

**LAND POLICY  
REFORM IN MEXICO  
(1991-2008)**

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LAND GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT  
OF THE MDGS  
WORLD BANK  
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**THE RURAL STRONGHOLD**

**In the XX c 11 states  
concentrate between  
68% y 71% of rural  
population**

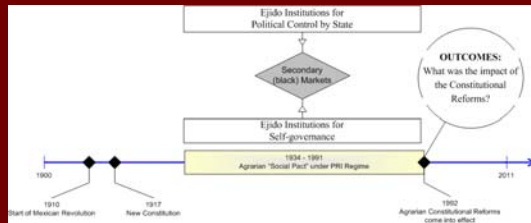


**HISTORICAL  
BACKGROUND OF THE  
AGRARIAN REFORM  
PROCESS**

**WHAT IS THE EJIDO**

**RURAL COMMUNITIES:  
URBAN PLOT  
PLUS  
INDIVIDUAL PARCEL  
PLUS  
COMMON RESOURCES**

## THE EJIDO: TWO FACETS



## THE EJIDO BEFORE 1991

- URBAN PLOT NORMAL **PRIVATE PROPERTY**
- PARCELS PRIVATE **USUS FRUCTUS**
- COMMON LAND **COLLECTIVE USUS FRUCTUS**

## EJIDO RULES (UNTIL 1991)

- **Work** the land **directly**;
- Could **not hire** wage labour.
- Could **not rent** the land or **sell** it.
- **Absences** from the ejido led to loss of right to the land.
- Ejidatarios could vote for and be elected to the **Executive Committee** of the ejido's Assembly.
- Executive Committee automatically membership to the **PRI**.

**MEXICO A ONE PARTY REGIME FROM 1929 UNTIL 1997-2000**

## STATE INTERVENTIONS

- Access to land could be gained in one of four ways
- In the internal life of *ejidos*
- In arbitration
- In controlling the flow of public resources to the *ejido* (credit, trading boards and guarantee prices, fertilizers, technical assistance, irrigation, social welfare and infrastructure)

## THE REFORM PACKAGE

- End to land redistribution
- The three forms of property enshrined in the Constitution: private, ejido and indigenous land
- For the ejido and its three components, an array of options: full property, condominium, rent, sharecropping, joint-ventures
- Self governed assemblies
- Land cadaster and registration to give titles to all ejidatarios
- Ombudsman to attend conflicts
- Special agrarian courts

## THE EJIDO AFTER 1991

- URBAN PLOT NORMAL
- PRIVATE PROPERTY
- PARCEL AS FARMER DECIDES FROM USUS FRUCTUS TO FULL PRIVATE PROPERTY
- COMMON LAND
- CONDOMINIUM PROPERTY

## EJIDO RULES (WITH REFORM)

- Work the land **directly**; **ELIMINATED**
- Could **not hire** wage labour. **ELIMINATED**
- Could **not rent** the land or **sell** it. **ELIMINATED**
- **Absences** from the ejido led to loss of right to the land. **ELIMINATED**
- Order of heirs to their land in writing, usually naming a **spouse** or partner as the preferred successor. **ELIMINATED**
- Ejidatarios could vote for and be elected to the Executive Committee of the ejido's Assembly. **ELIMINATED**
- Executive Committee automatically membership to the PRI. **ELIMINATED**

## RESULTS(1): TITLING AND LAND MARKETS

- Out of 31.5 thousand ejidos, 28.1 ejidos have been measured and titled during the period (1994-2006) in which the titling program called PROCEDE operated.
- 6,000 of those ejidos titled with a total of 4.7 million hectares have opt for full property, which means that less than 5% have chosen the alternative of potential privatization of their parcels. In fact 3 million hectares have been sold.
- 15,000 ejidos have reported operations of selling and buying of parcels to other ejidatarios and to neighbors
- ¿Leasing markets?

## **RESULTS(2)**

**The national average size of the plots -has been reduced from 9.1 hectares to 7.5 hectares, which might suggest that consolidation of bigger parcels thru buying and selling of land has been offset by intra-family subdivisions of plots.**

## **RESULTS(3):COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE**

- **“The agrarian communities obtained more autonomy, but their abandonment was also increased” (Merino, 2004, p. 195), particularly through a marked reduction in government supports.**
- **In addition, initial research shows that internal democratization of communities has not occurred as expected, and rather there have been new forms of intervention by local governments (Klooster, 2003).**

## **DIFFERENTIATED RESULTS(4)**

- **First, as survey work on the ejido indicated( De Janvry, Gordillo and Sadoulet,1997), the reform process produced differentiated results across the vast number of communities as early as the mid-1990s.**
- **Second, the reform has been accompanied by a series of organizational and institutional innovations at the local level, which can be understood as social adaptive strategies in the face of the policy changes described above.**

## **RESPONSE STRATEGIES (1)**

- **Farmers modernizing agriculture access to water bigger extension of land combining corn with fruits and vegetables,**
- **Farmers that diversify activities thru complex agriculture and cattle combinations,**
- **Farmers that diversify income thru off farm activities via wages and remittances.**

## RESPONSE STRATEGIES (2)

- **Peasants** which basic source of income is **public funds**,
- **Peasants disconnecting from markets** and developing almost autarchic livelihoods,
- **Neighbors living in the *ejido* community with limited rights over the *ejido* lands** ( an average of 85 neighbors per *ejido* versus 95 as full members) following mixed strategies

## DIVERSITY OF IMPACTS

- **The legal reforms of 1991-1992** Constitution and Agrarian Law
- **The policies reforms(1992-1997): PROCAMPO AND OPORTUNIDADES**
- **The changes in farmers' associations (1979-1997)**
- **The economic crisis in 1994**
- **The electoral reform in 1996**

## FACTS(1)

- **MEXICO TOTAL POP 107 MILL LESS THAN 24 YRS 40% (2007)**
- **50% of farmers more than 50 years**
- **With data from the 2005 ENIG 32% con food security poverty** (less than two dollars per day)

### FACTS(2)

- Rural population will have a rate of growth below the national average: 0.60 from 1990 to 2000 and (-) 0.32 from 2000 to 2005.
- Total rural population around 24 million inhabitants (less than 2500)
- International migration from 2001-2006, about 577 thousand persons migrated to United States per year, a figure 2.5 times higher than the net annual migration from 1981-1986.

### FACTS(3)

- Scattered small towns are the basic traits of the rural population.
- In 1970 towns of less than 2500 inhabitants were 95,000. By 2005 towns of less than 2500 inhabitants are estimated to have risen to 185,000.
- In fact 42.9 per cent of the total rural population lives in towns of less than 500 inhabitants

### FACTS (4)

Of 180 million hectares that are part of the rural Mexican territories, more than half (106 million hectares) have been distributed to 5.6 million farmers thru the agrarian reform process during a period of 70 years (1920-1991). The private property sector is composed by 1.7 million farmers which own 73 million hectares.

### FACTS(5)

- Of those almost 180 million hectares, 63% are natural grasslands and pastures, 18% for agricultural uses and 15% forests and jungles.
- Of the 106 million hectares donated by the government to the farmers through the agrarian reform, 33.7 million hectares have been granted as plots and 69 million hectares have been granted as common property.

## FACTS(6)

- 3.8 million rural workers which have no land and a very weak labor legislation to protect them.
- 2.4 million neighbors –some of which are sons and daughters of ejidatarios-, living in 17,349 ejidos and communities.
- Rural migrants. On 13,000 ejidos youth have migrated of which around 65% to USA and 25% to big cities in Mexico.

## FACTS(7)

More than 80 ethnic groups that basically live in the countryside. They are 10.2 million persons. Also the biggest ethnic population of Latin America representing 25% of the total indigenous population in the Region.

## Design Principles

