially land.

A territorial focus promotes processes of inclusion; it develops policies for all inhabitants of a given territory, not just the poor. Also, the aim is to link the different realities which exist in the same physical space – such as the rural and the non-rural, and to balance the individual and collective interests. Territorial development should incorporate a ‘rights-based’ approach, and also the ‘obligations’ of the state to guarantee sustainable development of these territories as a public good.

The Brazilian economist Edson Teófilo referred to “incomplete agrarian reforms which had been designed to fail and provide arguments for conservative sectors to say that peasants do not make the land produce. Mere access to land does not resolve the problem of development. Peasants all over the world have learned that access to other basic services, such as technical assistance and credit, are crucial to successful agrarian reforms.”

Towards Participatory Territorial Development

The working session identified areas for further consideration.

- How to institutionalize the recommendations obtained through community mapping systems and introduce them into political decision-making processes?
- How to transform people’s planning processes into ‘power exercises’?
- How to generate real empowerment in local communities, when the impact of globalization is felt beyond territorial boundaries?
- How are poor people affected by global production chains and international agreements, in particular those of the WTO?
- When we talk about culture, are we referring to tradition, or to a new changing identity?

IFAD and ANGOC Co-Chair Second Global Assembly

Following the practise for all Land Coalition events to be co-chaired by IFAD and a civil-society member, the Assembly was conducted under the leadership of Jim Carruthers, Assistant President of IFAD, together with Don Marquez, Executive Director of ANGOC. In his opening address Carruthers stated that this was an important turning point in the history of the Land Coalition and the meeting would set some important directions for the future. He emphasized the fact that by learning and sharing, participants had the opportunity to gain a wide repertoire of new ideas and innovations to take back to their respective organizations.

“We believe in what the Land Coalition is doing – for that reason it is housed at IFAD’s headquarters in Rome. IFAD is its largest financial contributor”, declared Carruthers. He went on to say that “Without land reform and sustainable land use management, we will not be able to overcome rural poverty or meet the Millennium Development goals in 2015”.

Participatory community mapping in Bolivia. PROMARENA Project/IFAD, Unidad Local Charazani.
Session 2: Reviewing, Reforming and Revitalizing Land Policies, presented an opportunity to exchange views and experiences on how to build up participatory processes to achieve political consensus on land policies.

The participants indicated that governmental institutions, community-based and civil-society organizations and the private sector, represent key actors who need to be engaged in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of policies and the related legislative and regulatory systems governing land access and use.

But for a dialogue process to be effective and produce lasting effects, two preconditions are essential: first, the recognition by all parties that there is a problem to be discussed and solved fairly and justly, and second; the desire for change.

The participants recognized that this ‘political will’ for change must come from those affected sectors, but in many cases resource-poor people have neither the power nor the capacity to influence policies.

The presentations and discussions during this session highlighted several issues and challenges that civil-society organizations face in the process of policy engagement and negotiation:

**Opportunities for reform** – A climate for reform often occurs with a change in government. However, it is important to realize that although there may be a shift in government leadership, the structure of bureaucracy often remains.

**Representation** – How can we ensure that the poor are allowed to speak and that their voices are listened to in policy decision-making? The Land Coalition can help make sure that civil-society is represented in policy dialogue through organizations of the poor and social movements.

**Finding common platforms** – Civil society is often viewed as a single group with a ‘common position’. While a ‘common position’ increases negotiating ability, civil-society is actually a diverse group. Although identifying common problems is, by and large, straightforward, the difficulty lies in reaching consensus on solutions. It is essential to arrive at the negotiation table with concrete proposals.

**Beyond land policies** – Advocates should look beyond land policies; wider impact is often achieved through civil laws, as in laws which aim to prevent gender discrimination.

**Implementation questions** – Policies are not enough; even when good policies are instituted, the real obstacle often lies in implementation.

**The role of international organizations in public policy** – These organizations have a very influential role since donor-funded projects and processes have significant effects on national land policies. International organizations provide useful technical help, but should not, in the opinion of the participants, represent local actors in policy negotiation processes.

**From local to global, and back again.**

Dialogue processes must commence, but not necessarily end, at the community level.

The land agenda needs to be taken up by national policy makers and positioned in the international fora to achieve globally sustainable social, economic and environmental development. At the same time, international agreements and commitments can help local communities advocate to their governments.

- At the **national** level, the visibility of landless farmers’ associations in the political arena is fundamental to positioning land on national policy agendas.
- At the **regional** level, reinforcing working relationships with government representatives and other social actors is crucial to sharing experiences and methodologies.
- At the **international** level, alliances with international institutions through joint events, or academic research studies, can promote awareness and understanding of agrarian issues.
Session 3, examined land rights from many different perspectives. For some organizations, land is a primary factor for achieving food security, whereas for others equitable land access is an issue of democratic development. For still others, it may relate to conflict prevention or natural resource management.

The debate centered on the following issues:

- different ways and means to gain more secure access to resources
- conflicts over land access
- links between resource rights and the right to food.

Ruth Meinzen-Dick from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), presented the different modalities of land tenure worldwide from a natural resource management perspective, in contrast to other approaches that looked at land mainly as an economic asset. Meinzen-Dick stated that “Markets and financial investments can deal only with property rights that are secured by individual land titles, but they are unable to deal with customary land rights or with collective property.”

Jochen Donner, from Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, proposed linking the 'right to land' to the 'right to food' as a basic human right, to take advantage of ongoing international processes, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, being used in various countries as a framework for their national food security programmes.

The International Land Coalition recognizes the support received for the Global Assembly from Fundación TIERRA, the Ministry of Sustainable Development – the Government of Bolivia, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI) the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with the support of the Government of Brazil, is pleased to announce that:

The International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development: New Challenges and Opportunities for Revitalizing Rural Communities will be convened in Porto Alegre, Brazil from 27-30 March 2006. For information contact parviz.koohafkan@fao.org.
Declaration for Collective Action

We have gathered in Santa Cruz this week to expand our knowledge and understanding of the relationship between land and poverty reduction, and renew our collective commitment to finding ways to increase secure land access by poor men and women and marginalized groups. Based on our exchange over the past four days, and on our interaction with representatives of the Bolivian government, civil society groups including farmers and indigenous peoples’ associations, private sector and social movements, several priority themes have emerged.

First, land is a point around which there are many complex social, economic, cultural and political relations. The same territorial space can have very different meanings to different people and groups. Indeed, the theme of this assembly - *La Tierra Es Vida* (Land is Life) - reflects the idea that land is more than simply a productive asset or locus for investment, just as there is more to life than economic production.

Second, access to land and control over natural resources by itself cannot eradicate poverty. From just an economic perspective, we generally acknowledged that land is only one of many assets needed for production, and must be accompanied by access to credit, fairly priced inputs, training and extension services, and markets. These are prerequisites for land reforms to yield results and for land resources to be used equitably, efficiently and sustainably.

Poverty, however, is the manifestation of more than just a lack of economic assets. It is also linked closely to exclusion from political processes, basic services such as health and education, and the marginalization of one's culture and own identity. Land reform must therefore go hand-in-hand with improvements in these other basic sectors, as well as changes to power structures within societies and between nations.

Third, eradicating rural poverty must account for the relationships that rural people have with urban areas. Where land access does not exist, migration to cities increases urban poverty and can even exacerbate urban violence. This flow of “landless refugees” now extends across national borders. Stronger links between rural areas, on the other hand, can contribute to regional development and complement improved access to land by rural households.

Fourth, while land access and control is important for rural peoples to affirm their local institutions and identity, this should not be interpreted as a lack of desire for change. Secure land rights may take a variety of different forms and, when accompanied by other basic services and citizenship rights, can unleash the creative capacity of poor men and women to transform their own lives. Culture is both a right and a force for change. The resistance to change that contributes to poverty and hunger is often found within decision-making institutions.

Securing women's land rights must be part of any land reform. While women are primary agricultural producers and users of natural resources in many parts of the world, they are regularly denied land rights and access to basic services through discriminatory laws, social and cultural practices, and political and administrative processes. Where HIV/AIDS is prevalent, distress sales and a lack of inheritance rights can cause women to lose their land, just when they and their families need it most. Intergenerational equality is also a concern for both girls and boys.

There is a need for the Land Coalition to ensure that diversity of viewpoints on land and its role in development are not only voiced, but also listened to. At the country level, civil-society members and partners are called on to find creative ways to involve rural people directly in decision-making, strengthen peoples’ organizations, and generate the analysis needed for sound policies. Our intergovernmental members and partners are called upon to leverage their relationships with governments and other donors to ensure that land access is a priority on national development agendas, and that democratic mechanisms are in place to determine their contents.
International agreements concerning land access provide a starting point from which actions by governments – in both the South and the North – could be assessed. The Land Coalition calls upon governments to concretize their international commitments through national laws and policies, so that the land rights provided for in global conventions are promoted, protected and fulfilled. To support this, it is necessary for the Land Coalition to develop means for making fair and accurate evaluations of how or whether governments are meeting their international commitments.

In order to foster links between local, national and international processes, the Land Coalition needs to broaden as well as deepen its network. In broadening, the Land Coalition should find ways to better include farmers and peasant organizations, other rural peoples’ associations such as those of fishers, women, indigenous peoples and pastoralists, and institutions that work with the urban poor. In deepening, the Land Coalition’s relations should be enhanced with the country and regional offices of intergovernmental members, and with civil-society groups by working through regional and national networks that are already partners with the Land Coalition.

Finally, we must remember that the strength of the Land Coalition lies in its members and partners. Organizations in the Land Coalition’s network each have different expertise, skills, and spheres of influence - resources that allow us all to make valuable contributions to our mission. Active communication and exchange of ideas and information between members and partners, with facilitation by the Land Coalition secretariat as needed, should be the cornerstone on which our collective action is based.

Declaration by participants to the Land Coalition’s 2005 global assembly, representing civil-society and intergovernmental organizations from 30 countries around the world.

Santa Cruz, Bolivia, 23 March 2005
Land Related Conflicts

Resource-based conflicts are not new, but are increasing in frequency and severity. They have been the single most common cause of civil war in the post World War II period. They may involve territorial disputes between groups of interest in a territory, or between local communities and external interests, such as extractive industries.

They create social dislocation, limit economic opportunities, create food insecurity, generate environmental damage and, at their most extreme, lead to loss of life. Poor households bear the heaviest burdens since their daily needs and future livelihoods are directly tied to their rights of access to land.

The roots of these conflicts are numerous because they involve a variety of actors, each with their own interests, but they often arise as an effect of socio-economic structural inequalities or unequal processes of development and growth. The conflicts can also emerge as a result of political or territorial disputes, ancestral claims or land grabbing. The lack of clear land rights can also contribute to the emergence of land conflicts, as in the situation of overlapping rights or contradictions in different regulatory frameworks, such as legal and customary rights.

These structural conditions need to be considered when regulating or mediating land conflicts, otherwise the solutions will not eradicate the deep roots of many long-standing conflicts. It is essential to guarantee the full participation of all parties, especially the poor and resource-poor groups, so that they are empowered to influence the negotiations and enforce the conflict resolution decisions.

Conflict management processes need to be seen as an intrinsic part of any development process, since it requires the development of civil-society institutions, governance processes, grass-roots decision-making power, and the establishment of social capital across class, ethnic, and socio-political groups.

The Assembly stressed the need to know more and do more about best practices and lessons learned by other Land Coalition members in preventing and moderating land conflicts.

The participants acknowledged the significant strategic role that can be played by the Land Coalition in producing and sharing information, case studies and methodologies.
Knowledge and Network

Two messages came across clearly during the Second Assembly of Members:

- the need for greater exchange of information; and
- the strategic role that the Land Coalition can play as a convenor for promoting this exchange and bringing diverse organizations together.

The Land Coalition has become a global convenor for land issues primarily because of the wealth of information generated by its members and partners. But, for this information to become usable knowledge for others, it is necessary to convey it through common language and methodologies. In Santa Cruz, one of the working groups studied the question of how to improve communication between members and partners.

It was recommended that the Land Coalition give further attention to the following:

- Thematic and regional working groups can promote comparative analysis. Interested organizations should work to identify common methodologies.
- Working experiences in partner organizations can help reciprocal learning. ‘Village-to-village’ or ‘farmer-to-farmer’ exchanges should be encouraged, as well as activities involving governments and civil-society working together. To make best use of these opportunities, clear objectives, areas of study and modalities for disseminating outcomes, must be established.
- Training activities should be developed to reinforce the analytical capacities of members and partners in order to share lessons learned and generate knowledge.
- Communication tools such as the Land Coalition’s website, the newsletter and technical publications, play a strategic role in capturing and disseminating information produced by the various members and partners. Further effort should be made to encourage members and partners to take full advantage of these communication tools.

Specifically, they called for the development of case studies on conflict prevention, land use conversion, rights of squatters and civil-society-led land conflict negotiation which had resulted in win-win situations.

Note: For the third consecutive year the International Land Coalition is hosting a Ministerial Roundtable on land at the ECOSOC (New York, 30 June 2005). On this occasion, the Land Coalition will present a technical paper on Land and Conflict. The outcomes of this ECOSOC session will contribute to the preparations of the Millennium +5 Summit where UN Member Countries will report on their progress in achieving the MDGs.

In my country, land...

“Land is not only important for livelihood but also gives social security to the people. Most of the conflict and violence against the oppressed in India – dalits, tribals and women – is due to their being landless. Once they have land in their name, they automatically gain respect and dignity.”

Vidya Bhushan, Social Development Foundation, India

“In Eastern Africa, the participation of women in agricultural activities reaches 80 percent in some communities; nevertheless, only 13 percent of them own their lands. The situation gets worse when husbands become AIDS-affected and families sell their land to buy drugs. The widows then remain without land and without resources.”

Rita Lakor, Uganda Land Alliance

“In Bangladesh, almost two out of three people are landless. They can only go to urban areas for employment. Land reform is the only way to prevent urban migration”

Mizanour Rahman, Association for Land Reform and Development, Bangladesh

“When a family leaves the land and the community to go to the cities in search of fortune, it is like going into exile for them. And for those who remain, it seems that the desert has become bigger. The communities are fighting a losing battle to make the land productive and keep their culture alive.”

Eduardo Belelli, Asociación de Productores del Noroeste de Córdoba, Argentina

“In my country, poor farmers do not hold birth certificates, how on earth are they going to have land ownership titles?”

Patrick Rasolofo, Harmonisation des Actions pour la Réalisation d’un Développement Intégré, Madagascar
Land Conflicts and the Bolivian Political Crisis

Assembly participants visit settler farmers and indigenous communities

The Assembly of Members coincided with a moment of political instability in Bolivia. The time for structural changes, long overdue, arrived, as was illustrated by the confrontational situation spanning the country.

Historically, the indigenous people, representing more than 60 percent of the country’s population, have been excluded from decision-making processes, including discussions related to the exploitation of natural resources in the territories where they live.

For decades, entire communities, dispossessed of their resources and rights, have been forced to leave their ancestral lands in the western plateau and migrate to cities and resource-rich areas in eastern Bolivia. But for most, access to resources, such as land, continues to be precarious, even in prosperous regions like Santa Cruz.

Santa Cruz has a dynamic economy based on extensive agribusiness and soy production. “Most of the large landowners in this area received land from the State at no cost, in order to develop a new agricultural centre in the 50s,” explains Miguel Urioste, Director of the Fundación TIERRA.

Attracted to this new development opportunity, thousands of poor farmers emigrated from the plateau and settled in municipalities such as Cuatro Cañadas, 120 kms from Santa Cruz. Most of them work as labourers for large landowners, while some of them occupy small plots of land.

“Unfortunately, the transfer of land in the 50s was not always a transparent process; in many cases, property titles were non-existent, or were falsified. Furthermore, most of these transfers were motivated by political favour”, continues Urioste.

In 1996, agrarian reform was initiated by the Government. The idea was to distribute parcels of untitled land (no formal owners) to landless farmers granting them legal titles. “This process of ‘saneamiento’ de tierras (regularization of property rights) created widespread opposition among landowners in Santa Cruz most of them without valid legal titles”, explains Urioste.

“The whole agrarian reform process was slowed down considerably and this contributed to increased pressure on the settler farmers who feared the opportunity to own their land would never be realised”.

Since 2002 Fundación TIERRA has organized radio forums in order to promote dialogue and reduce confrontation. These monthly round-tables provide a forum for landowners, settler farmers and local authorities to discuss and find solutions to their land conflicts.

“The radio forums have created a space for dialogue that did not exist previously”, says Urioste.

“The relationship between farmers and landowners has always been conflictual and violent here in Bolivia. The forum broadcasts to isolated rural villages, as well as to policy makers in Santa Cruz, creating a climate for dialogue”.

The Bolivian law has recently recognized indigenous communities’ territorial rights, but obtaining legal access to undertake productive activities in the natural reserves takes a long time.

The Centro de Tecnología Intermedia (CEDETI), one of the Land Coalition’s NGO partners in Bolivia, is currently supporting indigenous communities and producer associations of Yapacaní to enhance their economic activities and exercise their rights as citizens of the municipality. The project, visited by the Assembly participants, promotes dialogue and helps to reduce confrontation among the different groups accessing the natural resources of the reserve.

“The extractive industries are polluting our rivers and lands with cyanide and mercury for gold and minerals”, explains Anacleto Supayabe, leader of the Yuracaré Mojeños indigenous community in Yapacaní. “We want to preserve our lands, the plants and the rivers, but until we get titles we can’t take decisions on our territories”.

10 LAND IS LIFE - LA TIERRA ES VIDA
A Global Network

The International Land Coalition is a global alliance of inter-governmental, governmental and civil-society organizations. The 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.

The Land Coalition works with over 180 organizations in 40 countries. Stakeholders include voting members, partners, donors and affiliates.

List of Members

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Africa
- Environment Liaison Centre International (ELCI) - Kenya
- LandNet West Africa *
- National Land Committee (NLC) - South Africa
- Uganda Land Alliance (ULA)
- Zimbabwe Environmental Research Organization (ZERO)

Eastern Europe
- Transborder Wildlife Association (TWA) - Albania

Latin America and the Caribbean
- Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción (ALOP) - Costa Rica
- Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales (CEPES) - Perú
- Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) - Trinidad & Tobago
- Consejo Coordinador de Organizaciones Campesinas de Honduras (COCOCH)
- Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas (CONGCOOP) - Guatemala
- Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Agropecuarias y Agroindustriales (FENACOOP) - Nicaragua
- Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP) - Ecuador
- Fundación TIERRA - Bolivia *
- Grupo ALLPA - Perú

South Asia
- Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) - Bangladesh
- Mobilization and Development (MODE) - Nepal
- Social Development Foundation (SDF) - India

South East Asia
- Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) - The Philippines *
- Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) - Cambodia
- Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria - Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) - Indonesia
- The Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment (RMI)

Global
- International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) - Paris *
- The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobaco and Allied Workers Associations (IUF) - Switzerland

OECD Countries
- Bread for the World Institute (BFWI) - USA
- Deutsche Weltungerhelfe (DWWH) - Germany *
- Secours Populaire Français (SPF) - France

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
- European Commission (EC) - Brussels, Belgium *
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) - Rome, Italy *
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) - Washington, DC, USA
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - Rome, Italy *
- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) - Washington DC, USA *
- World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) - Nairobi, Kenya
- World Bank - Washington DC, USA *
- World Food Programme (WFP) - Rome, Italy *

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The Assembly in Ten Points

1. Situate access to land in a socio-political framework - Secure access to land is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for overcoming rural poverty. Land issues must be pursued in a framework that links together people, and the social, cultural, political and economic processes of a given territory.

2. Creating multi-stakeholder spaces for dialogue can result in a shared public vision of the benefits of more equitable patterns of land access. It can build up alliances for a reform agenda and bring about agreement on how to address interests that are resistant to change.

3. Strengthen the role of communities in policy making - Strengthening the capacity of community-based organizations and their networks can build up the collective power of rural poor people to represent their interests in policy-making and to negotiate and defend their rights with decision-makers.

4. Promote a precautionary principle for the use of land as collateral - Farmland, being a hard won asset by the poor, should not be put at risk. When used as collateral to finance production, the risks may outweigh the opportunities. The gains in income required to service the debt may be more risky than when collateral takes the form of crops, livestock, implements or other moveable household assets. If these assets are claimed by lenders, they can be re-acquired providing that the basic income producing asset, the land, is protected. Also, the farmland as collateral model is based on individual land holdings which may attract small producers away from the group securities provided by collective management and sharing of resources.

5. Support and protect common property and group rights to land - Common property systems, group user rights, common pool resources, and collective rights are all viable ways to provide asset security for the poor. These systems are fundamental to the well-being of large numbers of people and are increasingly important where growing populations depend on the same scarce resources.

6. Advocate for the legal protection of the resource-rights of poor households - Land reform beneficiaries need the legal security of an effective land administration system that can protect them from challenges to their rights and prevent “ill-gotten” land or land that has been grabbed, from being legalized. The risk of illegally obtained land becoming regularized is at its highest when land administration is separate from, or comes before, land reform.

7. Encourage government compliance with international commitments to land reform - World summits and ratified conventions have committed governments to land reform. Compliance frequently falls short. While government capacity may need to be improved, it is equally necessary to strengthen the institutions of the rural poor to help them become more powerful advocates for compliance through public policies and decision-making processes.

8. Support strategies to prevent and resolve resource-based conflicts - Resource-based conflicts are increasing in frequency and severity, often being linked to overlapping tenure; ancestral claims; extractive industries; landless farm workers; former landowners; or, land grabbing during civil conflict. Most organizations experience a gap in their capacity to conduct conflict analysis, intervention, mediation and negotiation. The Land Coalition may act as a broker of information, sharing experiences and lessons learned and providing training opportunities.

9. Encourage countries to establish inclusive decision-making processes - Transforming land relationships is most likely to produce lasting effects if all parties effecting and being affected by policy changes, take an active part in the decision-making processes. Public consultations, including those promoted by the Land Coalition, should be pro-active in encouraging the participation of social movements and private sector organizations.

10. Use information technology to strengthen collective action - Information technology has transformed the world from being organized as communities sharing the same geographic frame of reference into communities of common interest. As a community concerned with land rights, it is possible to use technology to instantly identify and debate issues, seek agreements for common action and to then intervene in processes that, in the past, would either have remained unknown, or decided upon, before action could have been taken in solidarity with like-minded organizations.