

Dear all,

I am very much happy to participate in the consultation for EU Land Policy guidelines. I am sorry for my delayed participation since I was out of station for couple of weeks and again was blocked for sometime due to Maoists blockades on all transportation.

Fortunately, I was in the communities for an interaction programme with the NGO, CBOs and civil society organizations on land rights and recent announcement of government on land bank. The programme was enthusiastic and people seem to be more aware of their problems and need of joint work.

Currently, MODE Nepal, where I work is playing facilitating role in building national network on land alliance in Nepal in collaboration with International Land Coalition.

I went through the guidelines while I was away which I found to be comprehensive and well covered. My views are only on couples of issues with cases from Nepal. However, I would be happy to provide additional information whenever the EU Task force intend to receive.

My views are summarized as:

1. Land reform is an economic process and, therefore, policy on land should be highly considered on improvement of productivity through appropriate land use and management and thereby to reduce poverty.
2. Land policy probably should also be thought through leasing land such as hills leasehold forestry in Nepal which essentially has designated the poor to land use, manage and reap the economic benefit. Land policy however, should consider support services (awareness, consultation, technical services and delivery of other services) for agriculture development.
3. Para 3.4.3 under section 3.4 is a vivid case of Nepal now. I would like to draw attention of all the concerned in this regard.

Recently, government of Nepal has announced the land bank policy (said to be a Brazilian model). I myself was one of the commentator in a Consultation Programme represented from diverse authorities on land bank policy of the government which seem to be designed on a highly adhoc basis. Government has claimed such announcement to be preliminary. Major lackings are there: which land being purchased and sold under such violated situation, high productive land less chance of being sold to the landless/poor, displacement of population from rural areas where poor were located, absence of complementary programmes with land selling.

It all attest that the government's policy recently introduced does not benefit landless and near landless; it will rather remain as a political slogan.

4. Policy need to be deliberately directed towards the disadvantaged groups, dalit, minorities and women.

The Bonded labour in Nepal have a critical situation now that they have no access to land and other productive resources although they were freed from bonded labour in July 2001 by government announcement. They are compelled to go back to their previous landlords. This should be considered under land policy, social justice and human rights.

5. EU's role on designing and the enforcement of land policy in developing countries, I guess, need to be elaborated to work in coalition with a network group which can easily pressurize the government's activities, institutional development and planning.
6. Institutional framework and legislation plays a vital role in land policy versus any development activities of the nation. I guess both of these support to update land record, maintaining transparency and accountability. This lacks in all developing countries particularly in Nepal.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to share my ideas through consultation.

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