



SUMMARY REPORT:
An Independent Review of
the Implementation and Impact
of the International Land Coalition
2007-2011 Strategic Framework

Prepared by



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Introduction

The International Land Coalition (ILC) has a very ambitious and important agenda: to influence a wide range of significant actors to promote secure and equitable access to and control over land through advocacy, dialogue, knowledge sharing and capacity building. This requires a clear systemic analysis of where the ILC has the greatest potential to exert meaningful influence, and translating that analysis into a solid strategy and disciplined program of activity.

This report presents an independent assessment by Innovations for Scaling Impact (iScale) of the International Land Coalition's influence during the period 2007-2011. This review was commissioned by the ILC to provide input into the development of its strategic framework for 2011-15. The members of the iScale team that undertook this assessment were Horacio R. Trujillo, Steve Waddell, Sanjeev Khagram, Catrina Lucero, Randy Kemp, and Saira Abbasey McDonald.

Preparation of this report included review of ILC programs and activities from 2007 through the end of 2010. However, the focus of the report is primarily on the ILC's development as a network, rather than its individual programs and activities. The main lens of analysis is the five strategic objectives in the Strategic Framework.

This report should be considered an "assessment" rather than an evaluation. Insufficient definition of "baseline" conditions at the beginning of the Strategic Framework period, and difficulties with surveying of members¹ made a traditional evaluation impossible. Moreover, as our research revealed, there was a lack of clarity about the Framework itself. However, extensive data were gathered through numerous interviews, extensive document review, focus groups and observation of the December 2010 Council meeting. These provided a rich source from which to generate strategy recommendations that were then presented in a draft report to ILC staff in January 2011 to support their development of the 2011-2015 Strategy Plan. This report is a refinement of that draft, to provide further guidance in the plan's development.

As we describe below, the ILC has realized meaningful influence through the implementation of its Strategic Framework for the years 2007-11. At the same time, the ILC could exert even greater influence by sharpening and shifting the focus of its efforts to match changing opportunities, challenges and achievements. This will require the Secretariat, Council and Assembly of Members to collectively adjust their expectations and understanding of the ILC.

¹Over the months preceding this investigation the ILC had conducted several surveys which resulted in survey fatigue among members.



Overview of Activities and Outputs

Before presenting our assessment of the ILC in implementing and realizing the influence of its Strategic Framework for 2007-11, we present an illustrative overview of the ILC's activities and outputs. This overview aims to give a more granular understanding of ILC's development, as a background to our assessment of the ILC as a network. It draws directly from ILC documents.

Membership and Governance

- From 2007-11, the number of ILC members increased 141%.
- 72% of members paid contribution fees in 2010, the first year of the membership contribution policy.
- A new Charter and Governance Framework was approved in 2009.
- Regional platforms were established to provide governance in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Grantmaking

Compared to the first Strategic Framework period, 2003-2006, from 2007-2010 . . .

- The number of grants increased 154.76%, with Asia experiencing the largest increase (240.74%).
- The total dollar value of grants increased 90.75%, with Africa experiencing the largest increase (158%).

Programmatic Activities and Outputs

a) The ILC has undertaken a variety of **knowledge-development activities** to influence global, regional and national policy dialogues on land governance and key land related topics.

- As a result of the ILC's major collaborative project under its **Land Reporting Initiative**, the ILC has developed the LAND PORTAL, aimed to be the world's leading easy-access, easy-to-use online platform to share land-related information, to monitor trends, and identify information gaps to promote effective and sustainable land governance.
- ILC-supported CSO-led and multi-stakeholder **monitoring of land issues** initiatives such as Land Rights Observatories and Land Watch has supported advocacy work at the national and international levels.
- The ILC produced a **land-monitoring handbook** on the development of indicators for the monitoring of secure access to land.
- As part of its **Commercial Pressure on Land (CPL)** collaborative research initiative the ILC launched 28 research projects and published 12 policy briefs. The ILC CPL portal is the most comprehensive online resource on the phenomenon and receives 10,000 hits per month.
- Through its three-year action-oriented research project on **women's access to land** the ILC administered small grant programs in 10 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, and produced a series of 10 reports capturing the experience of each of these programs, two project synthesis reports, and four policy briefs. To facilitate advocacy activities by partners, ILC also carried out advocacy workshops and developed an Advocacy Toolbox.
- A global series on **"framing the debate"** on land issues has been launched with the aim to analyze and better understand the key topics at the center of current debates on land governance issues. Studies for Africa, Asia and Latin America have each been drafted. Further studies will be commissioned to cover geographical areas that are not covered under the current ILC scope of action.
- In Latin America, ILC members and partners have produced **18 research studies on various land-related topics** (including five studies on women's access to land that were disseminated through a special issue of RIMISP's Intercambios Bulletin.)



b) ILC members have undertaken **advocacy activities** to influence debates on land at global, regional and national levels.

- ILC members participated in the development of the **UN Task Force on Food Security’s Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action**.
- ILC members participated in various notable regional processes, such as **ILC Asia** members’ urging the **Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia** to re-affirm commitment to the World Conference on Agrarian Reforms and a pro-poor and sustainable growth mode, and the **ILC Africa** members engagement with the **Africa Land Policy Framework and Guidelines** implementation, including the elaboration of a scorecard to monitor the implementation of the regional policy at the national level.
- In **Bolivia**, the ILC member FTierra has twice hosted the annual “Post Constitutional Bolivia” conference, which attracts hundreds of participants including indigenous and peasant leaders, local government representatives, national and international researchers and national government representatives, and has become a benchmark in the country for debate on public policy and land issues.
- In **Nepal**, the ILC member CSRC, convener of the biggest land movement of the country, initiated the National Alliance for Land and Agrarian Reform. The multi-stakeholder alliance advocated for land issues to be addressed in the new constitution. CSRC was able to combine its historical support to people’s movements with facilitating IGO-CSO-GOV dialogue.
- In **Niger**, an ILC pilot project implemented by IFAD supported project “Projet de Promotion de l’Initiative Locale d’Aguié” (PPILDA), in partnership with the Secrétaire Permanent du Code Rural tested the full implementation of the principles of the Code Rural at a village level and was defined by a final evaluation as an “école de sécurisation foncière” and the first pilot project of this nature in the country. A national workshop shared results of this pilot project to inform national debate on the implementation of the land policy in the country.
- In **Uganda**, the ILC member Uganda Land Alliance in collaboration with a coalition comprising civil society, government, the private sector and academia developed a “shadow” National Land Policy that integrated the priorities and concerns of over 350 grassroots organizations into a series of proposed measures for protecting the tenure rights of the rural poor. Reportedly, over 85% of these proposed measures, including a policy statement and related strategy on the integration of women’s rights to land in land transactions processes, have been adopted in the official Draft Four of the National Land Policy.
- In the **Philippines**, various complementary initiatives undertaken in partnership by ILC members in the country are influencing formulation and implementation of laws on tenure reform, and piloting alternative solutions for securing land rights and solving agrarian conflicts on the ground. The Land Watch Philippines campaign, contributed to the enactment of a bill (Republic Act 9700, otherwise known as CARPER) extending the land reform programme for another five years. Debate is being advanced on a Land Use Law that would rationalise and harmonize the use of natural resources in the Philippines into an integrated plan. Such a plan is still missing, leading to an increase in the number of land conflicts despite the existence of very progressive sectoral laws on tenure reform, for example conflicts from overlapping claims on land covered by both the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and the Indigenous People’s Rights Act (IPRA). PAFID and its partners (ANGOC and ARNow!) sowed the “seed” of partnership between the farmers and indigenous peoples, to gain support from a wider constituency, and sustain the efforts to advocate for the enactment of the National Land Use Plan.

c) ILC conducted **multi-stakeholders learning, research and capacity development**.

- 55 organizations participated in the three different ILC peer-to-peer learning exchanges: two on participatory mapping (in Central America and Southern America) and another on women’s access to land (in Eastern Africa). These exchanges, known as “**learning routes**,” are based on a model developed by ILC member, PROCASUR. A total of 11 innovation plans have been designed and implemented by organizations that participated in the routes.
- 50 ILC members’ representatives participated in two **training of trainers** in Asia – the first on Advocacy on Land Rights, and the second on Participatory Approaches to Improving Land Access and Food Security through Good Governance and Good Agricultural Practices for Small and Marginal Farmers.



e) ILC continued supporting interventions aimed at promoting and securing land rights of women and men on the ground and **empowering marginalized groups**. Illustrative examples are:

- ILC supported **women legal empowerment projects** in Pakistan, India, Colombia and Democratic Republic of Congo. As an example in Sind Province of Pakistan, as a result of the Oxfam-GB Pakistan women legal empowerment project, 60% of women in the Government of Sindh Land Distribution Programme received their ownership documents.
- ILC supported **Indigenous Groups** in claiming and protecting their rights over ancestral territories. In Bukidnon province of the Philippines, supported by PAFID, the Manobo community decided to pursue the processing of the Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) covering the 10-hectare lot offered by the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Assessment of the International Land Coalition

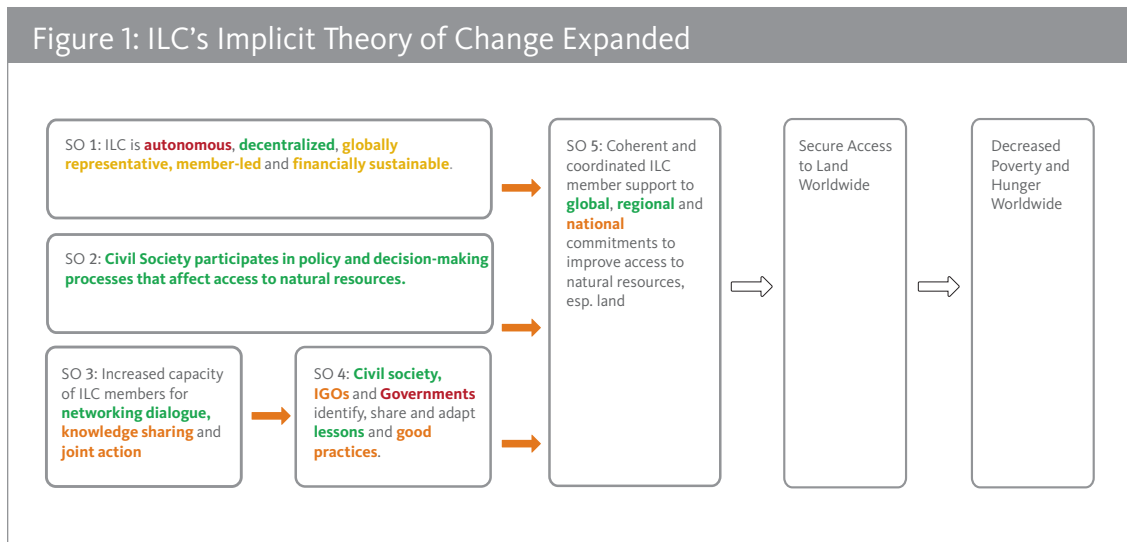
The ILC Strategic Framework provides a very useful reference point for assessing the effectiveness of the ILC as a network in realizing its intended influence. The Strategic Objectives are presented in Box 1.

Box 1: ILC's Strategic Objectives 2007-11

- All **members** of ILC provide coherent and coordinated support to global, regional and national commitments and actions to improve the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land.
- **Civil society** participates more actively in, and exercises greater influence over, the policy and decision-making processes that affect the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land.
- **Civil society, inter-governmental organizations** and **governments** identify, share and adopt lessons and good practices that improve the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land.
- All **members** of ILC have increased capacity for networking, knowledge sharing, dialogue and joint action.
- **ILC** becomes an autonomous, decentralized, globally representative, member-led and financially sustainable coalition.

However, stakeholders criticized the 2007-11 Strategic Framework for its structure, the lack of clarity of the Strategic Objectives (SOs) and the absence of a “baseline” to gauge progress.

ILC aims for large system change. Its strategy should be derived from a sound system-level theory of change. Therefore, to develop the assessment, we translate the Framework into a theory of change and analyze its individual components. The summary of this report is presented concisely in the figure below, which represents the **ILC's Strategic Objectives** in the form of a theory of change. Each of the five left-hand boxes represents one **Strategic Objective (SO)** from the 2007-2011 Framework. (Note: The SOs have been renumbered to reflect the perceived flow.) The last two boxes describe the overarching impacts, both the more proximate and narrow impact of Secure Access to Land Worldwide and the more complete impact of Decreased Poverty and Hunger Worldwide that inspired the initial emergence of the focus of the ILC from the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty.



The key individual words and one box in its entirety are color-coded, and this reflects our analysis of ILC's achievements with respect to them. With this “stoplight” approach:

- **Green** represents those objectives that we assess as having been realized to a significant extent,
- **Yellow** represents those objectives we assess as realized to a lesser, but still meaningful degree,
- **Orange** represents those objectives we assess as realized to some, but less meaningful extent, and
- **Red** represents those objectives we assess as not having been realized or having been realized to an unsatisfactory degree.

The illustration conveys in a relatively easy-to-recognize synthesis of iScale's overall assessment of the ILC's achievements. However, a meaningful assessment of the effectiveness of the ILC's implementation of the Strategic Framework requires that the Framework as a whole and not simply its components be assessed, as well as the manner in which it was applied over the past four years. After all, the basic theory behind a network is that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The effective functioning of a network – in terms of its vibrancy and connectivity – are key determinants of the effectiveness of the network as the sum of its parts.

SO 1: ILC is autonomous, decentralized, globally representative, member-led and financially sustainable

We begin our explanation of our assessment in the bottom left corner of Figure 1, with the SO related to ILC's own internal organizational development. This is the SO most directly under ILC's control. In terms of the theory of change, it provides the pedestal to develop the change. Among the components of this objective, we recognize the significant progress that the ILC has made in its efforts to decentralize through the launch and meaningful development of the regional platforms. Additionally, the Coalition has developed a globally diverse membership, although more can be expected.

Similarly, interviews revealed the ILC has made significant progress toward to being a “member-led” coalition. This commendable philosophical commitment should also be approached with measure. However, as various respondents noted that the orientation to being “member-led” might be being interpreted and applied practically in a way that decreases expectations for Secretariat staff to provide more leadership in identifying directions for the continued development and effective administration of the ILC. This contributes to concerns regarding the appropriate focus and steadiness of ILC activities.



Finally with respect to this SO, we recognize substantial progress that the ILC has made in attracting additional resources during the 2007-2011 period. This has allowed budget growth and bodes well for its sustainability. At the same time, the Coalition appears to develop plans for the future that are contingent upon its success in securing resources, rather than identifying clear program goals and correspondent financial goals and plans for development of these necessary resources.

SO 2: Civil Society participates in policy and decision-making processes that affect access to land and natural resources

ILC's theory of change is driven by a focus on ensuring that civil society has a meaningful role in land issues, which in turn (it is believed) will contribute to broader and longer term outcomes (SO's 3, 4, and 5). ILC has contributed to a role for civil society in policy and decision-making processes that affect access to land and natural resources. It has ensured civil society engagement in the African Union Land Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa (ALFPGF) and the Comprehensive Framework for Action High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (CFA) processes; as well, there are national-level processes such as in Nepal where it has enhanced civil society's role. Through its strategic convening of global and regional meetings, it has built connections to policy-makers. In fact, we suggest given such notable progress has been made in realizing this objective, both prior to 2007 and consolidated since then, that the ILC should consider decreasing its attention to this particular objective in favor of increasing emphasis upon development capacity for multi-stakeholder interaction. This reflects both an assessment that there has been significant improvement in civil society's role in comparison to when ILC began which is producing new needs and opportunities.

SO 3: Increased capacity of ILC members for networking, dialogue, knowledge sharing, and joint action

This SO has an internal dimension (ILC members sharing amongst themselves) and external one (networking with non-ILC members). In terms of the theory of change, it aims to enhance the density and quality of interactions. Our investigation reveals that members of the ILC have increased their capacity for inter-organizational networking among themselves at national, regional and global levels. This has been facilitated by the ILC's platforms, conferences, and action research at these various levels. Second, ILC members have also clearly increased their capacity for inter-organizational dialogue during this period. This is evidenced with the reported success and satisfaction of members with ILC-facilitated activities as well as the increased engagement of ILC member organizations with other actors in significant forums on land policy, such as the AU Framework, the Togo dialogues, and the CFA process. Knowledge sharing capacity of members has been improved, with the ILC website identified as a valuable source of information. However, there is still considerable room for progress both to become a widely recognized source of land reporting expertise and a more vibrant platform for regular sharing of knowledge among ILC members. We find that ILC has built capacity for joint action through the way it creates collective research and development initiatives, its regional platforms, and ensuring members' connection to global policy processes. However, this capacity is too often solely civil society joint action, rather than including IGOs and other stakeholders.

SO 4: Civil society, IGOs and Governments identify, share and adapt lessons and good practices

This SO recognizes that realizing ILC's vision requires engagement with stakeholders across sectors and geographies in the issue – although the stakeholders identified are not comprehensive. The ILC has quite uneven influence on engagement among civil society, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and governments to identify, share, and adapt lessons and good practice. ILC continues to build its civil society profile and there are very good examples of collective learning for NGOs such as with the learning journeys. However, there is weaker IGO interaction in this regard – the general approach is dominated by an attitude (by IGOs and NGOs) that IGOs are doing something for civil society rather than with it. Also, there is lack of a strategy for direct national government engagement. Engagement with the



latter in terms of learning seems largely through meeting and conferences, rather than through joint learning activity. Although there is clear evidence of lessons being developed, there is only weak anecdotal evidence of this turning into good practice.

SO 5: Coherent and coordinated ILC member support to global, regional and national commitments to improve access to natural resources, especially land

This is the core work of what ILC can do as a network, and is the product of the other SOs that the theory of change proposes will lead to ILC's vision. It is also the most challenging of the SOs: it depends on the other SOs and ILC's ability to undertake highly strategic interventions in complex systems with many actors. Coherence of interests and coordination of action is dependent upon both increased member capacity for, and realization of, mutually supportive engagement. Therefore, the Coalition can only hold itself accountable for how effectively it has acted to contribute to the realization of this objective, and not for the realization of the objective. We assess the performance is uneven. ILC members have lent support to develop commitments such as the AU Framework and the CFA. They have been active in national-level processes such as activities in Kenya demonstrate. However, there is absence of an ILC national-level strategy that would seem a critical element in providing coordinated support.

Summary Achievements

ILC's activities can be summarized as producing three major achievements. The achievements are described by bringing forward the highlighted elements in the ILC Theory of Change as depicted in Figure 1.

Achievement 1: The ILC has developed a growing IGO - NGO - research institute platform that is capable of multi-stakeholder influence.

- a. **Networking capacity (SO₃)**
- b. **Dialogue capacity (SO₃)**
- c. **Civil society, IGOs (SO₂, SO₄)**
- d. **Decentralized (SO₁)**
- e. **Member-led (SO₁)**
- f. **Globally representative (SO₁)**
- g. **Financially sustainable (SO₁)**

It is easy to overlook this achievement, particularly because it is part of the ILC's founding. However, continuing to build and maintain a cross-sectoral forum requires skill and attention. The ILC has not only maintained the platform, but has a significantly growing membership. This is occurring in tandem with increased member expectation for the ILC to make material contributions.

Although SO₃ referring to networking and dialogue capacity was undoubtedly framed more in terms of the ability of members to connect with non-members, the core expression of these capacities lies within the ILC itself.

Healthy civil society participation is the most significant related theory of change achievement — that of IGOs is notably weaker. Although the SOs refer simply to “civil society” and do not make any distinction between international NGOs, local NGOs and research organizations, their roles and perspectives in the issue of land is quite distinct. Active engagement of each of these civil society stakeholders should be also noted as an achievement.

There has been substantial movement for the initiative to be member-led and decentralized, accompanied by development of the regional platforms. However, we have noted with the latter that the performance is uneven: we raise the need for increased geographic focus for the “Asia” platform, and the African platform is still very much in development.



There is no inherent organizing logic or rationale behind “Asia” as a platform, as there is in Africa where action is driven by the African Union and in Latin America where cultural similarities drive substantial interactions. Perhaps the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific or some other regional entity has a realistic chance of playing an AU-like role to give an organizing logic to a more focused regional definition.

We interpret the reference to “globally representative” to be stakeholders from all parts of the world who are interested in the focal issue of the ILC. Although the ILC can be said to have members from North and South, there are stakeholders who are insufficiently engaged for ILC to be a fully multi-stakeholder entity. The most obvious are farmers’ organizations, and this is now receiving some attention. The roles of national governments and private enterprise need further development.

The ILC appears to be on firm financial footing, given the increases in financial support. However, financing appears to be an on-going challenge in the face of need for multi-year financial strategies, diminishing donor budgets and the under-engagement of IGOs. Given the rising importance of land and agriculture issues, and the recent adoption of the CFA and the AULF, the ILC appears in a good position to be an increasingly attractive partner for funders.

Achievement 2: The ILC has influenced some international and national debates to ensure its pro-poor perspective is on the international agenda and integrated into action plans.

- a. **Member support to global and regional commitments to improve access (SO5)**
- b. **Networking capacity (SO3)**
- c. **Dialogue capacity (SO3)**
- d. **Civil society participates in policy and decision-making processes (SO2)**

The most notable achievements for the field over the past four years are the CFA, the AULF and national-level policy developments in Kenya, Niger and Nepal. Of course there are many actors involved in these developments, but the ILC and its members had a notable presence. The alignment of the language of the policy outcomes with the ILC’s goals certainly suggest that the organization has been influential.

There were numerous action research and workshop activities initiated by the ILC to develop network and dialogue capacities. Indeed, the workshops, research, and conferences aimed to implicitly build these capacities. The policy achievements require networking and dialogue capacities, and therefore the policy achievements can be considered indicators of successful development of the ILC’s capacity development work.

Achievement 3: The ILC has developed an array of network capacities to realize change, most notably for multi-stakeholder: (1) learning, research and capacity development, (2) advocacy, and (3) system organizing.

- a. **Civil society, IGOs . . . identify, share and adapt lessons (SO4)**

The ILC has developed its role with these three activities in particular, and has done this with an impressive range of approaches. Although there have been some relatively traditional “trainings” and research papers, by and large there appears to be a very good understanding of the need to closely tie and even integrate learning and acting to truly realize development. This has been reflected both in the design of activities with member leadership, and in activity implementation such as with action research, learning journeys, and highly participatory meetings.



Summary Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The ILC should focus more rigorously on strengthening the multi-stakeholder objective of its strategy.

- a. Governments (SO₄)**
- b. Need to include other stakeholders**
- c. Autonomous (SO₁)**

The ILC historically has privileged the role of civil society in its work. This was the product of an era when civil society organizations working on the issue of land were almost non-existent. Capacity-development was critical in order for civil society to have a meaningful role. Today there are numerous NGOs focusing on land issues and a significant number of national and regional networks. There are many other donor agencies working to develop capacity of NGOs in the land arena, and although the resources might still be considered inadequate, capacity-building is not a feature unique to the ILC. Although there is certainly a need for greater civil society capacity, the situation today is far different from the era of the ILC's founding.

There is widespread recognition within the ILC that it's most distinctive quality is its cross-sectoral NGO-IGO membership. However, the level of IGO engagement was below what is necessary for a healthy collaboration; as noted, the attitude seems to be more about IGOs doing things for civil society rather than with it. Collaborations require definition and mutual commitment to not just goals shared amongst the stakeholders, but to distinct goals of stakeholder groups and even participating organizations. As well there must be a review process to assess performance-to-goals. There is a lack of clear definition of goals that IGOs would value and are necessary to ensure robust engagement. As well, the ILC should make sure it engages the most appropriate person from an IGO in the right place. Researchers are best placed in a leadership role vis-à-vis the research agenda. Senior IGO leaders should be those who are on the Council.

However, the key stakeholders for ILC go far beyond those of IGOs and NGOs-- indeed, it is difficult to see how real progress can be made without going beyond them. Most notably absent are farmers' organizations, national governments and private enterprise. Certainly there is reason for caution about how to engage particularly the last two where some may have goals conflicting with those of ILC. However, there is a range of possibilities depending on the degree they support the ILC's goals.

The need for a collectively-owned space of issue stakeholders is critical to giving life to the fundamental values of respect and embracing of diversity that are core to the ILC's vision. Dominance of one actor suppresses the potential of collective responsibility, shared skills, knowledge, resources, innovative thinking and entrepreneurial action that are sorely needed to address seemingly intractable problems and ones where progress is much too slow. For example, building a knowledge base and monitoring system that is widely seen as high quality and legitimate across stakeholder groups can only be achieved through collective ownership and action. Such a knowledge-base is usually critical to progress in complex arenas like land.

The need for this shared space will become increasingly global in new ways as the traditional North/South dynamic declines in the face of rising economic and political capacity of key southern governments and societies, diminishing donor budgets, and the general globalization of issues.

The ILC should continue to be led by those committed to its goals. However, continuing to privilege civil society actually undermines the ILC's ability to be perceived as, and act as, a cross-sectoral network for those working to realize its vision. This should not get embroiled in questions about the Charter and governance - at least not for the next few years. The ILC should develop strategies to engage a broader range of stakeholders on a peer basis--and perhaps investigate and experiment with such things as advisory groups and observers. These strategies should, as outlined with IGOs, be founded upon three principles: the degree of agreement with ILC's goals, the distinct goals of the organization that ILC can help realize, and ensuring engagement with the right individual and position within the organization.



There are two other considerations with respect to ILC's role as the leading multi-stakeholder network on land and natural resource issues. One relates to its legal structure. Currently the Secretariat is technically part of IFAD. Becoming an autonomous organization is part of a strategic objective in the 2007-11 Framework, and the issue obviously has received attention. There is inertia and some obvious positive administrative reasons to continue the arrangement, weighed against greater administrative flexibility and authentic independence. Becoming autonomous has two further implications. Most importantly, it reinforces the image of ILC being a neutral actor in terms of multi-stakeholder interests. However, ILC has a distinctly pro-CSO orientation even explicit in its SOs. Therefore, leaving the IGO home might well undermine the perception of ILC as a neutral multi-stakeholder platform unless ILC tempers its pro-CSO orientation as is recommended. Another option touted by some, to rotate between IGOs, would be an administrative, logical and personnel nightmare.

Another significant challenge to ILC's claim to being a unique multi-stakeholder network in the land arena is that the ecosystem of organizations working on this issue has become increasingly crowded and complex, with more organizations overlapping with one another. A particular case in point is the overlap between the ILC and the Global Land Tools Network (GLTN). While the two institutions are distinct from one another in their sponsorship by IFAD (ILC) and UN-HABITAT (GLTN), as well as their relative focus on rural (ILC) and urban (GLTN) populations, these distinctions are oftentimes indistinguishable by stakeholders. Some ILC members identified their membership in UN-HABITAT as well. Even the ILC and GLTN are members of each other's networks. This overlap leads to seemingly unnecessary coordination challenges and potential duplication. Moreover, it also has a deleterious impact upon system stakeholders who have limited time and resources to participate actively in such networks and thus cannot participate fully in either the ILC or GLTN when trying to be part of both. These factors lead us to suggest that there is good reason for the ILC to actively investigate opportunities for closer cooperation between the two networks, ranging from simply limited coordination of activities, to the holding of joint meetings/summits/annual assemblies, and even to a potential merger of the two networks some time down the road, which could also potentially allow the two programs to become more autonomous and multi-stakeholder.

Recommendation 2: The ILC should recognize in its priorities an opportunity to shift from creating frameworks to the implementation of such networks.

- a. **Joint action (SO₃)**
- b. **Member support to national . . . commitments to improve access (SO₅)**

This past year has seen milestones in the land issue, with the development of the CFA, ALPFG and other guidelines. These can be easily under-rated or under-appreciated as new tools for the ILC to realize its vision. They can provide the catalyst that ILC has long been aiming to develop in the international arena for spurring implementation. Although more international agreements, particularly regional ones, would be helpful, they should not be pursued with the same focus. The question now is how to realize their implementation.

Inertia of a historic strategy such as one to create international frameworks, often leads to ineffective application of resources. Historic investment in skills, programs and structures can cloud or inhibit the need to respond to a change in an issue arena like land. Networks should be particularly resilient.

This investigation rates the historic joint action low in part because the action seemed unbalanced in terms of stakeholder groups. This can be addressed in part through the first summary recommendation. There are things that the IGOs need integrated into joint action, for example, that they cannot do on their own. These seem under-articulated. This investigation also rated the ILC's engagement at the national level low – the level where the questions of integration of international agreements into national policy become critical. The ILC has no national engagement strategy, and has not done enough to draw lessons from engagement in countries like Kenya and Nepal – lessons not just about “how access to land” can be integrated into national-level policy, but also how the ILC and its members can most effectively participate in this process.



ILC members are working to develop land monitoring systems, and this is a great example of where a collaborative effort is needed – not just across sectors, but also to identify how to engage organizations at various levels from local to global. A signature activity like this should be identified to tie together and give discipline to development of the ILC's activities.

Recommendation 3: The ILC should be more disciplined and strategic about prioritizing, setting targets and allocating resources.

a. Coherent and coordinated member support (SO5)

The previous points lead to a recommendation for greater definition of ILC's theory of change and associated strategy. We perceive this as necessarily connecting to the member-led quality. The definition of strategy and targets needs to arise from members to ensure their understanding of, and their commitment to, playing their role in realizing them.

There was obviously an historic problem when the ILC was being "secretariat-driven", but that does not seem to be the case today. The absence of a clearly-defined set of SOs (lamented by all) with targets (lamented by some) can be seen as product of this historic quality, since the absence allows greater secretariat discretion.

Being "member-led" in a multi-stakeholder global network is open to particularly problematic interpretation. People naturally tend to think in terms of "one-member-one vote." That will create big problems. This is recognized in careful crafting of balances amongst stakeholder and geographic voices in the ILC's Council and regional structures. This needs to be honored in larger meetings of ILC participants. The goal of the network is not simply to be the summation of everyone's wish list, but to be integrative and transcend the individual perspectives to create a highly dynamic whole, focused on highly strategic action.

Targets are needed to give clear direction, and support members in playing their role in realizing them. Resources are modest, and members need a framework to understand which "good" idea must be "excellent" in terms of the ILC strategy.

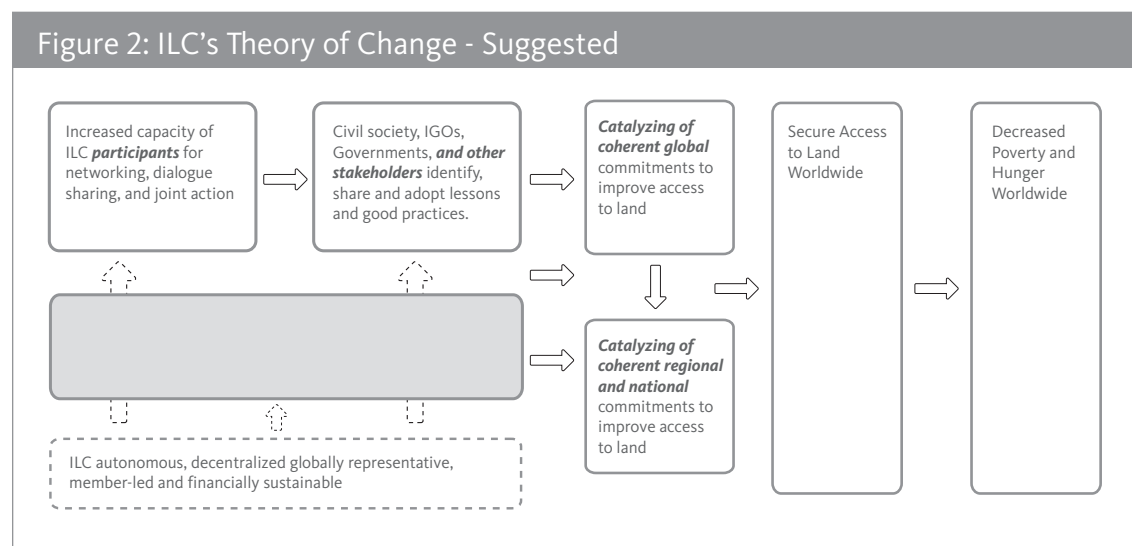
However, the concept of "targets" often has problematic interpretations and uses. When dealing with a highly dynamic field of activity with many actors and newly emerging trends and opportunities, targets are often best expressed in terms of ranges. For example: "The ILC will contribute to integration of access to land principles in # of ## national land policies over the next four years." This helps the next steps of identifying priority countries, while being flexible to respond to new opportunities. Furthermore, explicit definition helps members understand the conditions necessary, for ILC to identify a country as a priority. This can lead to associated activities, such as creating a community of practice amongst those priority countries.

We want to also be clear that we are not arguing in favor of using a log frame as a driving framework. Doing so can be problematic for a network like ILC dealing with a complex issue, which includes lots of uncontrollable variables and many other (more) powerful actors. The business strategy guru Henry Mintzberg once advocated simply throwing away a strategic plan once it was written, in recognition that the core value of planning is in the active verb – it is about focusing discussion, creating on-going cycles of discussion and adjustment in response to opportunities, learning and environmental changes. However, creating a disciplined connection of activities and rationale is essential to have a good on-going discussion and adjustments. Some clear goals are necessary, to explain, discuss and assess action.



Recommendation 4: ILC should consider reframing its strategic objectives as a more concise theory of change.

This recommendation integrates all of the summary assessment into a revision to the Figure 1 of ILC's theory of change. This follows our introduction to that theory with the suggestion that the Coalition can strengthen its strategy by refining its theory.



In this refined version:

1. SO1: ILC's becoming autonomous, decentralized globally representative, member-led and financially sustainable. The dotted lines aim to emphasize that this is a utilitarian, organizational development objective of different status.
2. SO2: Civil society participates more actively in, and exercises greater influence over, the policy and decision-making processes that affect the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land.

This is integrated into the next SO, reflecting our suggestion to increase focus on developing the multi-stakeholder aspect of ILC and supporting more specifically CSOs' (and others') capacity to engage in multi-stakeholder processes.

3. SO3: Civil society, inter-governmental organizations and governments identify, share and adopt lessons and good practices that improve the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land. We replace "members" with "participants," reflecting the need to broaden the ILC's stakeholder focus, but without getting into formal governance issues.
4. SO4: All members of ILC have increased capacity for networking, knowledge sharing, dialogue and joint action. We explicitly add "other stakeholders" to reflect our recommendation that the ILC broaden its stakeholder focus.
5. SO5: All members of ILC provide coherent and coordinated support to global, regional and national commitments and actions to improve the access of poor men and women to natural resources, especially land.



- We replace the terms “coherent and coordinated” with “catalyzing of coherent” to better reflect our view that (1) an active verb is preferable, (2) a broader range of actions than coordination are necessary (for example, developing), (3) the core function of ILC is to create “coherence” amongst stakeholders.
- We identify the path of influence that global commitments can have on catalyzing national commitments, by breaking these apart.

Despite its problems and vagaries, the 2007-2011 Strategic Framework laid the groundwork for a shift of this order. The biggest and probably most controversial of the suggested refinements is the omission of the objective on supporting civil society to participate in policy and decision-making processes that affect access to natural resources. This follows the discussion in Summary Recommendation 1 above. It suggests a change of a scale similar to that associated with the 2007-2011 Strategic Framework that pointed out:

In 1995 land issues had fallen from the development agenda. ILC responded by promoting the need to put land back on the agenda. It did so by working with its civil society and intergovernmental members to advocate for secure access to land.¹

As well, the 2007-2011 Strategic Framework went on to list “multi-stakeholder dialogue” first among its priority issues, noting:

*“As the 2006 external evaluation concluded, there is now more than ever a need for **effective mechanisms that encourage and foster multi-stakeholder dialogue about land issues**” (emphasis added). In particular, the ILC insightfully noted that such multi-stakeholder dialogue is particularly needed because “land issues tend to be not only technical questions, but issues with highly sensitive political and social implications.”¹ (emphasis added).*

As we have described, the ILC has made good progress in developing dialogue and networking capacity. The 2007-2011 Strategic Framework went on to identify as a priority:

*The current land reform movement is characterized by a range of important actors (government, political parties, inter-government, civil society, social movements and the **private sector, including multi-national corporations**) that have overlapping, different and often politicized agendas.¹ (emphasis added)*

Recently, in response to interest in acquiring or leasing large tracts of land by investors based in the North and in the food-importing countries, the ILC has developed Commercial Pressure on Land as a global initiative. It is a short step to develop this into a strategy to engage the private sector.

Additionally the 2007-2011 Framework pointed out:

One of ILC’s comparative advantages is its unique status as a bridge between civil society and intergovernmental organizations, bringing diverse groups together, sharing information on land issues, and providing opportunities for collaborative policy dialogue and advocacy. As a convener, ILC also facilitates the creation of space for broad and inclusive social dialogue at all levels, where diverse and often-competing interests can be negotiated. ILC will work more strategically and pro-actively to identify with its members and partners the need for coalitions and partnerships around specific issues and to support their formation.¹

Furthermore the 2007-2011 Framework pointed to the need to:

Refocus ILC at the national and local levels to achieve demonstrable impact on the livelihoods of poor women and men: The most significant change to ILC’s operation will be to place greater emphasis on the national and local levels, building critical mass in a limited number of priority countries to achieve demonstrable impact and to identify scalable and replicable approaches and solutions to land issues.¹



All this suggests that the summary achievements and recommendations incorporated into the revised theory of change and strategic objectives represent continuity in work, with sharpened focus and changes in response to new opportunities, challenges and achievements.

This all reflects some important shifts proposed for the ILC, summarized in Table 1. The first proposes that the ILC shift effort from creating global frameworks to using them to develop national actions that reflect them. This is because there are now two important international frameworks adopted by governments that incorporate the ILC's goals: the Comprehensive Framework for Action High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, and the African Union Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa. The ILC made important contributions to both documents.

Table 1: Key Shifts		
	From	To
Activity Focus	Creating the global frameworks	Implementing the Frameworks
Participants	IGOs, CSOs, Research Institutions	Multi-Stakeholder
Geographic focus	North-South Global	Global-national
Capacity Focus	CSO	Cross-Sectoral Interaction
Role	Dispersed activities: - Advocacy - Learning/Capacity Dev. - System Organizing	Primary: Monitoring Secondary: Advocacy Learning/Capacity Development System Organizing
Strategy	Target adverse	Target sophisticate

The second shift is from being IGO-CSO-Research Institute focused in terms of participation, to being truly multi-stakeholder. National governments, farmers' organizations and businesses all have important roles in land issues. A collective space where these stakeholders who are committed to the ILC's vision can come together as co-owners is very badly needed.

In terms of capacity-development, the key shift proposed is from a focus on civil society organizations (CSOs) to developing the capacity of all the stakeholders to interact productively. This arises in part in recognition of ILC success in building CSO capacity, the presence of others who are doing that, the need of all stakeholders for development of this capacity, and that the CSO focus undermines the ILC's ability to be a multi-stakeholder space.

Of less importance, but still a noteworthy shift, is from being global with a distinct North-South donor/recipient dynamic, to being truly global, including national. Donor budgets are being reduced, Southern economies and polities are becoming more powerful thereby reducing North-South distinctions, and there is on-going globalization for both good and bad that suggest this shift will become increasingly important.

To further sharpen the strategy, adoption of targets is important. We share the view that log frames and rigid targets are inappropriate for the network as a whole, for a network dealing with a complex "squishy" issue, lots of uncontrollable variables and many other (more) powerful actors. However, creating a disciplined connection of activities and rationale is essential to have a good on-going discussion and adjustments to reflect new learning, opportunities, achievements, and challenges.

Finally, ILC's role in the land issue should shift in response to the other proposed shifts. As well there is need for a more uniting activity to pull together all the distinct ones that ILC is undertaking and reflect its modest resources. Monitoring of land access as a key implementation vehicle with associated research, capacity-development and multi-stakeholder action is one attractive option to consider.