



WORLD FORUM ON ACCESS TO LAND **WFAL 2015**

WORLD FORUM ON ACCESS TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES (WFAL 2015)

10 years after the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (WFAR) and the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD)

Antecedents

It has been a long time since the issue of access to land was recognized as a necessary step towards the improvement of living conditions of the most vulnerable rural populations, and towards the improvement of food security of the greatest number. In 1979, the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, organized by the FAO, concluded that it was necessary to distribute land to those who do not have access to it and to producers who do not have enough to make a decent living from their work. In 1996, The World Food Summit, convened by the FAO in Rome, noted that the problem of hunger was far from being resolved and set the year 2015 in order to halve the number of people suffering from hunger. Six years later, upon a new summit convened on the issue, this goal was considered out of reach (2002). In 2004, the FAO, in its report on the State of Food Insecurity in the World, underlined that hunger continues its progress on a global scale.

In this context, the Centre of Rural Studies and International Agriculture (CERAI) and a large number of civil society organizations coordinated the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (WFAR) in Valencia (Spain), in December 2004. It brought together 500 delegates representing more than 200 organizations from 72 countries and five continents. It was an opportunity to observe how the lack of access to land and the process of marginalization of rural populations were feeding poverty, rural exodus and migration flows. Concluding from its work, the WFAR affirmed that the shared goal of food sovereignty was consistent with the access to land and natural resources, and that the recognition of the rights of rural populations worldwide was a prerequisite.

Two years after the new initiative proposed by the WFAR, the FAO and the Government of Brazil organized the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in 2006, in Porto Alegre (Brazil). There, nations reaffirmed that food insecurity, hunger and rural poverty were largely the result of a lack of access to productive resources, suffered by most farmers in the world. The major potential role of family agriculture in general, and traditional rural communities and indigenous groups in particular, was put forward to promote food security and sustainable development for all. The conference concluded its work by underlining the need to reorient development policies to the most vulnerable populations by strengthening their rights, both individual and collective.

Ten years after the WFAR (2004) and the ICARRD (2006) **bitter results**

Worldwide changes that have been observed over the last ten years are far from the recommendations formulated by the WFAR and ICCARD. They have even worsened over the recent years due to large scale land acquisitions/leases by a small number of economic actors.

In recent years, questions about the social and political impacts of large-scale investment projects and risk placed on food security and environment have been expressed on numerous occasions and by various organizations. The non-transparency of land transactions, and the denial of local modalities of access to and use of land and water resources have been recognized as factors favoring the eviction of peasants. The purpose of these projects, usually the export of agricultural commodities, has been compared with food security problems faced by populations of host countries, especially when their implementation replace food crops with agro fuels production. Finally, this kind of project is often based on production systems focused on monocultures and relying heavily on the massive use of fossil energy, industrial inputs and transgenic seeds, thereby presenting the risk of ground and water pollution and biodiversity reduction.

More generally, contemporary transformations of agriculture in many parts of the world and continuous population growth have been accompanied by, on the one hand, the impoverishment of a large number of peasants and, on the other hand, the expulsion of millions of people in the agricultural sector. This phenomenon reflects the blockage of the investment and the deep crisis facing many agricultural regions. This true side-lining of hundreds of millions of farmers, due to the absence of adequate access to land, irrigation water and other inputs, now feeds a global process of marginalization and loss of dignity, implying major imbalances. This lack of guarantee on access to land, water, fisheries and forests, and the parallel development of large agro-industrial and forestry projects leads increasingly to the eviction of entire communities from where they live and work. We also know that it is precisely these impoverished campaign areas that constitute the bulk of malnourished quotas in the world. “The State of Food Insecurity in the World”, prepared by the FAO in 2013, highlights the figure of 842 million undernourished people, three quarters of whom are rural.

The United Nations has declared 2014 as “the year of family farming”, thus calling to place this model back in the center of agricultural policies and investments, in recognition of their specificities and capacities to increase food production while preserving the ecosystems, to generate the employment and reduce poverty. At a historical moment when they have never been so threatened across the entire planet, this decision takes a clear direction and a particular dimension. Many other initiatives have also been launched in this direction, and dialogue between national governments, civil society and multilateral agencies may have been reactivated on a new basis, including – and in particular – the question of the right to land and natural resources. One of the most significant is the initiative of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), involving states, international institutions and civil society, that adopted in 2012 the “Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of land tenure regimes applicable to Land, fisheries and forests in the Context of national Food Security”. After two years of negotiation, these guidelines were the expression of a broad consensus to promote responsible land governance as a response to the monopolizing process. Gathered in Rome on February 21, 2014, the Farmers’ Forum solemnly called governments to implement the decisions adopted by the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD, 2006) and the CSA.

CALL

Ten years after the World Forum on Agrarian Reform WFAR (Valencia, 2004), followed by the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development ICCARD (Porto Alegre, 2006), and now in the International Year of Family Farming we, the signatories of this call, emphasize the need to gather different social actors and institutions in an open debate to further the discussion and improve poor farmers' access to land, water and natural resources.

The current situation - persistence of hunger, population growth, exclusion, massive unemployment, environmental crisis and loss of food sovereignty - as well as the persistence of acquisitions, leases and land concessions, invite us all to revisit the issue of access to land and productive resources. Though shareholders of large-scale projects often obtain a return on investment, their overall economic efficiency - and, in particular, the interests of concerned populations and their generations to follow - are far from guaranteed.

Will the choice to promote agricultural companies based on the production of a small number of commodities, the heavy use of synthetic inputs and fossil fuels, and the employment of salaried workers result in a significant increase in production and wealth? Will it create jobs and income for hundreds of millions of those active today by way of exclusion? And likewise for as much or more who are expected to enter the labor market? Will the agricultural revolution to come, capable of both feeding 9 billion people and giving work to the greatest number while eradicating hunger, be based, as in the past, on a massive replacement of labour by capital? How to ensure that the principles enunciated in the context of "the voluntary guidelines" will be actually translated into action respecting the rights of rural populations and promoting sustainable development?

Finally, the issue of rights and "commons" on the agenda of international discussions seems, in our opinion, in need of attention again. The massive monopolizing of the planet's resources, beyond the diversity of its forms, reflects their ever-expanding commodification in the name of growth and worldwide welfare. But this leads to ignorance of the historical, social, ecological, cultural and political dimensions of the current dynamics, and minimization of their impacts. In this context, it seems necessary to re-engage on the issue of human rights. Specifically, people's rights of equitable access to land, water and natural resources, and to implement production systems according to their ecological, economical, cultural and technical choices, in coherence with the common interest.

We call on civil society organisations and governmental institutions to mobilise and launch a global forum on access to land and natural resources. It is essential to debate the analyses and proposals related to current developments and their consequential, major problems. We call for the creation of such a forum in order to identify and implement the most effective solutions.



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FIRST SIGNATORIES OF THE CALL

Farmer and civil society organisations

ACTION AID INTERNATIONAL

ACTUAR, Association for Cooperation and Development (Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento), Portugal

AFA, Asian Farmers' Association for sustainable rural development

AGTER, Association to contribute to improve the Governance of Land, Water and Natural Resources (Association pour l'Amélioration de la Gouvernance de la Terre, de l'Eau et des Ressources Naturelles), France

ANEC, National Association of Rural Commercialization Enterprises (Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo), Mexico

APMM, World Mountain People Association (Association des Populations des Montagnes du Monde)

CAFS, Centre for Agroecology and Food Security, United Kingdom

CED, Center for Environment and Development (Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement), Cameroon

CEPES, Peruvian Center for Social Studies (Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales), Peru

CERAI, International Agriculture and Rural Studies Center (Centro de Estudios Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional), Spain

CES, Centre for Social Studies (Centro de Estudos Sociais), Portugal

CNCPRT, National Council for the Concertation of Rural Producers of Chad (Conseil National de Concertation des Producteurs Ruraux du Tchad)

CONTAG, National Federation of Agricultural Workers (Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura), Brazil

COPROFAM, Coordination of Family Farms of Mercosur (Coordinadora de Organizaciones de productores Familiares del Mercosur)

CSA, Coalition for Food Sovereignty, (Coalition pour la Souveraineté Alimentaire), Quebec, Canada

EKTA PARISHAD, India

FNCA, New Water Culture Foundation (Fundacion Nueva Cultura del Agua), Spain

FPP, Forest Peoples Programme, United Kingdom

GLOBAL WITNESS

IFOAM, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

MVIWATA, The Network of Farmers Groups in Tanzania (Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima)

OXFAM

PENHA, the Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa

PHANO, Vietnam Association of Rural Development Science

OPSA, Political and Social Observatory of Angola (Observatório Político e Social de Angola)

PROPAC, Sub-Regional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa (Plateforme Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale)

ROPFA, The Network of Farmers and Agricultural Producers Organisations of West Africa (Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)

SLOW FOOD

SOCLA, Latin American Scientific Society for Agroecology (Sociedad Científica Latinoamericana de Agroecología)

WFF, World Forum of Fish harvesters and Fish workers

Governemental and international organisations

FAO, Food and Agriculture Organisation

Ministry of Agrarian Development (Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário, MDA), Federative Republic of Brazil

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment (Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'équipement rural), Republic of Senegal

Department of Agrarian Reform, Republic of the Philippines

People

ABIS Sébastien (Administrator of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, CIHEAM, France)

ADAMS Martin (Mokoro, United Kingdom)

AGUILERA KLINK Federico (Professor, University of San Fernando de La Laguna, Spain)

AKESBI Najib (Professor, Agronomics and Veterinary Institute of Rabat, Morocco)

ALTIERI Miguel (Professor, University of Berkeley, California, United States of America)

AMIN Samir (World Forum for Alternatives, Egypt-France)

ARBENZ Markus (Director of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, IFOAM, Switzerland)

ARNALTE Eladio (Professor, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain)

ARROJO Pedro (Professor Emeritus, Economical Analysis Department, University of Zaragoza, Spain)

BOVÉ José (Member of the European Parliament, France)

CHONCHOL Jacques (Former Chile's Minister of Agriculture, Salvador Allende's Government, Chile)

CISSOKHO Mamadou (Honorary President of the Network of Farmers and Agricultural Producers Organisations of West Africa, ROPPA, Senegal)

COCHET Hubert (Professor, AgrosParisTech, France)

COULIBALY Ibrahima (President of the National Coordination of Peasant Organizations of Mali, CNOP, and FAO Special Ambassador for the International Year of Family Farming 2014)

DAO The Anh (Research Director, Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences)

DE ALBUQUERQUE Catarina (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to safe drinking Water and Sanitation, Portugal)

DE SCHUTTER Olivier (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food 2008 – 2014, Belgium)

EGUREN Fernando (Chairman of the Peruvian Centre for Social Studies, Cepes)

ELLOUMI Mohamed (Researcher, National Agricultural Research Institute of Tunisia, INRAT)

GARCÉS Vicent (Member of the European Parliament, CERAI, Spain)

GÓMEZ Sergio (Rural sociologist, Chili)

GONZÁLEZ DE MOLINA Manuel (Professor, Pablo de Olavide University, Seville, Spain)

HERREN Hans (President and CEO of the Millennium Institute, President of the Biovision Foundation, United States of America)

HOUTART François (Professor Emeritus, Catholic University of Louvain la Neuve, Founder of the Centre Tri-continental, CETRI, Belgique)

JAIZME María del Carmen (Canarian Institute for Agrarian Investigations, ICIA, Spain)

KAIMOWITZ David (Former Chief executive of the Center for International Forestry Research, CIFOR, United States of America)

KOOHAFKAN Parviz (President of the World Agricultural Heritage Foundation, Iran)

LAZOS CHAVERO Elena (Professor, National Autonomous University of Mexico)

LEITE Sergio Pereira (Professor, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

LEIVA MONTENEGRO Cecilia (Former Chile's Vice Minister of Agriculture)

LOYAT Jacques (Agronomist, associated researcher at CIRAD, France)

MAMALO Abdoul Karim (Former Permanent Secretary of the Rural Code of Niger)

MAZOYER Marcel (Emeritus Professor, AgroParisTech, France)

MERINO Leticia (Chair person of the International Association for the Study of the Commons, IASC)

MERLET Michel (General Director of AGTER, France)

MUSSE AHMED Sadia (Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa, PENHA, Somaliland/Somalia)

NGUIFFO Samuel (General Secretary of the Center for the Environment and for Development, Cameroon)

NICHOLLS Clara (Professor, University of Antioquia, Colombia)

OH Hyunseok (President of Terrami Rural Development Institute, South Korea)

OLIVEIRA BAPTISTA Fernando (Former Portugal's Minister of Agriculture)

PACHECO Fernando (Political and Social Observatory of Angola)

PALEBELE Kolyang (President of the National Council for the Concertation of Rural Producers of Chad, CNCPR, Vice-President of the Sub-Regional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa, PROPAC, Chad)

PARÉ Frédéric (Coordinator of the Food Sovereignty Coalition, Quebec, Canada)

PIMBERT Michel (Director of the Centre for Agroecology and Food Security, CAFS, Coventry University ; High Level Panel of Expert of the Committee for Food Security at the Food and Agriculture Organisation, United Kingdom)

QUINTANA Victor (Advisor to the Peasant Farmers' Democratic Front of Chihuahua, and Professor, Autonomous University of Juarez City, Mexico)

ROUILLÉ D'ORFEUIL Henri (Agriculture Academy of France, French coordinator of the International Year for Family Farming, France)

SARMENTO Francisco Bendrao (Centre for Social Studies – University of Coimbra, Portugal)

SERRA Carlos (Professor, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique)

SUAREZ CARRERA Victor (Director of the National Association of Rural Commercialization Enterprises, ANEC, Mexico)

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PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE WFAL 2015



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Date, place and organization of the forum will be determined by the international organizing committee (IOC WFAL 2015)

With the support of:



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TO JOIN THE CALL

Please send an e-mail to: [**secretariat@landaccessforum.org**](mailto:secretariat@landaccessforum.org)



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