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Rural Development Institute CEO invited to join world leaders at Clinton Global Initiative 2007 Annual Meeting

SEATTLE –Tim Hanstad, President and CEO of the Rural Development Institute (RDI), an international non-profit working to alleviate global poverty by securing land rights for the world's poorest people, has been selected to join world leaders at the Clinton Global Initiative 2007 Annual Meeting to formulate innovative strategies to solve pressing global issues.

The invitation to the Clinton Global Initiative is part of a growing list of recognition the Seattle-headquartered RDI has recently received. RDI is a finalist for the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize, the world's largest humanitarian award. Hanstad recently was invited to speak at the Annual Hilton International Humanitarian Symposium in September along with other global leaders including U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. The invitation from the Hilton Foundation applauded RDI for "creating a 'revolution without a revolution' by granting land rights to the rural poor..." RDI was also the first organization to be awarded a challenge grant from the Seattle International Foundation to support its innovative "micro-land ownership" program in India.

"Land rights are a key tool for lifting people out of poverty and creating long term change in a peaceful and fair manner," said Hanstad. "World leaders and policy makers are increasingly recognizing the connection between poverty and land rights, and are coming to RDI to learn more, develop new laws and launch new programs to help alleviate poverty."

In September, prior to the Clinton Global Initiative, RDI will hold policy briefings in New York and Washington, D.C. for a select group of some of the world's best minds, including top policy makers, NGOs and thought leaders to raise awareness about the concept of micro-land ownership and its potential for global poverty alleviation.

"Our research has shown that it only takes a little bit of land to make a big difference in lifting people out of poverty," said Hanstad. "We have found that micro-plots of land as little as 1/10th of an acre can provide a foundation for extremely poor people, especially women, to build a sustainable livelihood and a better economic future."

The benefits of micro-land ownership include improved shelter, better nutrition, increased income, access to credit, improved health and education, enhanced status of women and much more.

Today, RDI is working with four states in India, one of the world's most populous and impoverished countries, to implement micro-land ownership programs. Several other states, as well as Pakistan's Punjab province, are also lining up to implement the program.

Attendees at the policy briefings will include such notables as Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, Rockefeller Foundation President Judith Rodin, President of the Grameen Foundation Alex Counts, President and CEO of World Relief Sammy Mah and Oxfam America President Raymond Offenheiser.

Shortly after the policy briefings, Hanstad will take RDI's unique expertise to the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting to help create new ideas and strategies and devise specific commitments in four key areas: poverty alleviation, energy and climate change, global health, and education. Hanstad will be tapped to lend his expertise and experience for the poverty-alleviation portion.

Notable Clinton Global Initiative members include world leaders Bill Gates, King Abdullah II, First Lady Laura Bush, Warren Buffet, Mohammad Yunus and other top leaders from the private sector, international non-profits, academia, government and multilateral institutions.

About the Rural Development Institute

RDI is an international non-profit working to secure land rights for the world's poor. Over the past 40 years, RDI has worked in more than 40 countries, helping more than 400 million people attain secure land rights. A global pioneer in using law to create land ownership opportunities, RDI's work creates leveraged, sustainable and generational poverty alleviation. For every dollar contributed, on average RDI has secured land rights for six families. For more information, visit www.rdiland.org.

About the Clinton Global Initiative

The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) is a non-partisan catalyst for action, bringing together a community of global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. CGI has approximately 1,000 members, diverse and influential leaders from all over the world, who make tangible commitments to create or support projects within CGI's areas of focus. In 2007, CGI's four areas of focus are education, energy and climate change, global health and poverty alleviation.

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