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## **Rural Development Institute named as a finalist for the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize**

**Seattle** – 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 named a finalist for the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize, which honors a charitable or non-governmental organization that has made extraordinary contributions toward alleviating human suffering anywhere in the world.

“Being named a finalist for the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize is a distinct honor,” said Tim Hanstad, RDI’s chief executive officer and president. “This international prize is the world’s largest humanitarian award, and at \$1.5 million, it ranks as one of the largest monetary prizes in any category equal to the Nobel Peace Prize. We are very pleased that the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation recognizes the importance of land rights in the alleviation of global poverty.”

Past recipients’ of the award include Heifer International and Doctors Without Borders. This is the third year that RDI has been nominated to receive this distinguished award. Nominations are sought throughout the international community. An independent international panel of jurors will make the final selection; the award recipient will be announced in the fall of 2007.

RDI, headquartered in Seattle, with offices in China, India, Indonesia and Rwanda is a recognized global pioneer in using the law to design innovative strategies that create land ownership opportunities, helping to lift the world’s rural poor out of poverty. Over the past 40 years, RDI has worked in more than 40 countries, helping more than 400 million people attain secure land rights.

RDI has recently been nominated for two other prestigious awards:

- The **World Food Prize** recognizes the achievements of those who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity or availability of food in the world.
- The **Alcan Prize for Sustainability** recognizes the critical role of the not-for-profit sector in promoting and implementing sustainable development around the world.

In addition, Roy Prosterman, RDI’s founder and chairman emeritus, has been nominated for the Purpose Prize, a 2-year-old initiative of Civic Ventures, founded in the late 1990s by social entrepreneurs John Gardner and Marc Freedman. This prize recognizes social innovators over the age of 60. Prosterman also won the 2003 Social Entrepreneur award, sponsored by the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, the Gleitsman International Award, the inaugural Henry R. Kravis Award for nonprofit leadership in 2006 and is an invitee to the World Economic Forum held in Davos.

Today, RDI is engaged in a number of land rights projects globally, including an ambitious “micro-land ownership” program with the governments of four states in India, one of the world’s most populous and impoverished countries.

“Our research has taught us 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 plots of land as little as 1/10th of an acre, or less, can provide a foundation for extremely poor people, especially women, to build a sustainable livelihood and a better economic future.”

For more information about RDI, please visit [www.rdiland.org](http://www.rdiland.org).

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