“FONTIERRAS:
Structural Adjustment and Access to Land in Guatemala”
RP 100581

A Study/Proposal
by
CONGCOOP and CNOC

Supported by
IDRC

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared by Kimberly Inksater

For IDRC

March, 2003
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<tr>
<td>CIDECA</td>
<td><em>Centro de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo de Centro América</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>CIEP</td>
<td><em>Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>CIEPRODH</td>
<td><em>Centro de Investigación, Estudios y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>CNOC</td>
<td><em>Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas</em></td>
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<td>CONGCOOP</td>
<td><em>Coordinación de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales y Cooperativas</em></td>
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<td>FONTIERRAS</td>
<td><em>Fondo de Tierras – Land Fund</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>IDRC</td>
<td><em>International Development Research Centre</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>IEPADES</td>
<td><em>Instituto para la Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible</em></td>
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<td>IXCO</td>
<td><em>Organización de Apoyo al Desarrollo</em></td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td><em>Non-governmental Organization</em></td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The external evaluation of the IDRC project entitled “FONTIERRAS: Structural Adjustment and Access to Land in Guatemala” was conducted with the goal of fomenting institutional learning. Kimberly Inksater, an independent consultant with previous experience in verification of the peace accords in Guatemala, was contracted by IDRC to conduct evaluation activities from mid-January until mid-February, 2003. This report is the product of these activities.

The project was coordinated and administered by CONGCOOP, an umbrella organization of various Guatemalan NGOs and cooperatives, in conjunction in some aspects with CNOC, the National Coordinating body of Campesina Organizations.

The first phase of the project resulted in the published study document in May 2002 entitled “FONTIERRAS: El model de mercado y el acceso a la tierra en Guatemala, balance y perspectives”. The second phase of the project focused on the dissemination of project results to various sectors of Guatemalan society and the preparation of an executive summary and a popular version of the study.

Methodology

The evaluation was conducted according to the four major components identified in the Terms of Reference for the Evaluator:

- Review of documents
- Interviews and meetings (15 semi-structured interviews; observation of workshop)
- Internal discussion (IDRC, CONGCOOP and CNOC)
- Preparation of the present report.

Assessment

The Evaluator assesses the following elements in the body of the report:

- Achievement of Project Objectives
- Project and Study Management
- Achievement of IDRC Corporative Objectives

Achievement of Project Objectives

The Evaluator found that the general and specific objectives of the project proposal were met in the final documents and activities of the study. Most importantly, the study determined how sample campesina communities are affected by the market-assisted design of FONTIERRAS. The study documents produced and related dissemination activities encouraged dialogue, public policy debate and practical changes in FONTIERRAS.

Project and Study Management
The Evaluator collected information from CONGCOOP and IDRC that confirmed the efficient administration of the project resources. The study process was also efficiently managed by CONGCOOP, with the planned activities being executed on schedule.

The Evaluator found that the effectiveness of some aspects of the study process was difficult to measure with any great certainty. Important positive results were achieved through the study process: dialogue with national and international experts; integration of academic and field research; inclusion of women’s experience in beneficiary communities and participation in international and national debate.

Other aspects of the study management were the source of the majority of critical observations from external sources (interviewees). Particularly important to note is the observation that the study conclusions favour CNOC as an accompaniment organization1 in the land access process over other agencies. Section 4 of the report provides more detail and offers the actors potentially valuable observations that could foment the most important lessons learned.

Achievement of IDRC Corporate Objectives

The three IDRC corporate objectives assessed were found to be achieved to the extent possible given the project design. Most notably the project fomented public policy discussion and generated new understanding and discussion of land access, the policies of the World Bank and the application of the particular market-assisted model of FONTIERRAS.

The degree to which the project strengthened the institutional research capacity of CONGCOOP is more difficult to assess given the fact that the majority of the tasks were out-sourced to independent researchers.

Recommendations

CONGCOOP

It is recommended that CONGCOOP:

- Conduct follow-up activities to assess the impact of the study on FONTIERRAS and World Bank policies and procedures.
- Consider building partnerships with formal research institutions to increase internal capacity.
- Consider an academic or research specialist to accompany and/or advise in the study management process of future research projects.
- Consider new research projects that incorporate the successful formula of participatory field research and public policy proposals.
- Dialogue with member organizations when defining new research proposals to foment member involvement in the study process.
- Consider integrating experienced personnel from member organizations (such as CIDECA, CIEP, CIEPRODH, IEPADES and IXCO) in future research projects.
- Integrate mechanisms for critical reflection and lessons learned in the project management cycle.

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1 The term accompaniment organization is used to refer to organizations that support the campesina associations in accessing the Land Fund, from organizing community associations, preparing applications to selecting land and negotiating the price. CNOC and its member organizations act as an accompaniment organization, as do a variety of other religious and development entities.
Communicate these critical reflections and lessons learned to donors, through regular meetings and more descriptive project reports.

Attempt to formulate general and specific objectives in a concise manner to allow easier assessment of progress toward their achievement.

Assess and enhance the capacity of researchers to integrate gender analysis as a cross-cutting theme in all research components.

Distribute an executive summary at the same time as the complete study document.

Organize a discussion group with key actors at the time the publication is released.

Ensure the executive committees and personnel from all partner organizations have been presented with the study results.

IDRC

It is recommended that IDRC:

- Continue the level of support to partner organizations throughout the project cycle.
- Continue to facilitate regional and international networking.
- Ensure project proposals contain mechanisms that will promote the achievement of the three corporate objectives.
- Encourage partnerships between NGOs and experienced research institutions such as FLACSO or universities.
- Review initial proposals to ensure concise statements of objectives and expected results.
- Ensure initial proposals include dissemination and follow-up or monitoring activities once the study document is published.
- Continue to encourage collaborative research efforts of civil society organizations where the likelihood of timely public policy influence is high.
- Consider meeting with SOCODEVI personnel in Guatemala to discuss the study.
- Consider future projects with CONGCOOP that integrate some of the recommendations outlined above.
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Summary

In November 2000 the Guatemalan non-governmental organization Coordinación de Organizaciones non Gubernmentales y Cooperativas (CONGCOOP), a coordinating body of various development organizations and a federation of cooperatives, presented the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) with a proposal to study the Land Fund (FONTIERRAS) in Guatemala.

The goal was to conduct a study with a strong field research component that would determine how the World Bank design of a market-assisted model was affecting the campesina population in Guatemala. Study results could then be utilized to influence land access policies of the Guatemalan Government and multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank.

The project commenced in March 2001 and the first phase was completed in May 2002. An extension was approved by IDRC in order to disseminate the report and its popular version to a wider audience within Guatemala and also internationally. This second phase recently culminated in February 2003.

1.2 Partners

CONGCOOP is an umbrella organization that has 27 affiliates with approximately 18 active affiliate organizations. Member organizations are development NGOs (from rural development organizations to research centres) and also the Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives (which has 35 member cooperatives).

CONGCOOP has two main aspects to its mandate:

- To provide support to member organizations; and
- To influence public policy on identified priorities.

Although CONGCOOP was the lead proponent in this project, they collaborated with the National Coordination of Campesina Organizations (CNOC) with the intent of grounding the study, politically and practically, in the experience of campesino organizations. CNOC is active in rural development issues, including land access and acts as the representative for the campesino sector on the Directive Council of FONTIERRAS.

The collaborative relationship between CONGCOOP and CNOC commenced in 1998. Three initiatives were identified as critical to the consolidation of this relationship: CONGCOOP’s support to CNOC in preparation for its second national congress; the jointly prepared study on minimum salary in rural Guatemala; and a joint European tour to promote understanding of the peace accords prior to a meeting of the Consultative Group.

1.3 Objectives of the Evaluation

The General Objective of this evaluation is:

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2 Rather than translate campesino or campesina into English (rural peasant farmer) the Spanish designation will be used throughout the report.
To foment an institutional learning process between CONGCOOP, CNOC and IDRC by means of project performance analysis with the goal of determining up to what point the corporate objectives of IDRC have been met.

This evaluation was not planned with the intent of judging the project in a success-failure dichotomy. Rather, it was designed to collect information from various sources to facilitate the learning cycle of the partners and IDRC. The Evaluator’s assessment, based on the interviews and analysis of documents, is contained in the text of sections 3 to 5. Comments by the persons interviewed are highlighted within text boxes.

1.4 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation was conducted according to the four major components identified in the Terms of Reference for the Evaluator:
- Review of documents
- Interviews and meetings (15 semi-structured interviews; observation of workshop)
- Internal discussion (IDRC, CONGCOOP and CNOC)
- Preparation of the present report.

1.5 Factors for Analysis

The terms of reference identified a number of factors for analysis. These factors framed the interviews and meetings conducted by the Evaluator. The following themes were identified by IDRC as important for consideration:
- Knowledge generation
- Dissemination and use of results of research
- Methodology
- Policy Influence
- Strengthening of research capacities
- Project planning and management
- Incorporation of gender analysis

These factors are incorporated and discussed at various points in sections 3 to 6.

2.0 Background

2.1 Land Access in Guatemala

Guatemala has one of the highest land ownership concentrations in Latin America, if not the world. Estimates are that approximately 2% of the population owns 70% of all productive farm land\(^3\). The colonial roots to this land distribution were further complicated by U.S. corporate (and therefore political) dominance in Guatemala in the 20\(^{th}\) century.

This skewed land distribution has left the rural poor and indigenous populations with limited access to land for even the minimal land necessary for subsistence farming. Land conflicts have a complex and lengthy history dating from the Spanish conquest and the thirty six year armed conflict further complicated land ownership and access issues as rural population were forcibly displaced and uprooted.

The negotiation of peace accords between the State and the National Revolutionary Unity of Guatemala (URNG) attempted to address the most divisive issues in Guatemalan society, including land access. The Socio-Economic and Agrarian Situation peace accord is the instrument which mandates the State to take particular action to institutionalize policies and mechanisms to promote access to land. The accord, signed in 1996, contains an exhaustive list of State obligations ranging from:

- Democratization (with women’s equal participation cited as a priority)
- Social development (health, education, labour, social security and housing),
- Rural development (land access, rural production, environment, natural resources, resolution of land conflicts, land registry),
- Modernization of public administration and fiscal policy.

As a result of provisions in the Socio-economic accord, legislation was passed by the Guatemalan Congress in 1999 that created the Land Fund (FONTIERRAS), an autonomous decentralized state agency. The Fund has had technical and financial support from international donors, most notably the World Bank. FONTIERRAS has two central functions: to administer the land access program and to review and adjudicate with regard to property illegally granted by the State during the armed conflict.

2.2 Rationale for Study

During and after the armed conflict CONGCOOP supported the work of member organizations with issues confronting displaced populations and returning populations. These populations are predominantly from rural communities involved in subsistence agriculture. Access to land is therefore a critical issue for the beneficiaries of many of CONGCOOP’s member organizations.

In order to study land access in Guatemala two elements were deemed to be critical to the assessment: the operations of FONTIERRAS and the influence of multilateral financial institutions, in particular the World Bank, in the policies adopted by the Government of Guatemala. This project was envisioned with the goal of providing data to NGOs that would enable them to sustain arguments relating to the appropriateness of the market assisted model for land reform in Guatemala.

CONGCOOP proposed to undertake the FONTIERRAS study after having published other research initiatives on rural land issues. CONGCOOP approached CNOC to work in partnership due to previous successful collaborative efforts. Also, given that CNOC is a member of the governing body of FONTIERRAS, it therefore provided CONGCOOP with access to the Fund in addition to its ability to support the field research in campesina communities.

3.0 Project Objectives and Results Achieved

3.1 General Objective(s)

The general objective proposed by CONGCOOP is two-pronged so for the purpose of analysis it has been divided into two parts by the Evaluator.

3.1.1. Determine how the methods of Structural Adjustment promoted by the Multilateral Financial Institutions (which, in the area of access to land, implies a market model) have affected the Guatemalan campesina population.
The project did determine how the Land Fund had impacted on several beneficiary communities who had accessed the Fund. The project also confirmed that a market-assisted model for land access can operate effectively only with established institutional mechanisms (i.e. land title registry; institutional framework to exercise rights to land; integration of land and financial markets) and with a technically capable beneficiary population.

The project was very successful in providing data on the particular market-assisted model implemented by the Guatemalan Government with World Bank financing and technical assistance. The findings provided arguments that the market aspects of the model are not appropriate given the lack of capacity of campesinos in the various aspects of the model (negotiation; large scale agricultural production; marketing and so on) and the lack of institutional mechanisms to support such a model in Guatemala.

To conclude, although the wording of the general objective may be too broad or ambitious, the data compiled during the project does provide evidence to question the suitability of this particular model or design in Guatemala and its impact on beneficiary communities.
3.1.2. Elaborate a proposal so that the Land Fund (FONTIERRAS) represents a better solution to the problems of land access and rural development in Guatemala.

The proposal, incorporated in the last section of the study publication, acknowledges that FONTIERRAS is only one mechanism, and insufficient, to address land access in Guatemala. The recommendations for changes to the operation of FONTIERRAS were well received by a variety of sectors and also very timely for the Fund itself.

The study was conducted during a period in which the Directive Council of FONTIERRAS was conducting its own investigations of allegations of corruption and mismanagement by senior Fund managers. Although the Directive Council had initiated internal management re-structuring in March 2002; when the results of the study were publicized in April 2002 they provided further evidence of internal problems for management to address.

Therefore, many of the recommendations for improvements to FONTIERRAS presented in the study have been addressed by the current Fund management.

3.2 Specific Objectives

3.2.1. Analyze Government of Guatemala land access policies since the 1970's, within the context of international paradigms and influence and how the national and international context has influenced the creation of a market model for land access.

The Evaluator does not find this specific objective clearly formulated and thus difficult to assess; however CONGOOP’s final project report (May 2002) suggests the first phrase of the stated objective is the most important aspect. CONGOOP notes that the result went beyond even what was anticipated since the chronological analysis of land access policies in the study commenced from the year 1954 and the discussion of the market model principles and its viability in Guatemala was extensive.

3.2.2. Analyze the operations and feasibility of the Land Fund (FONTIERRAS) including the following aspects: the actual possibilities of the poorest campesinos to access the fund; the participation of the communities throughout the process of negotiation, agricultural production and marketing; the role of the private sector; the accompaniment and training provided by the Fund to communities; the economic and ecological sustainability of the productive projects and their impact on food security; the role and participation of women in the process.

Community participation, agricultural production; accompaniment and technical assistance, women’s participation

The majority of individuals interviewed found that the multi-faceted analysis of the Fund operations, contemplated in this specific objective, was the most practical and useful component of the study.
The most beneficial aspects of the study for senior management and Directive Council of FONTIERRAS were:

- The degree of participation of the communities in the FONTIERRAS procedures;
- Deficiencies in the procedures;
- Deficiencies in the accompaniment and training (technical assistance) offered to the communities;
- The sustainability of productive projects;
- And the role of women in the process.

Access by Poorest Campesinos

The specific objective to assess whether the “poorest campesinos” had access to the fund was a matter of discussion during some interviews. The World Bank identifies “poor rural families” as the target population in the project approval document (defined as rural poor, land poor or landless).

The Evaluator observes that the study highlights this contradiction in the Fund design. That is, rural poor with insufficient or no land to meet basic needs are identified as the beneficiary population but the Fund is designed to promote commercial agricultural production, not subsistence farming.

Ecological Sustainability

CONGCOOP acknowledges in its final report that ecological sustainability was not addressed to the extent anticipated. However, the data gathered and analysis in other aspects was more comprehensive than planned.

3.2.3 Develop a proposal based on an analysis that would include general elements of the market model within the Structural Adjustment policies and concrete elements of the operations of the Fund. Present and promote the proposal to the Fund, government entities and Multilateral Financial Institutions.

The proposal concentrates on the concrete elements of the Fund operations. The community-based data, which clearly demonstrated the limitations inherent in all aspects of the Fund process, contributed to the improvement of the FONTIERRAS policies and procedures.
The degree to which the conclusions and proposal of the study were taken into account by FONTIERRAS is difficult to measure as the parallel investigations by the Directive Council resulted in restructuring and strengthening of procedures that coincide with the content of the proposal. The new General Manager of FONTIERRAS ordered an evaluation by external evaluators, the results of which purportedly are even more critical than the study results.

Although the study makes important critical observations of the market assisted model as applied in Guatemala the conclusions and proposals do not attempt to elaborate recommendations in the general context of market assisted land reform as a Structural Adjustment policy. Arguably, this element of the objective may have been overly ambitious as the study did not emphasize a comparative analysis of the experiences of the market assisted model in other countries. The conclusions and proposals were consistent with the focus of the study: the impact on beneficiaries of the FONTIERRAS market assisted model.

Another aspect of the proposal that was noted by at least two interviewees as particularly useful was the second component of the proposal: the analysis of budget allocation necessary to meet demand for land access.

### Comments on Proposal

The contents of the study proposal were often confused by interviewees with CNOC’s proposal for agrarian reform, which includes recommendations to expropriate and confiscate land. This topic was often broached by interviewees to demonstrate, in their opinion, expropriation as an unrealistic solution for Guatemala.

The World Bank, in the project approval document for the Land Fund, states that, based on lessons learned from other countries, expropriation involves lengthy legal processes and promotes conflict, thus their promotion of market principles in the case of Guatemala. While some interviewees noted that expropriation had worked in other Latin American countries they thought it doubtful that it could function in Guatemala.

The study was presented to the sectors identified in this objective and resulted in positive dialogue. At the international level the results of the study were presented and discussed in a number of events: the 23rd Latin American Congress of Sociology; the World Social Forum in Brazil; and the International Seminar on Negative Impacts of Market Agrarian Reform policies of the World Bank (organized by Food First). The second phase of the project focused entirely on this aspect of the specific objective.

### 3.3 Second Phase: Diffusion

After the initial activities to present the results of the study, CONGCOOP, at the suggestion of IDRC, presented a proposal to disseminate the study more diversely and in a more accessible version.

The general objective of this eight month phase is:
To diffuse the results and recommendations of the study at the local, national and international levels and promote and monitor its application by FONTIERRAS and international financial institutions.

The specific objectives of this phase are:

1. Develop alternative formats of the study to ensure their accessibility by a broad sector of the population.
2. Discuss the study and the model of “agrarian reform assisted by the market” at the international level and monitor the new policies generated by the international financial institutions.
3. Promote the “appropriation” of the study by campesina organizations, other popular organizations and technical personnel from FONTIERRAS and monitor the process of implementation of the proposal in the Fund.

During the evaluation this phase was still on-going so that any definitive conclusions would be premature. However the Evaluator did observe a workshop in Solola conducted under the category of the third specific objective.

Approximately 25 leaders of campesina organizations attended a workshop during which they discussed the findings of the study and received a popular version. The initial discussion of problems encountered by the communities with regard to FONTIERRAS and the informal discussions between the Evaluator and individual participants confirmed the problems identified in the study. Unfortunately the workshop did not address monitoring mechanisms to assess the implementation of changes recommended in the proposal.

The latter half of the workshop was conducted by CNOC. The workshop participants discussed some of the components of the rural development proposal prepared by CNOC.

The monitoring of the implementation of the proposal by FONTIERRAS had not been completed at the time of the evaluation. The Manager of Land Access of the Fund was aware of the study but had not read it or met with CONGCOOP regarding the implementation of its proposal. As mentioned above, the Directive Council of the Fund has order various changes, from organizational restructuring to the development of new internal policies and procedures. These changes are not specifically based on the proposal in the study but some coincide with the recommendations.

### 4.0 Project and Study Management

#### 4.1 Project Management

The project management cycle and project administration activities were conducted by CONGCOOP.

The project proposals and two project reports were reviewed by the Evaluator. This aspect was discussed only briefly during the evaluation, although it appears from the perspective of both CONGCOOP and IDRC that project administration was efficient.

CONGCOOP staff found the IDRC staff well prepared and their involvement constructive throughout the project cycle. IDRC staff trip reports demonstrate a continual monitoring of the progress of the study and the importance placed on the political context in which IDRC’s
Guatemala partners work and networking between research organizations regionally and internationally.

The Evaluator noted in project documents and in the field evaluation that analysis of internal performance was very brief. Although the project reports reviewed (one interim project report and one final phase one project report) attempt self evaluation the internal assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the project management cycle is minimal.

For example, statements such as the following are made in the interim report: A competent research team was formed; the coordination between CNOC and CONGOOP has functioned very well. It is suggested that a more detailed written and verbal discussion on the successes (and challenges) regarding elements of the project management cycle would be helpful in the institutional learning process. Such a discussion could generate constructive lessons learned for future integration and application.

4.2 Management of Study Process

The Evaluator found that information regarding the management of the study process and the study methodology was vague in oral discussions during the evaluation. As mentioned above, the internal evaluation or reflection on this aspect of the project appears to be limited, although the interim report states that an external evaluation of the preliminary phase of the study was conducted.

Unfortunately due to time constraints the Evaluator did not meet with all members of the study team (only one individual meeting was held with the independent researcher responsible for community and gender research).

4.2.1 Process

The interim report (March to June 2001) outlines the following initial steps:
- formation of study team (one coordinator of methodology; two economists, one social worker and one agronomist)
- compilation and analysis of bibliography
- presentation of study proposal to Directive Council of FONTIERRAS in June 2001
- meetings with various agencies in Guatemala
- meetings in Washington with multilateral financial institutions
- contact with external advisors
- preparation of consultative workshops with beneficiary communities
- selection of eight sample communities
- review of information on 8 communities provided by FONTIERRAS
- review of materials on land access in Guatemala and other countries
- development of interview questions for each sector
- interviews with entities and individuals offering technical assistance

The Evaluator understands the process to have continued as follows:
- field research conducted
- regular study team meetings
- discussion groups with “experts” in Guatemala and Washington
- individual researchers provided analysis of particular research results
- compilation of study by coordinator of methodology
- draft reviewed by some researchers and CNOC
Discussions and documentation review confirmed all of the above activities with the exception of two components: “regular team meetings” and the extent of “contact with external experts”.

Team meetings were held, according to CONGCOOP, every two weeks with all researchers attending for the duration of their contracts. The researcher hired for the community and gender component of the field research suggested that more substantive dialogue among team members would have enhanced the final study document. To respond to this observation, perhaps in the future the contracts for independent researchers could include additional time for team discussions beyond the actual period of investigation.

In the final report CONGCOOP notes that three discussion groups with experts were organized; two in Guatemala and one in Washington. Although the experts who participated may have changed from those initially suggested by the IDRC, it appears that dialogue with national and international experts signified a positive contribution to the study. It is suggested that future project reports could provide more information on the results achieved by these activities.

These comments, which may or may not be valid from the perspective of the partners, are still important external perspectives that can be considered in an institutional learning cycle and contribute to the application of lessons learned regarding study management in future projects.

4.2.2 Dialogue

The study process initiated dialogue between CONGCOOP/CNOC and various governmental, non-governmental and international actors. The challenge will be to sustain this dialogue through periodic meetings and/or discussion groups.

Unfortunately, during the field research component and the community consultations, relations were strained between SOCODEVEI and CNOC. SOCODEVI, a Canadian NGO acting as an executing agency for various rural development projects in Guatemala, was contracted by FONTIERRAS to deliver technical assistance to selected communities. This technical assistance commences after the land ownership to the farm is granted.
During the community consultations, community members realized they had not received all of the assistance mandated nor had they been able to select the implementing agency. This latter criticism of lack of community participation in selection of the technical assistance agencies was also noted by SOCODEVI in the interview with the Evaluator. FONTIERRAS has revised their procedures to ensure communities hear proposals from at least three potential implementers prior to selecting their choice.

Due to intense criticisms and political pressure, SOCODEVI withdrew from its contract with FONTIERRAS. The representative of SOCODEVI expressed the wish to renew relations with CNOC.

It is important to note that this appears to be the only instance of strained relations resulting from this study process. The following are observations made regarding CNOC which do not pertain to the study itself.

4.2.3 CNOC-CONGCOOP Coordination

Coordination between CONGCOOP and CNOC appeared to operate in two areas: the political and operational. The CNOC representative and the Executive Director of CONGCOOP formed a “political team” where political decisions were made. This team also met with the “technical coordinators”. Contact between the “political team” and the researchers occurred in approximately five opportunities:

- when international experts visited;
- to discuss the mid-term status of the project and preliminary findings;
- to support access to FONTIERRAS when resistance was encountered;
- to attend specific meetings (for example, with SOCODEVI); and
- review of draft report

Operational support was offered by CNOC to CONGCOOP and the researchers contracted for the study to facilitate access to the eight sample communities, other beneficiaries and FONTIERRAS personnel.

At the date of the evaluation a CNOC representative noted that the executive of CNOC had not received the study results. A presentation of the study documents to the executive committees of both partner organizations would be beneficial for ownership of results and institutional support for dissemination of the study, as well as for future research projects.
4.2.4 Gender Analysis

The project proposal identified a gender analysis as a priority. To ensure the full participation of women in the various aspects of the field research special measures (such as arranging separate meetings with women) were taken.

It was noted by CONGCOOP and external sources, that the inclusion of gender in this project was an improvement over previous publications, such as the minimum salary study. A review of the final study document reveals that information on the situation of women in the beneficiary communities was incorporated and provided original discussion of the participation of women in the FONTIERRAS land acquisition process. However, a review of the study document as a whole, leaves the impression that an integrated gender analysis could be strengthened in future projects. The sporadic gender analysis in the study document is due to the fact individual researchers prepared their research results without consideration to integrate a gender analysis.

The study document includes a particular sub-section (see pages 93 and 94) on the participation of women in the communities. Other sub-sections of Chapter IV also include information on women. Unfortunately the researcher who gathered field information on community organization and women’s participation felt that her data and accompanying tables were not incorporated into the final document to the degree she expected.

A review of her document shows that more detailed information and/or tables could have been included on women (women’s participation in community structures and processes, women’s committees, women as co-owners of property and technical assistance offered to women) in the text or annexed to the study.

4.2.5 Incorporation of Field Research

It was not the role of the Evaluator to assess the degree to which all research, theoretical and field components, was integrated into the final study document. Here it is suffice to say that interviewees raised the issue without prompting during discussions.

The review of the document prepared by the social worker who conducted part of the field research shows that more descriptive information on the communities (organizational structure and project management capacity) may have been helpful to understand the experience and capacity of the sample communities.

Admittedly, the fact that the two field researchers produced two individual reports rather than one joint report of their research findings made the integration of the data into the final
document a greater challenge.

These observations can provide useful lessons for the management of the next study conducted by CONGCOOP, especially with regard to the presentation of study data in the most objective manner possible. For example, the inclusion of information on the communities’ capacities may have allayed criticisms of bias since the communities were accompanied by various organizations, including CNOC member groups.

5.0 IDRC Corporate Objectives

5.1 Strengthen the institutional research capacity (of CONGCOOP)

The progress toward this corporate objective is limited by the fact that CONGCOOP has not institutionalized research functions. The study was coordinated by the director of the organization’s rural development section; however other members of the study team were contracted on an interim basis for varying periods of time.

An alternative to short term contracts with independent consultants could be considered so as increase research capacity of CONGCOOP and its member organizations. A review of the list of member organizations belonging to CONGCOOP reveals a number of NGOs with research experience. Integrating member organizations into research projects may support the members “buy in” to the research and public policy process component of CONGCOOP’s work.

Although the previous level of research capacity of CONGCOOP was not documented as baseline information, the Evaluator did ask some interviewees how the FONTIERRAS study differed from earlier research publications by the partner.

A small number of interviewees had read previous publications by CONGCOOP. Two documents on the following topics were mentioned in particular: land registry and the negotiation process in Alta Verapaz. It was observed that the present study was of a much higher quality due to its original field research conducted in the beneficiary communities.

5.2 Generate new understanding of the research topic

The information gathered during the evaluation suggests that the research conducted did generate new understanding and discussion of land access, the policies of the World Bank and the application of the particular market-assisted model of FONTIERRAS.
The Evaluator found that while the results of the study had been widely disseminated the interviewees had not always read the document. The executive summary did not appear to have been as widely distributed as the full study document.

The organizations most familiar with the content of the study were generally those who are involved directly with FONTIERRAS or the issue of land access in Guatemala, such as the following: accompaniment organizations, members of the Directive Council of the Fund, the World Bank and the UN Verification Mission to Guatemala (MINUGUA).

The four members of the Directive Council of the Fund interviewed by the Evaluator had not read the study although they had attended a presentation of the results at a council meeting.

Unfortunately due to time constraints the Evaluator had only one interview with a government agency (other than FONTIERRAS), the recently formed Secretariat for Agrarian Issues of the Presidency. The Secretary had resigned the day prior to the interview to officially enter in the electoral race. The under secretary for policy and analysis was not familiar with the content of the study.

5.3 Foment public policy change

The study contributed to concrete changes in FONTIERRAS and has facilitated increased discussion on the issue of land access and World Bank models. In particular the project has:

- Allowed CONGCOOP to contribute to discussions on land access at approximately four international conferences.
- Increased regional and global exchange of experiences on land access and land reform.
- Increased understanding of the problems inherent in the application of the market assisted model given the land situation in Guatemala.
- Increased attention of beneficiary communities, international donor agencies and the government to the problems within FONTIERRAS.
- Contributed partially to the internal restructuring and strengthening of FONTIERRAS (since internal investigations and audits were conducted independently but close in time to the field research component).
- According to FONTIERRAS representatives (management and council members) the study contributed specifically to improving bureaucratic procedures to benefit the beneficiary communities.

6.0 Conclusions

There is a risk that the Evaluator, when drawing “conclusions” from a brief review of a project that spanned the course of almost two years, may not capture the experience precisely. The following are more aptly labeled “observations” with the intent of presenting the project partners with external information that can facilitate critical reflection and learning processes for application in future projects.

Based on this proviso, the following are broad observations, divided into three categories, synthesized from the information gathered during the evaluation.

6.1 Achievement of Objectives
The general objective was achieved: the impact on beneficiary communities of the model implemented by FONTIERRAS with support from the World Bank was determined.

The specific objectives were achieved, with the aspects relating to the FONTIERRAS operations perceived as the most useful.

The objectives of the second phase on dissemination appeared to have been partially met at the time of the evaluation.

The popular version and executive summary of the study had been produced and were being disseminated to campesino leaders and FONTIERRAS personnel in regional offices.

The executive summary had not been distributed in government agencies, including FONTIERRAS.

The monitoring of the specific changes relating to the proposal in FONTIERRAS had not been conducted.

The monitoring of the evolution of policy changes in multilateral financial institutions will be a long term task.

6.2 Management

The combination of historical analysis, field research and public policy proposals was a successful formula.

Administration of the project appeared efficient.

Operational and political coordination of the study appeared effective.

Project reports lacked detailed information in some instances.

The study methodology and process was consequential and coherent.

Decisions to include or exclude research findings are sensitive determinations that impact on perceptions of objectivity.

Members of the research team participated to varying degrees in the study process.

Information on the situation of women was compiled in the field research and inserted to a significant degree in the study document.

Information on women’s experience in the beneficiary communities was included. Data was available to elaborate in more detail.

A gender analysis was not evident throughout the study document.

New relationships were developed as a result of the study.

Policy dialogue with diverse actors was successfully initiated.

One relationship was strained during the study and efforts to rebuild these relationships could lead to enhanced cooperation for the benefit of communities.

6.3 IDRC Corporate Objectives

The capacity of CONGCOOP and CNOC to dialogue with various national and international actors was enhanced.

CONGCOOP’s ability to coordinate an original research project was enhanced.

The extent to which CONGCOOP’s institutional research capacity was enhanced is limited as the majority of the study activities were performed by short-term consultants.

Internal discussions of this project experience and the application of lessons learned by CONGCOOP would be a positive learning outcome.

In particular, the incorporation of lessons from the study management process in CONGCOOP initiatives would indicate strengthened institutional capacity.

The study did generate new understanding (and discussion) of issues and challenges relating to land access.
The study was widely disseminated. The distribution of an Executive Summary at the time of the launch may have facilitated a more thorough understanding of the study results among government and other actors.
7.0 Recommendations

7.1 CONGCOOP

The following recommendations are made with the intent of promoting reflection and application of lessons learned from the present project for future research initiatives.

It is recommended that CONGCOOP:

7.1.1 Conduct follow-up activities to assess the impact of the study on FONTIERRAS and World Bank policies and procedures.
7.1.2 Consider building partnerships with formal research institutions to increase internal capacity.
7.1.3 Consider an academic or research specialist to accompany and/or advise in the study management process of future research projects.
7.1.4 Consider research projects that incorporate the successful formula of participatory field research and public policy proposals.
7.1.5 Dialogue with member organizations when defining new research proposals to foment member involvement in the study process.
7.1.6 Consider integrating experienced personnel from member organizations (such as CIDECA, CIEP, CIEPRODH, IEPADES and IXCO) in future research projects.
7.1.7 Integrate mechanisms for critical reflection and lessons learned in the project management cycle.
7.1.8 Communicate these critical reflections and lessons learned to donors, through regular meetings and more descriptive project reports.
7.1.9 Attempt to formulate general and specific objectives in a concise manner to allow easier assessment of progress toward their achievement.
7.1.10 Assess and enhance the capacity of researchers to integrate gender analysis as a cross-cutting theme in all research components.
7.1.11 Distribute an executive summary at the same time as the complete study document.
7.1.12 Organize a discussion group with key actors at the time the publication is released.
7.1.13 Ensure the executive committees and personnel from all partner organizations have been presented with the study results.

7.2 IDRC

It is recommended that IDRC:

7.2.1 Continue the level of support to partner organizations throughout the project cycle.
7.2.2 Continue to facilitate regional and international networking.
7.2.3 Ensure project proposals contain mechanisms that will promote the achievement of the three corporate objectives.
7.2.4 Encourage partnerships between NGOs and experienced research institutions such as FLACSO or universities.
7.2.5 Review initial proposals to ensure concise statements of objectives and expected results.
7.2.6 Ensure initial proposals include dissemination and follow-up or monitoring activities once the study document is published.
7.2.7 Continue to encourage collaborative research efforts of civil society organizations where the likelihood of timely public policy influence is high.
7.2.8 Consider meeting with SOCODEVI personnel in Guatemala to discuss the study.
7.2.9 Consider future projects with CONGCOOP that integrate some of the recommendations outlined above.
“FONTIERRAS, el ajuste estructural y el acceso a la tierra en Guatemala”
(RP # 100581)

EVALUACION EXTERNA

Términos de Referencia

Antecedentes:

La distribución desigual de las tierras productivas se reconoce ampliamente como una de las causas que estuvieron a la raíz del conflicto armado de 36 años en Guatemala. De hecho, la problemática del acceso a la tierra es fundamental en Guatemala, uno de los países de América Latina donde mayor concentración de la tierra se presenta. Las políticas de acceso a la tierra impulsadas por los diferentes gobiernos desde los 1970 a la fecha no han contrarestado este fenómeno. En los años 80, las Instituciones Financieros Internacionales empezaron a impulsar políticas de ajuste estructural en los países en desarrollo, entre ellos Guatemala. Estas políticas se caracterizan por asignarle al mercado un papel fundamental en la solución de los problemas que el mundo en desarrollo enfrenta.

Los Acuerdos de Paz firmados entre 1994 y 1996 codificaron compromisos para abordar este problema estructural mediante una serie de reformas legales e institucionales, en el marco de la economía de mercado. Una de las nuevas instituciones establecidas en base de estos acuerdos es el Fondo de Tierras (FONTIERRAS). Su mandato es proporcionar crédito y asistencia técnica a los campesinos sin tierras, prestando especial atención a las mujeres, para que puedan adquirir tierra y utilizarla sustentablemente en la producción agrícola de pequeña escala.

FONTIERRAS ha funcionado desde fines de 1998 con fondos del gobierno nacional y el Banco Mundial. Durante el período 1998-2000 ha ayudado a casi 4000 familias a adquirir nuevas tierras. Sin embargo, se le critica por la insuficiencia de sus recursos, el nivel elevado de gastos de funcionamiento y la baja calidad de la asistencia técnica. Las críticas sugieren que parte del problema reside en que FONTIERRAS está obligada a operar dentro de una estructura de mercados de tierra distorsionados y concluyen que sin efectuar cambios significativos en estos mercados, FONTIERRAS no podrá solucionar la persistente crisis de la tierra en Guatemala.

CONGCOOP (Coordinación de ONGs y Cooperativas) es una red de ONGs y cooperativas guatemaltecas que tiene una larga trayectoria de trabajo en desarrollo y análisis político. Con el apoyo de IDRC, entre marzo de 2001 y abril de 2002, CONGCOOP junto con su socio, la Coordinación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (CNOC), llevaron a cabo la primera evaluación independiente de FONTIERRAS, en el contexto de las amplias políticas orientadas hacia el mercado promovidas por el gobierno nacional, el sector privado y las instituciones financieras internacionales. Su investigación “FONTIERRAS: El modelo de mercado y el acceso a la tierra en Guatemala. Balance y perspectivas” ha sido recibido dentro y fuera de Guatemala con mucho interés. Incluye el análisis de documentos claves primarios y secundarios, entrevistas con las partes interesadas guatemaltecas y representantes de IFIs, una investigación en el terreno en una muestra de comunidades beneficiarias, la elaboración de un estudio y una propuesta.
técnica, y su evaluación junto con las partes interesadas guatemaltecas. CONGCOOP y CNOC han puesto con meta, usar el estudio y sus recomendaciones para ejercer presión sobre las personas encargadas de tomar decisiones a nivel nacional e internacional con el fin de reformar FONTIERRAS, y revisar algunas de las suposiciones que forman la base de políticas de reforma agraria en base del mercado en Guatemala.

En mayo de 2002, IDRC y CONGCOOP acordaron prolongar el proyecto mediante la firma de un suplemento financiero con el fin de difundir más ampliamente tanto dentro como fuera de Guatemala, los resultados de esta investigación. El proyecto está por terminarse en febrero del 2003; IDRC y CONGCOOP están de acuerdo que el momento es oportuno para reflexionar sobre los logros y debilidades del proyecto en cuestión.

**Objetivo de la evaluación:**

Fomentar un proceso de aprendizaje institucional entre CONGCOOP, CNOC y IDRC mediante el análisis del desempeño del proyecto en materia de acceso a la tierra con el fin de determinar hasta que punto ha logrado avanzar los tres objetivos corporativos de IDRC, es decir:

- **Fortalecimiento de la capacidad de investigación institucional (de CONGCOOP);**
- **Generación de nuevos conocimientos en la materia bajo investigación;**
- **Fomento de cambios de política pública**

**Metodología de la evaluación:**

La evaluación se realizará mediante el estudio de documentación e informes producidos y entrevistas con los actores involucrados incluyendo: la coordinación del proyecto; los usuarios previstos de los productos de los proyectos (académicos, ONGs, funcionarios de FONTIERRAS/Estado, miembros de la comunidad internacional). Ver Anexo 2 para lista de entrevistas sugeridas.

La recolección y procesamiento de información tendrá cuatro momentos:

1. Lectura de documentos
2. Taller de reflexión interno (IDRC, CONGCOOP, CNOC - Pendiente confirmar)
3. Entrevistas
4. Redacción del informe.

**Contenido del informe final de la evaluación:**

El informe final será de 20 páginas y se basará en los parámetros del Anexo 1 “Aspectos para análisis y evaluación.” Incluirá:

1. Carátula con los siguientes elementos:
   - Número y título del proyecto evaluado
   - Nombre del/de la evaluador(a)
   - Fecha
   - Nombre de la persona y el nombre del programa de IDRC que ha solicitado la evaluación
2. Resumen ejecutivo: Un breve resumen (1-2 páginas) de lo observado, la metodología, las conclusiones y/o las recomendaciones de la evaluación.

3. Texto del informe: (Ver Anexo 1)
   • Los antecedentes del proyecto;
   • Una descripción de la metodología de la evaluación;
   • Un análisis que describe hasta qué punto el proyecto cumplió con los objetivos y resultados planteados;
   • Un análisis de lo anterior incluyendo los factores endógenos (planeación, manejo, apoyo técnico, etc) y los factores exógenos (contexto político-institucional, compromisos, evolución de agendas, etc) que influyeron la marcha del proyecto;
   • Conclusiones y recomendaciones.

Cronograma de la evaluación:

**Enero 2003:** Revisión y estudio de documentación interna por el/la evaluadora (2 días laborales)
Preparación de plan de trabajo (1 día laboral)
Programación de entrevistas; Diseño de taller (con IDRC/CONGOOP) (1 día laboral)

**28 enero - 6 febrero 2003:**
Viaje y visita a Guatemala; taller de reflexión, entrevistas con actores involucrados. (8 días laborales)

**Hasta el fin de febrero:**
Elaboración del informe de evaluación (4 días laborales)

**6 de marzo 2003:**
Entrega del informe de evaluación
Revisión y discusión del informe (IDRC y CONGOOP)

**Total de días laborales:** 16 días laborales

**Idioma de redacción:** Inglés

**Renumeración:** CAD$ 600/día laboral
ANEXO 1: Aspectos para análisis y estudio

Generación de conocimientos: (Knowledge generation)

Hasta que punto logró el proyecto generar nuevos conocimientos en la temática?
Cuáles han sido los aportes empíricos, conceptuales y analíticos en la temática?
Qué evidencia hay que demuestra la presencia de esos aportes?

Cómo respaldo el trabajo de investigación apoyado por el IDRC..........
Quiénes son los usuarios de la investigación? Cómo han sido recibido las diferentes versiones del producto de investigación (versión académica; versión popular). Conocen y han leído los productos?
Han logrado involucrar actores nuevos?

Diseminación y uso de los resultados de la investigación:

Hasta que punto logró la dirección del proyecto vincular los resultados de la investigación con otros procesos de diálogo e interlocución en marcha en Guatemala? Fuera de Guatemala?

Metodología:

Cómo fue la metodología de investigación?
Fue acertada la metodología utilizada por CONGCOOP y CNOC?
El proceso de redacción del estudio final: Ha sido percibido como participativo por otros sectores de la población?
Como percibe el gobierno los proyectos? Funcionarios de FONTIERRAS?
Como perciben diferentes actores de la sociedad civil los proyectos?

Influencia sobre la política (policy influence):

Qué evidencia existe para indicar que la investigación apoyado por el CIID está ha logrado insertarse en:
• El debate nacional sobre el tema de acceso y uso de la tierra? Hay evidencia de cambios o reformas en FONTIERRAS?
• El debate regional en temas del modelo de mercado y acceso a la tierra?
• El debate internacional sobre le tema anterior?¹

¹Se solicita al evaluador de recoger información relativa a las agendas internacionales y regionales en cuanto que sea posible; para efectos de esta evaluación, IDRC prefiere priorizar las dimensiones nacionales.
5. **Fortalecimiento de la capacidad de la institución de investigación (Capacity building):**

Hasta que punto ha logrado este proyecto fortalecer la capacidad de investigación de CONGCOOP?
Cuáles fueron los obstáculos?
Fue suficiente la retroalimentación del CIID sobre:
   a. La marcha del proyecto
   b. El estudio: su estructura, borrador inicial?

6. **Planificación y manejo del proyecto (Performance):**

Alcanzaron el proyecto sus objetivos originales y los productos planteados? Al finalizar el proyecto, qué opina la coordinación sobre la relevancia de los objetivos y productos vis-a-vis el entorno político?
Alcanzaron los proyectos sus productos de manera eficaz y oportuno?
Si hubo atrasos, porqué (ej. Demasiado ambicioso; cambios en el ambiente político, etc?)
Había estrategias de la coordinación de los proyectos para manejar riesgos y atrasos?

7. **Otros aspectos:**

Género:
¿Qué metodología fue adoptada para la incorporación de un enfoque de género en las investigaciones? Fue eficaz? ?
Cuáles fueron los problemas o obstáculos?
Anexo 2, Lista de Entrevistas sugeridas

1. Taller de Reflexión:
   • Byron Garoz, Encargado programa de estudios rurales de CONGCOOP
   • Susana Glauster, Coordinadora del proyecto 100581
   • Daniel Pascual/Gilberto Atz, Consejo Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (CNOCC)
   • Helmer Velasquez, Director Ejecutivo, CONGCOOP

2. Sergio Funes, Director de FONTIERRAS (interim), marzo - julio 2002, y coordinador del proyecto de IDRC “Investigacion para la formulacion de una propuesta de anteproyecto de ley para la regularizacion de la tenencia y uso de la tierra en Guatemala”
   Email: sfunes@intelnet.net.gt

3. Carlos Camacho, punto focal sobre el Acuerdo Socio-económico, MINUGUA, Guatemala  Email: ccamacho@un.org

4. Jesús Godínez, (nuevo) Gerente de FONTIERRAS.

5. Bonifacio Martín, Delegado Titular del Sector Indígena en el Consejo Directivo de FONTIERRAS

6. Edin Barrientos, Ministro de Agricultura del Gobierno de Guatemala, Ganadería y Alimentación

7. Pedro Palma Lau, Secretario de Asuntos Agrarios.
8. Eduardo Somensato, Representante de Banco Mundial en Guatemala (alternativo: Mario Marroquín)

9. Gabriel Aguilera, actualmente trabajando el la SAE
   Email: azuga@correo.de

ANEXO 3:

Bibliografía

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