



## Exercise Five: Families Confronting Globalization

 **Time: 40-55 minutes (dependant on the number of groups)**

### **Objectives**

- To look at the impact of globalization on rural families around the world.
- To demonstrate some of the obstacles to overcoming poverty and hunger.
- To learn about the ways communities are struggling for their right to land to grow food.

### **Materials needed**

- Colored Paper (5 sheets, each a different color)
- Scissors
- Note Cards
- Glue
- Five thick note cards (size optional thick and large enough to stay on the table and for everyone to see).

### **Preparation**

- Based on the number of participants in the workshop, decide how many groups you will have. There are five family profiles. We recommend using at least three different profiles. We also recommend always including the U.S. family.
- Print out each family profile in large font size and paste it on a large note card.
- Print out five copies of the instructions below and paste them on five large note cards.

### **Procedure**

1. State: “In the previous exercise we looked at hunger and poverty and how it affects individual people. Previous to that we looked at the important role that land plays in food production. This next exercise provides an opportunity for us to think about these same issues from a family perspective and a country perspective. We are moving from the micro level to the macro level and connecting the two.”
- 15 min* 2. Divide workshop participants into three to five groups of four or five depending on number of participants. Inform participants that you will be distributing a large card to each table. Each card has the profile of a family written on one side and instructions written on the other. They should read the family profile and then follow the instructions on the other side of the card. In addition, inform participants that you will be checking in with each table to address any questions or concerns. (See Family Profiles and Instructions in Appendix I and II.)



## Exercise Five, continued

### Procedure, continued

25 min 3. Come back together as a large group and have each group give their presentations. After each group presents, ask other workshop participants if they have comments or want to share additional information. The Facilitator should incorporate the facilitator context for each family profile (see Appendix). (Allow 5 minutes per group)

15 min 4. After each group has presented, ask participants the following:

- ★ Identify any common themes or issues from all of the presentations/stories.
- ★ Can you imagine any of these families working together around some of the common themes or issues identified?

Share as much of the information from the facilitator context below as needed.

### Facilitator Context

Below is additional information about the families, organizations and situations presented in this exercise. This may be helpful background to share with participants who want more information while they are planning their presentations, or it may be shared after the groups present to fill in any crucial details that groups may have missed. Not all of the information needs to be read or incorporated. The facilitator should decide which information would complement the presentations.

#### The Hernandez Family:

- In the country that introduced corn to the world, Mexican corn farmers earn 7 cents per pound of corn. NAFTA paved the way for cheap imported, subsidized corn from the U.S. to take over the Mexican market, dropping prices paid to Mexican Farmers by 70%. Similarly, this same bottoming out of prices is true for other crops such as sugar and coffee.
- Since Mexico became part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, the average Mexican has watched his income fall and his cost of living rise nearly 250%.
- Mexicans working abroad in such roles as gardeners and dishwashers last year injected more dollars into their homeland's economy than did multinational corporations. Emigrants sent \$13.4 billion to Mexico in comparison to the \$11 billion in direct investment that Mexico gained from foreign companies. Remittances are second only to petroleum as Mexico's largest source of foreign exchange.
- Grassroots organizations in Mexico are encouraging members to diversify their agriculture to limit dependence on export-oriented crops and protect themselves from steep price drops.

*Statistics from NAFTA's Promise and Reality, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Audley et al. 2004*



## Exercise Five, continued

### Facilitator Context, continued

#### The Juste Family:

- Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. 81% of the population lives in extreme poverty and 10% of children die before their fifth birthday.
- **Structural Adjustment** plans forced on Haiti by the international financial institutions in 1994 resulted in economic collapse in the agricultural sector. The adjustments also reduced government services (down to a level of 4500 government employees for a population of 8,000,000) and privatized many public services.
- The international community withheld large amounts of aid in an effort to pressure the Haitian government over the contested elections of May 2001. Even while new loans and aid were being withheld, the government had to pay US \$24,000,000 on Haiti's foreign debt last year.
- In the face of these challenges, Haitians have demonstrated creativity and a will to survive. Grassroots organizations in Haiti demonstrate these characteristics as they find ways to join together to continue to struggle for basic human rights and life with dignity using the resources they have.
- The **MPP (Peasant Movement of Papay)** is the oldest peasant association in the country, with a broad range of development activities aimed at improving peasants' quality of life, including reforestation and sustainable agriculture in the Central Plateau. The **MPP** has planted more than 20 million fruit, nut and timber trees to combat deforestation and to provide local food and materials to Haitians.

#### The DaSouza Family:

- Brazil is noted for wide inequality in wealth and resource distribution. Three percent of the population owns 2/3 of the land. Much of the land lies idle or is used for export production that does little to support the local economy.
- Since 1988, a new constitution in Brazil has allowed peasant families to occupy under-utilized land.
- Several rural movements in Brazil, like the **Landless Workers Movement**, work to speed up land reform and make land ownership a reality for the nation's hungry. They are part of a larger movement to create a more inclusive and equitable economy in Brazil.
- The success of the landless movement has led to increased violence against landless workers and their organizations.
- The Brazilian government is bowing under pressure from powerful landowners in Brazil and international finance institutions by spending less money on land reform institutions. International finance institutions are imposing spending cuts on land reform, arguing that it is too costly. This makes the work of the **Landless Workers Movement** even more pertinent.



## Exercise Five, continued

### Facilitator Context, continued

#### The Abdullah Family:

- Qalqilya consists of 32 villages where approximately 72,000 Palestinians live. The wall is not built on Israel's border (the Green Line), but will eventually surround the city on three sides, all on land within the Occupied West Bank. The 8 meter (24 foot) high wall is surrounded by a trench, barbed wire and is controlled by the Israeli Army.
- Palestinian homes, farms, fields and greenhouses within 35 meters (100 feet) of the wall have been or will be destroyed by Israel.
- The wall confiscates Palestinian land and impoverishes the Qalqilya residents by denying them means to a livelihood (farming) and access to natural resources (land and water).
- Approximately 3,000 dunums (740 acres) of agricultural land have been or will be confiscated. This represents almost 50% of the city's agricultural land.
- In 2004 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague, ruled that the construction of the Wall is illegal and obliges Israel to stop construction of the wall, dismantle what has already been built and provide reparations for all damages caused by the construction of the Wall. Despite this ruling, the Wall continues to be built.

*Statistics from <http://www.miftah.org/display.cfm?DocId=1455&CategoryId=4>*

#### The Fortin Family:

- Six out of ten farm households lose money on their farm operations each year, and an average of 330 farms go out of business each week in the U.S. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the number of U.S. farms has declined from about 7 million in the 1930's to just over 2 million in 2003, with only 565,000 still owned and managed as family farms. Family farms and the rural lifestyle they represent are disintegrating.
- The U.S. government spends billions of tax dollars annually subsidizing one in three farms, but over 70% of USDA payments go to the top 10% of the nation's largest producers, increasing the pressure on family farms to "get big or get out."
- When the only economic alternative for a family farmer is to contract with a giant agribusiness, the farmer must sign away his or her right to make independent decisions about their farming practices. These contracts often oblige farmers to use practices that are bad for the environment, including promotion of monocultures, the use of antibiotics and hormones and polluting water sources.
- The drug rBGH is widely used in the U.S. since being approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 1993, but remains unapproved in Canada and much of Europe. Evidence has accumulated indicating links between cancer in humans who drink milk from rBGH-treated cows.

*Statistics from the National Family Farm Coalition, <http://www.benjerry.com/familyfarms> and <http://www.foodfirst.org/pubs/backgrdrs/1999/s99-v5-n2.html>*



## Appendix I for Exercise Five: Families Confronting Globalization

Print a copy for each group's family profile/instruction card.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Read the family profile on the other side of this card.

Imagine that you are members of the family and spin out a storyline that shows how globalization affects your family and your community's access to land and water.

Begin by identifying possible events that might occur that could affect your family both positively and negatively. Then decide what actions you might take (as individuals, as a family or as members of a larger community) in response to those events. Then think about what might happen next. Be sure to think of an ending for your story.

The events/actions that you identify might have to do with policy issues (the passage of a trade agreement or law at the national or international level), with things that happen at the micro/household level or with a natural or political disaster. Feel free to draw upon your own knowledge and experience or be inventive and create new situations.

Once you have your story sketched out, decide if you want to present it as a skit, tell it as a story, or find some other way to share it with the whole group.

(You will have fifteen minutes to prepare your story and four minutes to present to the larger group.)



## Appendix II for Exercise Five: Families Confronting Globalization

### Family Profiles

Print one profile for each group's profile/instruction card.

#### The DaSouza Family

**Country:** Brazil

**Town:** Maranhão

**Family Members:** João (41), father and farmer  
Betânia (36), mother and farmer  
Paulo (10), student and farmer  
Maria (13), student and farmer  
Camila (15), student and farmer  
Gilberto (17), student and farmer  
Gabriela (19), cleaning woman

**Issues:** Your eldest daughter Gabriela got married and left for Boston in the U.S. three years ago where she and her husband clean people's homes. Because they are undocumented they cannot visit but they send money home, although quite irregularly. You are all active members of the Landless Rural Workers of Brazil (the **MST**), Latin America's largest social movement. The **MST** works with poor, landless people to identify underutilized land, gain legal title to the land and bring it into productive use (as sanctioned by the Brazilian constitution). Through the **MST's** efforts 300,000 families have been settled on 17 million acres of land. Another 70,000 families that are living in encampments are currently awaiting title to their land. After 3 years of living in an encampment with no access to running water, schools or health clinics, your family finally gains title to land. You and 600 other families are given the opportunity to begin building a settlement community on 16,000 acres of land.



## Appendix II, Exercise Five, continued

### The Hernandez Family

**Country:** Mexico

**Town:** Oaxaca

**Family Members:** Benito (45), coffee farmer and father  
Lucia (40), coffee farmer, mother, homemaker and weaver  
Carolina (20), factory worker in Tijuana  
Memo (18), migrant farm worker in Southern New Mexico  
Rodrigo (15), coffee farmer  
Ana (13), student and coffee farmer  
Juanito (10), student and coffee farmer  
Imelda (2)

### Issues

You are a family of coffee farmers living in the village of Miramar in the lush green highlands of Oaxaca, Mexico. You have been struggling to make ends meet over the past couple of years as world coffee prices continue to fall and government support to small farmers disappears. Two of the children have had to leave home to seek income elsewhere. You currently receive 7 to 10 cents per pound of coffee (or \$3 a day during the harvesting season). If it weren't for Memo and Carolina sending money home regularly you probably wouldn't be able to hold on to your land and Juanito and Ana could not go to school.



## Appendix II, Exercise Five, continued

### The Fortin Family

**Country:** United States

**City and State:** Shoreham, Vermont

**Family Members:** Bob (51), dairy farmer, father and carpenter

Wendy (52), dairy farmer and mother

Lucy (18), high-school senior preparing for college

John (22), soldier

### Issues

You are a family of dairy farmers living in rural Vermont. You own a small family farm with 80 dairy cows that was established in 1911. You are struggling to maintain it because government farm subsidies are increasingly going to larger more industrialized farms that inject rGBH (genetically altered bovine growth hormone produced and sold by the agro-tech giant Monsanto) into their cows making them produce 10-15% more milk. {Small farmers tend not to use rGBH because it makes their cows sick; over 50% of rGBH injected cows suffer from udder infections, reproductive and digestive problems}. The subsequent increase in dairy on the market has driven dairy prices down, forcing many small farmers out of business. Over the past five years, 43 percent of farms with 50 cows or less have gone out of business in Vermont, while the number of farms with 200 cows or more has increased by 40 percent. You are hoping you won't lose yours.



## Appendix II, Exercise Five, continued

### The Juste Family

**Country:** Haiti

**Town:** Papay—Central Plateau Region

**Family Members:** Pierre (45), father and subsistence farmer  
Marie-Josie (40), mother and subsistence farmer  
Josiane (20), factory worker in Ouanaminthe, a **Free Trade** zone on the border with the Dominican Republic  
Casseus (17), subsistence farmer  
Jean (15), student in Port au Prince  
Céline (13), subsistence farmer  
François (7), student  
Jacqueline (7), student

### Issues

You have been communally farming manioc, sugarcane, corn and vegetables for generations with a traditional work group composed of four neighboring families. Your workgroup belongs to a cooperative of 48 people, which is part of the Movman Peyizan de Papay (**MPP**), or the Peasant Movement of Papay. The **MPP** has more than 60,000 members advocating for pro-poor rural policies and offering technical assistance to cooperatives on sustainable agriculture, potable water, reforestation, leadership training and animal husbandry. Over the years, severe deforestation has led to reduced outputs. With the **MPP**'s help, you and your fellow members struggle to maintain your previous levels of production.



## Appendix II, Exercise Five, continued

### The Abdullah Family

**Country:** Palestine

**Town:** Qalquilya

**Family Members:** Mohammed (60), father and farmer

Khadija (50), mother and weaver

Hassan (24), trainer for a NGO

Moustafa (20), unemployed,

Samah (18), university student

Rania (15), student

Fatima (12), student

**Issues:** Your family owns 23 dunums of land (about 5 1/2 acres) where you grow olives and various types of vegetables. Several years ago, Israel began constructing the Separation Wall around your town. The 25 foot high concrete Wall now completely surrounds Qalqilya, separating many of the town's residents from their lands and wells. Before the wall was built, Mohammed and his sons were able to freely work their land. Now, Mohammed must apply for a permit from Israel to cross the wall in order to access the family's land. He is granted the permit but his sons are not and the land is too much to work for him alone. What Mohammed is able to harvest, you sell in the local market but many of the fruits and vegetables rot in the fields.

You rely on a well for your water supply, and if the electricity is out (which it often is), the well pumps do not work. The influx of cheap Israeli products to Palestine makes it difficult to compete in the Palestinian market. You are looking for ways to generate more income and maintain your livelihood. You recently sought help from the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (**PARC**) a NGO that focuses on creating jobs, rural development and strengthening women's position in Palestine.



## **Appendix III for Exercise Five: Families Confronting Globalization**

### **Facilitator Tip**

If groups are having problems with this exercise, the following questions can be used to stimulate thought. They will provide an additional framework to guide participants.

### **Questions for Hernandez Family**

What kind of events or actions would help your family meet your goals? What kind of events would make life harder? What kind of people or groups would you be able to work with around your goals? Who can you depend on to support you with advice and resources? What is the government's responsibility? Does the government have current policies that will help or hurt you? How can you organize to secure a better price for your coffee? How will you organize to provide for your family if you are unable to get a decent price for your coffee? Can you envision a way to reunite your family?

### **Questions for DaSouza Family**

What kind of events or actions would help your family meet your goals? What kind of events would make life harder? What kind of people or groups would you be able to work with around your goals? What obstacles will you face now that you have gained title to a piece of land? Who can you depend on to support you with advice and resources? What is the government's responsibility? Does the government have some current policies that will help or hurt you? What are the benefits or drawbacks to being a part of a movement? What are the steps to building a community?

### **Questions for Fortin Family**

What kind of events or actions would help your family meet your goals? What kind of events would make life harder? What kind of people or groups would you be able to work with around your goals? Who can you depend on to support you with advice and resources? What is the government's responsibility? Does the government have current policies that will help or hurt you? How can you organize to ensure better security so you do not lose your family farm?

### **Questions for Juste Family**

What kind of events or actions would help your family meet your goals? What kind of events would make life harder? What kind of people or groups would you be able to work with around your goals? Who can you depend on to support you with advice and resources? What is the government's responsibility? Does the government have current policies that will help or hurt you? How can you organize to ensure that your family is able to grow the food it needs and have access to clean water?

### **Questions for Abdullah Family**

What kind of events or actions would help your family meet your goals? What kind of events would make life harder? What kind of people or groups would you be able to work with around your goals? Who can you depend on to support you with advice and resources? What is the government's responsibility? Does the government have current policies that will help or hurt you? How can you organize to ensure better security and access to markets?