

IN THE FACE OF LAND GRABBING AROUND THE WORLD, A TOOLBOX TO HELP IDENTIFY, ANALYSE, AND IMPLEMENT CHANGE

Online course offered by AGTER and the INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION (ILC)

Dates : 25 May – 19 June 2020

Application deadline : 19 May

AGTER and the International Land Coalition are inviting members of civil society, farmers organisations, development professionals, researchers, journalists, students and others interested in participating in an online class on land grabbing around the world, and who would like to learn how to analyse and understand the true nature of this worrying trend, and to work together to bring solutions in the face of this threat to us all.

Why this course ?

Since the mid 2000's, interest in arable land from multinationals, financiers, and some states has risen considerably. The seizure of these lands is often detrimental to the people who have lived on this land for generations and who often depend on its resources for their survival. Their customary laws are often ignored. In addition, despite being called "large investments", the new production systems put in place are often immense – thousands or even hundreds of thousands of hectares – and rarely take into account the primary needs of the local population, such as food security, environmental sustainability, and maintaining employment in rural areas.

In some cases, land and resource concentration by a few companies or individuals happens without apparent violence, via land sales, leases, inheritance, etc., that is, at least on the surface, through common agreement between both sides. However, this process contributes to the development of inequalities, and fails to assure the common good.

The course will cover both types of land grabbing, with and without apparent rights violations of the local population. Based on this analysis, the participants will discuss possible solutions and propose actions.

Roots of the course

AGTER has worked on the question of land grabbing since 2009. The association and its members have produced numerous works on the subject, sharing their valuable knowledge through articles, conferences and university courses in various countries (see www.agter.org). Expanding these courses was necessary in order to accommodate a growing number of interested professionals, especially in the development sector (international, national and public institutions, NGO's, consultants) but also in agriculture (farmers associations) and civil society organisations.

At the initiative of AGTER and CERAI, the first round of classes were organised as part of the preparations for the World Forum on Access to Land (WFAL), which was held in Valencia in 2016 (<http://www.landaccessforum.org/>). Organised by AGTER and in collaboration with MODOP NGO, and with financial support from the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind, it brought together 25 French-speaking participants from 15 countries (Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe).

With the success of this first session and the demand far exceeding the number of places available, AGTER decided, in collaboration with CERAI and in partnership with the International Land Coalition (ILC) (<https://www.landcoalition.org>), to update the class and offer new sessions in 2020. As part of a service proposed by the ILC to its members, and by AGTER to all its partners and any interested individuals, this time the class will be given in 3 separate languages, French, English, and Spanish,

Target audience

The course is aimed at those who are confronted by situations of land grabbing in their daily and/or professional lives, be it directly or indirectly. It will look to bring together people of various origins whose different experiences, exchanged within the analysis framework, will enrich and expand the capacities of the participants to both analyse and to foment action. This course was produced for a wide audience, mainly members of farmer's organisations and civil society, members of the development sector (NGO's, Ministries, development agencies, independent consultants); as well as researchers, students and journalists.

Even if this course is directed primarily at the member organisations of the International Land Coalition, and those who participated in the creation and running of the World Forum

on Access to Land in Valencia (Spain) in 2016, all individuals and organisations who are interested are welcome to apply.

Prerequisites

1. Be able to dedicate 10 hours a week to the course
2. Have access to a stable internet connection, be able to both receive and send documents in .doc and .pdf format, and able to comment and ask questions via email.

How, and what will you be learning?

The core aim of the course is to arm the participant with the tools necessary to analyse land grabbing situations, and to create action. The tools are the result of having studied cases of land grabbing in all its forms, and the various reactions they have provoked. This allows one to understand the characteristics that are both common to all land grabs but that are also unique to each specific case. Armed with these tools, actors and organisations who are already fighting against land grabbing in “the field”, will be able to create coalitions and co-actions with organisations in the political and legal spheres, in order to create change on a broader scale.

The lessons are based around a **chat room** where each participant will be able to express their opinion. The participants won't be passive learners listening to conference lectures, as is often the case with long-distance learning. They will be speaking and working directly with the teaching team via the chat room during the whole 4 weeks of the course, and will each contribute to the lessons with their own experiences. The participants will get the opportunity to use the analysing tools they have learnt and apply them to a situation they themselves have chosen.

Along with various examples provided by AGTER and which can be found on the International Land Coalition website or AGTER's document bank dedicated to governance of natural resources (www.agter.org), the case studies that are constructed by the participants may subsequently also be integrated into future classes, and even published on the AGTER and ILC website.

The course will take place over a one-month period. It will be composed of **3, one week-long modules** focussing each on one particular aspect; **understanding, analysing, and responding** to land grabbing, and a final week where each participant will have the time to finish their own case study with the help of the tutors, and most importantly be able to continue exchanging opinions on the general discussion group with the other participants:

- **Module I: *Understanding* ...** what we call « land grabs », how to define what they are, their history, which forms they take, and what they represent in today's world?
- **Module II: *Analysing* ...** the economic rationale which is at the heart of large-scale land appropriation, with a critical reading of the justifications often put forward by promoters of land appropriation, and analysing their impact on farmers and on the country.
- **Module III: *Responding* ...** to land grabs by identifying the diverse possibilities of resistance, and discussing both their successes and failures.
- Throughout the 4th and final week of the course, the participants – still supervised by the tutors – will have the time to finish their **personal work** on which they have been working on over the last 3 weeks, and most importantly will be able to continue exchanging their experiences and personal opinions.

Teaching methods

The entirety of the course will take place online on **AGTER's teaching platform, Moodle**.

On this platform the participants will be able to consult the lessons, which are based on **structured analyses** and illustrated with numerous **case studies**. Additional reading recommendations and exercises will also be available.

Each week the lessons will consist of:

- **Exercises** which will allow the participants to use the analysis toolbox and apply it to a land grab scenario they have chosen.
- A **discussion forum** with a guest speaker, on a subject seen during the class

The team responsible for the running of the course will also evaluate the exercises and the weekly discussion forum. The team will be available for the participants at all times.

At the end of the course each participant will need to fill in an **evaluation form**. The feedback will then be used to improve all future classes.

A **certificate** will also be given to each participant at the end of the course.

Teaching personnel

The initial course was elaborated in 2015 by Samir El Ouaamari, formerly mission head at AGTER (today university lecturer at AgroParisTech Agronomic engineer school).

The course is run by a team of AGTER members or members of partnered organisations who have long term experience with questions regarding land grabbing. The first class in English will be ensured by :

- **Christian Castellanet**, GRET, Associate Expert of AGTER, Agronomist, Ecologist (PhD Institute of Ecology – UGA-USA), action research specialist in the field of land tenure and natural resource governance, 40 years experience in West Africa, Caribbean, Brazilian Amazon, South East Asia.
- **Mathieu Perdriault**, In charge of projects and development at AGTER, agroeconomist, political analyst, facilitator in multi-actor processus and propositions in the domain of natural resource governance, executive secretary of the World Forum on Access to Land and Natural Resources (WFAL2016), 15 years experience

Experts on specific subjects will also be invited to partake in the discussion forums.

Fees and scholarships

This is the first course of a new permanent learning system which introduces a financial subsidy system. Its launch is financially supported by the International Land Coalition (ILC).

This non-profit teaching supply must cover work-time and the costs of preparation of new classes, and thus enrolment costs are necessary. In order to guarantee the benefits of the course to those whose livelihoods depend on the use of land and natural resources, a **principal of solidarity** applies to its financial mechanism: organisations with the largest financial resources (international and national governmental organisations, large NGO's, research centres, etc.) will pay their full enrolment fees in order to cover the costs of those without the necessary means, allowing them to participate as well. This principal will allow us to partly or fully support some participants who are unable to cover the enrolment costs.

The full enrolment cost is **1500 Euros** (or 1654 USD). Scholarships are mainly designed to cover the enrolment costs of applicants from the Global South who work in farmers and civil society organisations, or students.

The amount of financial support will var according to the type of organisation:

- **Organisations or individual candidates with no financial resources.** Amount to be paid: **0 Euros**. The scholarship covers the entirety of the enrolment cost (1500 Euros or 1654 USD).
- **Very small NGO's, individual candidates with few financial resources.** Amount to be paid: **500 Euros**. The scholarship covers two thirds of the enrolment costs (1000 Euros or 1103 USD).
- **Small NGO's, individual candidates.** Amount to be paid: **750 Euros all inclusive**. The scholarship covers half the cost (750 Euros or 827 USD).

- **Large NGO's from the Global South, large farmers organisations.** Amount to be paid: **1000 Euros.** The scholarship covers a third of the cost (500 Euros or 551 USD).

In order to receive a scholarship, you will need to fill out the attached **candidate application form**.

Based on the information given in the application form, the selection committee will decide the amount to which the participant will be entitled.

The **selection** process of participants will be based on a number of different criteria: the organisation's reasons for applying for the course, how the participants experience will enrich the discussion forum, and of course personal motivation.

Not all applications will be accepted as the number of places is limited to 25 participants, in order to ensure an optimum working environment. The candidates who were not accepted may reapply for the following course which will take place about 6 months later.

Course dates – application deadlines

The **next session in English** will take place

from May 25 to June 19 June, 2020

Please fill out the application form and send it to following address no later than May 19, 2020

formation-en-ligne@agter.org

You will receive an answer regarding the scholarship you are entitled to when your application is accepted, at the latest, by May 21.

Next course on land grabbing in Spanish: July 2020