



## The Fight for and the Acquiring of Land by the Landless Workers in Engenho Prado – Tracunhaém, PE/Brazil

### What is it about?

The aim of the experience was the earning of the right to land of landless rural worker families, in the Zona da Mata (rural area) region of the state of Pernambuco, through occupation. The functioning of the sugarcane monoculture took place in the following manner: through expanding, the plant swallowed up the mills, which in turn, swallowed up the sites of the inhabitants who, consequently, went to live in the outskirts of the cities of the Zona da Mata.

### What problem emerged?

The experience of occupation of lands has been a strong instrument of vindication of the Agrarian Reform, used by landless rural workers since the 80s. The families, previous inhabitants of the Mills, came to live in inhumane conditions in the outskirts of the cities of the Zona da Mata, exploited by the sugarcane monoculture.

### What has been the impact?

The families, who previously lived in the outskirts of the cities in sub-human conditions, today have a decent home and land to produce food. They are owners of their own destiny and work.

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## Experience AT A GLANCE

### Why did it happen?

After the occupation of the land, the method of organisation of the group to remain camped in the area can be highlighted as a fundamental element for the resistance of the families and for the facing up to the challenges. Surveillance, food, cleaning, health and medicine, communication, coordination, treasury and secretariat commissions were formed. With the foods produced on the occupied land, a large part of the subsistence of the families and the selling in local markets was ensured.

### What are the key messages and lessons learned?

The main subjects involved in this experience were around 300 landless families, with the support given by the CPT throughout the whole period.

### Who could be interested in the experience?

This experience serves as an example and must be shared between social organisations that act in accordance with the Agrarian Reform, and, mainly, with other peasant communities, particularly between groups of landless rural workers that find themselves in a process of organisation and fighting for the Agrarian Reform and for the guaranteeing of rights.

### Who is already using it?

The Agricultural Workers' Federation of the State of Pernambuco (FETAPE) and the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST).

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AUSTRIAN ORGANISATION FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

**Sector:** Human Rights and Civil Society

**Period:** 1997 - 2005

**Organisation:** Pastoral Land Commission 2

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