

Report of Regional Strategy Meeting Land Watch Asia

28-30 March 2007, Tagaytay City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Throughout Asia, land is the main source of livelihood and employment among rural communities. A large portion of the population is involved in agriculture, and many livelihoods remain dependent on subsistence farming and access to resources managed as common property, including forests, pastures and water. Secure access to land and other natural resources, however, remains elusive for many poor men and women, as the agrarian contexts of South and Southeast Asian countries are characterized by skewed distribution of private land ownership, with large areas of lands (as high as 80 percent) owned by minorities (from 5 to 20 percent) of the population.

Land reform initiatives have been developed in many Asian countries, but the implementation of these has generally been wanting because of corruption, changing political leadership and priorities, and a lack of political will. In most countries, even where agrarian reform efforts have been undertaken or are underway, there are significant sectors that do not benefit in these programs such as rural women, indigenous peoples' communities, and youth. Particularly in South Asia, the marginalization of women and Dalits is a key factor, as land access is often impeded by class/caste dynamics and gender discrimination; discrimination against indigenous peoples is also a concern throughout the region.

Land Watch Asia is a regional campaign to ensure that these issues of access to land, agrarian reform, and equitable and sustainable development in rural areas are addressed in the national and regional development agendas. It shall map the rural poor's access to land in the region by reviewing existing political and legal frameworks; initiatives and mechanisms for participation by various stakeholders in governance processes. It aims to contribute to existing campaigns by identifying through consensus building the context, challenges and opportunities of access to land and agrarian reform campaigns at regional and national levels.

This report highlights the outcomes of a three-day Land Watch Asia planning meeting that was held in March 2007, including the agreements and future actions identified by participants from NGOs in six Asian countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines. Organizations from Peru and Burkina Faso engaged in regional network activities also participated, to exchange lessons and experiences from a comparative perspective with Asian colleagues.

In relation to implementing the initial phase of Land Watch, the planning meeting had the following objectives:

1. Identify and come to agreement on campaign outputs
2. Discuss and revise the framework and process for mapping campaign activities
3. Formulate country action plans and build a regional Land Watch platform.

Key outputs from the meeting, which this report will discuss further, included the following:

- Approval on the Land Watch Campaign framework
- Revision and finalization of the content of and process for the formulation of country- and regional- level campaign mapping studies
- Identification of focal points for the campaign in six Asian countries
- Completion of country studies within first quarter of 2008
- Agreement to share quarterly updates on campaign activities, land policies, case studies and other relevant materials via an electronic platform
- Decision to focus on the Asian Development Bank by conducting a mapping of institutional policies and programs related to land access and agrarian reform, and drafting case studies of specific projects in relation to access to land
- Agreement to conduct a regional dialogue on these themes by 2008

This meeting was part of a modest initiative to initiate Land Watch Asia, as spearheaded by the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) with support from the International Land Coalition (ILC), MISEREOR and Action Aid International.

Table 1: Participating Organizations

Country	Organizations
Bangladesh	Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)
Cambodia	NGO Forum on Cambodia STAR Kampuchea
India	Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) Ekta Parishad South Asia Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA)
Indonesia	Bina Desa Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA)
Nepal	Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC) Federation of Community Forestry Users in Nepal (FECOFUN)
Philippines	Center for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (CARRD) People's Campaign for Agrarian Reform (AR Now!) Philippine Association for Intercultural Development, Inc. (PAFID) Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)
Peru / Andean Region	Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales (CEPES)
Burkina Faso / West Africa	Land Net West Africa (LNWA)
Regional	Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)
Global	International Land Coalition (ILC)

SETTING THE CONTEXT: REGIONAL AND COUNTRY OVERVIEWS

The opening sessions of the planning meeting reviewed the context for strengthening a regional campaign around land rights, including discussion of key challenges being faced nationally and regionally, and the existing campaign strategies and activities to address these.

At the regional level, ANGO C Chairperson Fr. Francis Lucas assessed the growing need for civil-society actions that pursue policy and institutional reforms and combine these with community-based activities in order to improve access to land and tenurial security for the rural poor across Asia. Given the changing context and landscape of access to land in the region, there is a need to advocate access to land in a broader context, pooling activists together and formulate ways of strategically pursuing agrarian reform in the region. This is the impetus for ANGO C's work to build campaigns at the regional level and establish a regional platform to improve access to land.

Participants also reviewed the main findings from a regional meeting held in the Philippines in October 2006, organized by ANGO C, KPA and ILC, which assessed current trends on access to land in the region and identified programmatic interventions to address main gaps, including those related to campaigns. Key issues identified included:

- Access to land and other natural resources remains crucial to rural livelihoods, as many households are reliant on subsistence agriculture and access to common property resources.
- Land is also a source of power – political, economic and cultural – and thus an important point of struggle for social justice and democratic institutions.
- Where land and agrarian reform has been undertaken or is being conducted, problems such as chronic corruption; absence of political will; and changes in policy priorities have caused initiatives to fall short of their goals.
- The implementation of land and agrarian reforms has also been blocked by powerful groups, including elements within government and the military.
- Social and political marginalization has prevented women (especially in South Asia), indigenous peoples and youth from meaningfully participating in land and agrarian reform processes.

This brief review of regional trends framed the exchange of country updates that followed, in which participants reviewed: (a) the land rights contexts in their countries, (b) existing campaign strategies and actions to address land access and related policy reforms, and (c) strengths of these approaches and challenges that must be met going forward. These, in turn, provided the basis for participants to consider the proposal for the Land Watch Asia campaign and discuss its content and process.

Country Overview: Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a predominantly an agricultural country where 42 percent of the population remain under the poverty line. 63 percent of the labor force is employed in the agricultural sector. Despite these figures, land-use policy is weak, and does not reflect well whether those claiming land rights are dependent on agriculture or not.

Campaigns to address these issues face problems of corruption, a lack of political will to implement laws, and a “tug-of-war” for power between and among government agencies. Although, the government has committed itself certain international conventions, women, indigenous peoples and other minority groups remain excluded from land access in many instances. In its attempt to address land issues, the government has enacted laws on land distribution, land ceiling, and land registration. It has also repealed vested property laws and included land reform in its PRSP document. Unfortunately, these laws have not been thoroughly implemented.

Civil-society organizations have engaged land issues in at least five areas: policy advocacy; research, study and publication; capacity-building; networking; and alliance building. In terms of advocacy campaigns, efforts have been focused on land-use policy; retention of government lands by the landless; vested property; transparent land survey and record; indigenous peoples’ access to land; and the inclusion of land issues in the PRSP. There have also been some GO-NGO partnerships, including with the Land Ministry, and alliances built via regional and international networks.

Recently, the government has started a crackdown on corruption and illegal occupation. However, the latter has resulted to the victimization of marginalized groups. In response to this, CSOs have organized policy dialogues with different government agencies such as the Resettlement Committee and have solicited both internal and outside support. There remain significant threats against rural organizers, particularly among indigenous peoples communities and their leaders who are active in claiming rights to ancestral land and territories.

Country Overview: Cambodia

Landlessness is becoming a more extreme problem in Cambodia, as the increased market demand for land is coupling with lack of social safety nets and exclusion from political and administrative processes to increase the vulnerability of the poor, especially women-headed households. There is a high demand for land among the general population but this is not being met, as the market price for land is rising sharply, driven by land speculation and investments in agro-business, extractive industries and mega-projects. Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities do not enjoy protection of their territorial rights; other recently passed laws which provide for social land concessions are not yet being implemented. Corruption within the land administration process allows an opening for land grabbing to further marginalize poor families and communities.

In the face of these challenges, rural communities are organizing to defend their land rights and, in particular, to strengthen their positions in facing land-related disputes. One strategy of land rights campaigns is to support people's campaigns through petitions, press demonstrations, spiritual ceremonies; another is to support cooperating organizations and provincial networks which can facilitate conflict resolution processes between communities and the government. Public forums and national events to build awareness of land-related laws and rights are also campaign tools being used by Cambodian organizations.

A challenge that has emerged has been difficulties in terms of coordination, as many NGOs have yet to develop a culture of information sharing, especially in cases where some NGOs involved on the same issues see themselves in competition. To address this, a number of organizations involved in land-related activities have formed the Land Action Network for Development (LAND), which seeks to provide a forum for sharing information and responsibility on specific land-rights cases. LAND has three levels of operation: national, provincial and community. NGO Forum serves as the secretariat of the network, organizing capacity-building initiatives and coordinating with the Land Ministry and other government agencies, as well as the World Bank, which is active on land policy and administration in Cambodia.

Country Overview: India

In India, there exist laws such as the Land Acquisition Act and Forest Conservation Act which provide for access to land. Despite such laws, however, a significant percentage of the population remain landless or near landless, with 63 percent of marginal smallholders controlling just 15 percent of the land. Tenure insecurity and displacement is being created by development projects, industrialization and the establishment of special economic zones (SEZs), and the emergence of corporate farming. Thirty million people, many from socially marginalized groups such as Dalits, have been displaced by mega-projects. India has yet to recognize joint entitlement as well as the inheritance rights of women.

In campaigns for people's land rights, NGOs and people's organizations combine and link dialogue, such as with government agencies, and mass actions, such as national foot marches by landless families. Campaign activities focus on establishing a land-to-the-tiller policy, with specific attention to the rights for disadvantaged segments of the population, such as women, indigenous peoples, and farmers working on feudal estates. On several occasions, CSOs have succeeded in facilitating people's access to land by directly helping the installation of farmers, establishing venues and task forces for dispute mediation, and mainstreaming land issues in national and international forums.

Country Overview: Indonesia

Corruption and lack of coordination among state agencies are two institutional challenges which land rights campaigns in Indonesia face. Policy processes, and information regarding them, are not easily accessible by civil-society organizations, and lack of transparency makes it unclear the extent to which recent proposals for policy reform are being discussed in official forums, including the parliament. The Indonesian government announced in late 2006 its intention to distribute 8 million hectares of land; however, a consensus on the mode of distribution had yet to be reached among the three government agencies involved in this process, the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Forestry and the National Land Agency.

Within this context, NGOs and people's organizations that are part of land rights campaigns have demonstrated strong coordination, and often provide mutual support when communities they work with, or even their own staff, face conflicts or arrest because of their campaign activities. Policy advocacy focuses both on generating support for laws that would strengthen peoples' land rights and provide the basis for land and agrarian reform, and opposition for laws and regulations that threaten these rights, such as a recent bill on investment.

One challenge for CSOs is that every few months, conflicts erupt while the organizations have minimal resources to make interventions in these conflicts. There are also few lawyers who can commit themselves in cases like these. Due to the lack of transparency, data on land distribution, and legal and other information related to land disputes, is difficult also to obtain from government agencies. Because state information is not available or not complete, civil-society organizations monitor land conflicts directly and work with communities that face conflicts to corroborate the details of their cases.

Country Overview: Nepal

Land ownership in Nepal is highly skewed, as landlords have better access in the corridors of power including the formulation of policies on land and food management. According to the 2004 Human Development Report, the bottom 47 percent of the population only owns 15 percent of arable land. Tillers, meanwhile, remain in virtual bondage, receiving unfair wages and lacking access to basic services. Women, Dalits and ethnic minority communities in particular areas do not have ownership and control over land resources, even while they are the ones who really manage the land.

One campaign strategy to address these social problems has been to support rural people's organizing around land and livelihood rights, such as through the community self reliance centers that CSRC beginning in 1995. This approach has now been upscaled and linked to policy debates, via a national land rights forum that serves as a platform for solidarity, exchange of information and knowledge-building among local land rights movements. Capacity-building and community organizing campaigns are linked to action research, so that they may have bearing on policy debates taking place.

CSOs have also developed relationships with the government to critically engage land issues while performing research and reviews of draft legislation, land-related elements of political party platforms, and other policy documents. In the current political moment in Nepal, land rights are being highlighted as a key part of the democratic movement in the country – as such, CSOs are actively engaging the various political parties and movements to build awareness and support for land rights campaigns.

Among the challenges that campaigns face are the lack of commitment of political parties to address land issues, and strong links between land lords and government officials. There is also a concern that international donors are advocating market –led reform frameworks, which would threaten the tenure security of the land-poor and prevent access to land by the landless.

Country Overview: Philippines

One current focus of campaigns in the Philippines is mobilization of support to extend the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), which the Congress enacted in 1988. Networking and alliance-building are central elements of this campaign, as there are a range of NGOs and people’s organizations which are involved in the advocacy process.

As a national network, AR Now! has gathered a strong membership to pool expertise in necessary advocacy and technical skills. There is, however, a broad spectrum of positions around CARP and proposals for its extension which need to be reconciled; for instance, one camp calls for an assessment of the program and the extent to which it has realized its stated goals for land distribution, while the other is for the extension, with or without an assessment of CARP.¹ A working group is now preparing a unity bill, as a proposal that could maintain the broadest coalition possible.

Other campaign initiatives include direct action and the establishment of a more reliable database to collect and monitor data on land rights, including land distribution via CARP, and agrarian reform; the formation of a coalition of rural people’s organizations and participation in the national rural congress spearheaded by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP); and the establishment of sector-specific advocacy coalitions, such as the formation of Alyansa Tigil Mina, which has continuously struggled to highlight mining’s impact on rural land rights in national debate.

A challenge facing campaigners has been the inaction on the part of government leadership, particularly the President and her office, which ignore increasing conflict and even deaths over land disputes, preferring to make pronouncements only on agricultural productivity and agribusiness. Without clear leadership from the highest levels of government, there is little impetus for opponents of land and agrarian reform to comply with CARP, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), or other national laws that provide for people’s land and resource rights.

¹ In the Philippines, an estimated 1.3 million hectares of private lands still have yet to be distributed in accordance with the provisions of CARP.

Reflections and Comparative Experiences

Following the country overviews, colleagues from Land Net West Africa, a regional network focused on land rights, and CEPES, a Peruvian NGO that coordinates regional initiatives on land and agrarian reform in the Andean region of South America, shared their reflections and comparative experiences from their work.

Hubert Ouedrago from Land Net West Africa affirmed that because of the complexity of land issues, particularly at the policy level, it is crucial to assess clearly what national and regional campaign goals should be. Land is a political issue, and thus to transform inequities in access and distribution of land and other resources, campaigns must increase the involvement and leverage of key stakeholders – farmers, women, indigenous peoples, Dalits and others – who are most often left out of political debates and processes.

An important first step is to have a clear diagnosis of the situation particularly on the trends and impact of existing land policies. This can be a starting point to reinforce national campaigns through a regional strategy, considering (a) which institutions are most influential, both at national and regional levels, (b) who are potential allies, such as other social and religious movements, and (c) which are priority reform measures that need to be undertaken. When debating policy questions, civil-society organizations must ensure that they themselves have ideas and capacities to answer these questions. This requires, among other things, building expertise on technical aspects of land issues and shifting the locus of technical debates from the government bureaucracy to civil society or other multi-stakeholder forums.

In the Andean region of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, tenure security over land and resources held as common property has a strong link to poverty and poverty reduction, particularly among rural communities. As a campaign strategy, CEPES and other civil-society groups in the region are developing ways to monitor tenure security, including through the use of indicators, with goals of influencing public policies and increasing the capacity of peasant and indigenous peoples' communities to defend their lands. While national laws and policies remain an influential component of tenure security, increasingly cross-border trends and institutions, such as capital investments and free-trade agreements, are impacting rural people's land rights. A regional approach to monitoring thus seeks to reflect these cross-border phenomena, while providing a tool that can be used in campaigns to reform national laws and policies.

Summary of Country Overviews

The table below provides a summary of the strategies, actions, strengths and challenges of land access and agrarian reform campaigns, based on their six country overviews.

Strategy	Types of Actions	Strengths	Challenges
Capacity-Building and Community Organizing	Training on natural resource management; sustainable agriculture; mediation and conflict management; Focus on increasing capacity of community-based and people's organizations	Increasing level of organization among rural communities, and growing ability to take direct actions on campaigns; available resource persons and other training resources	Low level of awareness and skills among the grassroots; opposition to community organizing by those controlling the land remains high in some places
Education and Public Information	Land literacy; awareness-raising on laws, land rights and human rights	Existing cases (requires documentation)	Low level of awareness and skills at the grassroots
Media and Communications	Petitions, press conferences and statements, Publications, newsletters for network members	Linkages with media	Communicating effectively with the public, i.e., finding user-friendly messages and language
Alliance-building	Division of task among members of a network; Linkages with other stakeholders such as human rights organizations, church, urban poor and others; Developing common positions or dividing responsibilities on different policy and legislative issues	Good coordination among CSOs	Broad spectrum of opinions within civil society Limited funds
Direct Action and Support	Mass demonstrations, foot marches, hunger strikes Legal, media and logistical assistance to mass actions	Support from other groups such as the church	Small number of committed lawyers for land conflict cases Limited funds

<p>Policy and Legislative Advocacy</p>	<p>Campaigns on proposed laws on investments, anti-AR laws; Review of existing land reform</p> <p>Direct advocacy to legislators on draft bills</p> <p>Dialogue directly with government agencies; facilitating dialogue between government and community organizations</p> <p>Action research with communities</p>	<p>Strong research and technical expertise of some CSOs; Openness of certain government offices; ability to build on and reinforce community-based actions underway</p>	<p>Corruption; Lack of transparency in decision making processes</p> <p>Questionable official data</p> <p>Refusal of the government to table policies on land (lack of political will)</p> <p>Limited funds</p> <p>The prominence of a market-led framework in the policies of the government and donor agencies</p>
<p>Resource Mobilization</p>	<p>Fund-raising</p>	<p>Resourcefulness of CSOs</p> <p>Openness of donors including international financial institutions</p>	<p>Some flawed frameworks of donors</p>

SHAPING THE LAND WATCH CAMPAIGN

Land Watch Asia aims to take stock of significant changes in the policy and legal environment; make a strategic assessment and planning of ongoing civil-society activities as advocates and, as a network on access to land; help develop interventions, approaches, methods and tools; and encourage the sharing of experiences. Initially, the campaign would operate during 2007-2008, conducting research studies through consensus building; engaging national governments in policy dialogues; and sharing information, experiences and insights, and updates on local campaigns through the web.

At the regional level, the campaign will be shaped upon the completion of the country studies, and on a mapping of selected regional institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) will be undertaken. Figure 1 on the following page depicts the proposed framework for the Land Watch campaign, which formed the basis for discussion during this regional planning meeting.

This section reviews the points of discussion and agreements made by participants on three elements of the Land Watch Asia campaign: (a) country mapping studies, (b) information networking and (c) strengthening a regional campaign platform.

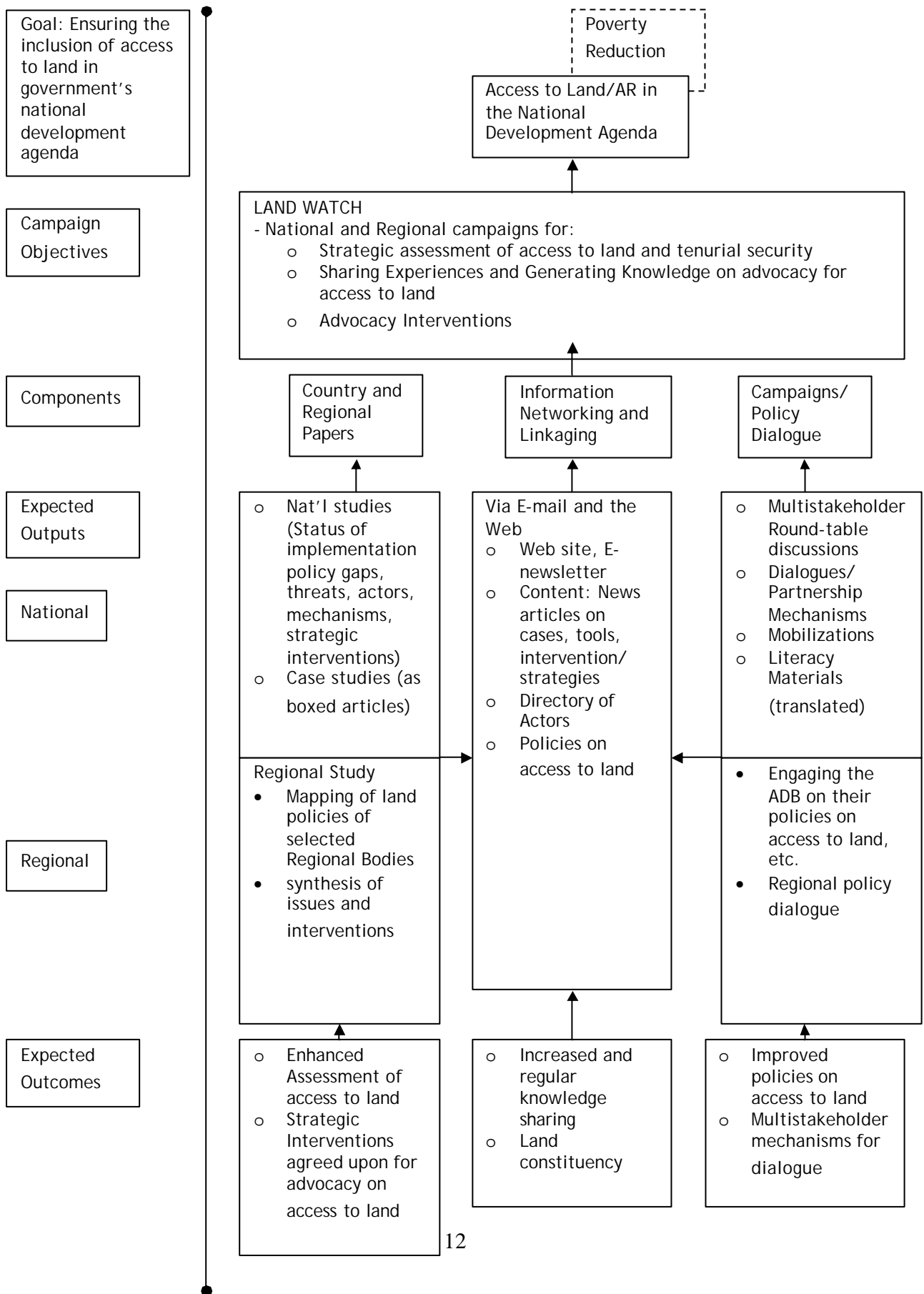
Mapping Study Component

As was raised during the discussion that followed the country overviews, a thorough diagnostic of the campaign environment is a necessary element for civil-society organizations working on any policy issue, and particularly one as complex and politically charged as land rights. Generating up-to-date data on land tenure and landlessness is often difficult, as a country's agricultural census may be outdated, or no longer undertaken as in the case of the Philippines. In most cases, campaigners must rely on secondary materials and their on-the-ground data in their studies. At the same time, it would require a considerable amount of resources (i.e., financial, human and time) to conduct a new survey.

With this in mind, the initial action proposed for the Land Watch Asia campaign was a set of country mapping studies, which could both provide relevant data to inform regional campaign strategies and an activity around which campaign organizing and planning can may take place. As proposed, the process has three objectives:

1. Review the policy and legal environment on access to land and tenurial security
2. Inventory the campaign engagements of social movements and civil society on land issues
3. Identify opportunities in effectively responding to issues and gaps on access to land and tenurial security.

Figure 1: LANDWATCH Proposed Campaign Framework



The proposed mapping study outline included four main areas: (a) legal framework, (b) status of land access, (c) assessment of key actors and (d) opportunities in advancing land access. The first section defines the laws and categories of ownership; efforts at land distribution; and the implementation of these laws and programs. The second area reflects existing statistics and major developments over a certain period, as well as assessments of the situation from the perspectives of government and civil society organizations. The third section identifies actors, primarily within the government, donor agencies, civil society organizations and other social movements. The final part addresses strategies and spaces which can allow activists in facilitating land rights.

Discussion of the proposed study outline raised a number of comments and recommendations:

- Land issues must be appreciated in relation to other social issues and take into account recent changes and trends, such as the impacts on land tenure by globalization processes. This includes the impact of international financial institutions and donor policies.
- While the focus is on access to land, this may include access to other land-based resources (such as forest resources or water), depending on their country context.
- In making links between rights/tenure and land use, the mapping studies should focus on production and consumption patterns rather than income, and account for a variety of different land-based livelihood patterns (i.e., sedentary farming, shifting cultivation, pastoralism).
- In tracking government's commitments, the studies should not only map out national laws and regulations, but also international commitments related to land that have been taken and the extent to which with these are complied.
- While there may be value in assessing the perspectives of government agencies and making an inventory of what data collection is being undertaken, the studies should also consider that government data is often unreliable or out of date.
- Conflicts are a key issue in all the countries; assessments should consider not only the conflict resolution mechanisms that are in place (or whether any are in place) but also track the actors involved and identify roots of land-related conflicts.

Following the introductory discussion of the proposed outline, participants broke into two breakout groups to consider in more detail whether and how the mapping study could be applied in their work. The groups, one of which focused on South Asia and the other on Southeast Asia, addressed: (a) the proposed content of the outlines, and (b) processes that would be relevant in support of existing national campaigns.

The recommendations and agreements from the Southeast Asian workshop group were:

- In terms of legal framework, the country’s compliance with their international commitments should be considered.
- Specify sectors affected by land issues depending on the country context, e.g., women and indigenous peoples.
- Laws should be assessed not in terms of “effectiveness” but rather in terms of their “level of implementation.”
- Include an assessment of the contribution and impact of media and academic institutions in the process of facilitating access to land.
- Link access to land with poverty and development, as well as emerging developments such as land-related concessions and free trade agreements.
- In terms of key actors, include those which are blocking peoples’ right to land.
- Identify key conditions for secure access to land, particularly in the framework agrarian reform.

The group also proposed the following schedule of tasks:

	Process	Who/ When
Legal Framework	Secondary data gathering	5 months
Status of Access to land and Tenurial Security	Secondary data-gathering Validation: FGDs/ consultations	April to August 2007
Assessment of Key Actors	Consultations	
Key Opportunities	CSO Consensus-building	
Final draft		Sept to Nov 2007
		Dec 2007 to Jan 2008
In one meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate steps 1, 2, 3 • Build consensus for 4 (policy at national, policy at regional, consultation at regional paper) 		

The participants in the group affirmed the relationship between the Land Watch Asia campaign and national campaigns. In terms of its value-added, Cambodian participants considered the study as an entry point to organizing policy-oriented campaigns. For Indonesian participants, the study was seen as a tool to build coalitions and consensus among agrarian reform advocates, indigenous peoples’ movement and environmentalists. In the Philippines, the study was seen as a means to influence the legislative agenda

related to issues such as CARP, IPRA, and mining and fisheries laws, which may also contribute to mechanisms for addressing land conflicts.

The main recommendations from the South Asia workshop group were:

- Include assessment of “supranationals” such as UN bodies (e.g., FAO), other intergovernmental platforms (e.g., WTO) and transnational corporations.
- The parameters of the study should be expanded to account for lands used for grazing and other forms of common property. Land-use practices should also be identified.

In addition to developing sounder baseline information, the group identified opportunities to use the mapping study process to achieve other organizational goals: (a) alliance-building and strengthening of networks partnerships, (b) information-sharing on best practices, (c) mainstreaming of the use of communication tools, (d) organizing solidarity actions and (e) exploring potential targeting of regional forums such as SAARC.

Participants from Bangladesh proposed that campaign actions focus on reforming the women’s inheritance law and gaining state recognition of customary rights. In India, basic information is not yet available, so there is a need to establish links with government line agencies first. The study would be better conducted at the state-level, and could be used to develop relations across state-level campaigns, and to develop mechanisms for managing land conflict. Participants from Nepal felt that the study can contribute to the policy discourse and strengthen national land rights campaigns.

Based on the recommendations made in the introductory discussion and the group workshops, the study outline was revised and presented again to the participants. A summary of this final outline follows.

Section 1: Status of access to land and tenure security

- Existing data, particularly on land distribution and equity
- Data on relations between land access and poverty, peace and development
- Major developments, issues and trends that are affecting land access
- Best practices in land access and tenure security
- Overall perspectives from government, civil society, other key actors

Section 2: Legal framework related to land access and tenure security

- Legal framework that defines ownership, control and access to land
- Efforts at land redistribution and/or tenure reform. Particular attention to:
 - Recognition of customary rights
 - Whether/how concerns of marginalized groups, e.g., farmers, forest communities, women, lower castes and ethnic minorities, are addressed
- Extent to which laws and reforms are implemented
- Other laws or policies that affect land access by the poor
- International and bilateral commitments related to, or affecting, land access and tenure security

Section 3: Assessment of key actors: how they facilitate or impede access to land

- Government
- Political parties
- Donors and international agencies
- Private sector
- Civil society and social movement
- Lessons from different initiatives and interventions

Section 4: Opportunities and strategies to improve land access and tenure security

- Necessary conditions or changes for improved land access
- Strategic linkages and alliances needed to influence policies and implementation
- Specific forums, processes or other opportunities to strengthen land rights

This final version was presented and approved on the third day of the planning meeting, following which country focal points for the mapping studies were identified. The following organizations took on the responsibility of facilitating the country studies:

- Bangladesh – ALRD with the support of SEHD
- Cambodia – Star Kampuchea and NGO Forum on Cambodia (LAND network)
- India – Ekta Parishad will take lead the process, with AVARD and SARRA possibly contributing cases, focusing on a select number of states.
- Indonesia – KPA with the support of Bina Desa
- Nepal – CSRC with the support of FECOFUND. The former would focus on agricultural lands, and the latter on forestry and common property.
- Philippines – PhilDHRRA and ANGOC
- Regional institutions and processes – ANGOC

As a number of participants raised in discussion of the proposal, ANGOC stressed that the process of drafting the paper should involve consensus-building among civil society and social movement, so that the study itself can be an organizing tool as well as a way to generate useful and more comprehensive data for use in campaigns. Given the recommendations for the Land Watch campaign to give attention to cross-border trends and institutions, a regional mapping study was added to the six country studies.

Information Networking Component

In order to increase knowledge on land access and tenure security, and their relationship to poverty reduction, peace-building and sustainable development, regular information sharing is needed. This component is built in as an essential feature of Land Watch Asia, including regular contribution of news, analysis and other land-related information from participating organizations.

As part of the information networking component, participants agreed that Land Watch should maintain a group website, which would include the following among its content:

- Updates on the formulation of Land Watch country paper
- Policies and legislations related to access to land and resource tenure
- Statements, petitions and other advocacy documents
- Updates on specific land rights cases
- News coverage of land access and tenure issues
- Photographs, video clips and other knowledge products
- Campaign materials and tools, (e.g., techniques for mapping, conflict resolution, etc.)
- Directory of advocates and practitioners

It was agreed that participating organizations should submit articles on a quarterly basis. A Land Watch Asia blog website has been created, and is in the process of being linked to the ANGOC website so that participants can upload their documents directly. In the meantime, participating organizations could send their articles electronically to ANGOC. It was recognized that due to varying information technology capacities among participants and other national organizations, ANGOC would continue to manage the technical aspects of the website.

Regional Campaign Component

In the remaining sessions of the planning meeting, the discussion returned to the question of how participating organizations could work together at the regional level, as part of an Asia-wide campaign to improve tenure security and land access by poor men and women. One related element of this discussion was how Land Watch Asia as a regional campaign would be coordinated effectively with the national campaigns that participating organizations and others are pursuing.

As part of this discussion session, participants considered the experience of Land Net West Africa in linking national and regional campaigns around land rights. In many parts of West Africa, land rights are managed by local customary institutions and the demand for a decentralized approach to land governance is quite strong. Public debate over land tenure and land access is most easily and clearly perceived at the local level. National campaigns and alliances tend to form in order to bring these local sentiments to bear on national policy processes.

Similar to the case of the Andean region that was discussed earlier in the meeting, national land rights campaigns in West Africa face the trend of sub-regional and regional integration, particularly among Francophone countries. While every West African country faces its own specific land-related issues, they also share common issues which can – and, increasingly, must – be addressed through cooperation, such as the role of regional intergovernmental institutions in setting the direction for national laws and policies.

These issues have been raised through various networks, but yet to be addressed thoroughly in a collective way. One sub-regional activity that Land Net West Africa has been a comparative study, similar to the mapping studies proposed for Land Watch Asia, as a starting point for capacity-building and overcoming language barriers between Francophone and Anglophone organizations. In this sense, the value-added of a regional campaign lies in strengthening of one's own analysis and perspective, consolidating experience held by organizations throughout the region, and supporting capacity-building activities across borders. Regional networking around campaigns has also encouraged greater openness in some international agencies to address land access as a key development priority for the region.

The subsequent discussion among the Asian participants identified gaps which Land Watch Asia campaign can fill, both in terms of (a) engaging regional institutions and process and (b) supporting national campaigns through the work of a regional network. The recommendations from this discussion were as follows:

1. Regional Support to National Campaigns

- Establish a Land Watch Asia mechanism through which organizations can assist each other when facing threats or harassment, e.g., if their own local members or staff are arrested.
- Increase the exchange information on comparative policies and legal frameworks, and on lessons from reform campaigns throughout the region.
- Demonstrate support for direct actions, e.g., demonstrations and mass marches in support of people's land rights.
- Exchange practical information and training tips on land-related organizing tools, such as community-based mapping and demarcation of ancestral territories.

2. Campaigns via Regional Institutions and Forums

- Increase the visibility of land rights on the agendas of regional and sub-regional bodies, including through participation in parallel civil society forums (e.g., Peoples' SAARC); a review of the Asian Development Bank's policies and programs was proposed as part of this effort, as was working with the ADB to establish benchmarks regarding secure tenure and access to land by the poor.
- Use regional forums to advocate for greater accountability by governments, e.g., greater transparency, access to information, and implementation of international commitments.

- Address the impact of cross-border trade and investment, including that coming from within Asia (e.g., companies from China, India, Indonesia and Japan) and from outside the region; this could include focus on specific land-based sectors, such as mining, which are impacting people's land rights and tenure security
- Synthesize data and analysis on land conflicts, e.g., through regional harmonization of national land conflict databases

3. *Links with International Campaigns and Institutions*

- Work collectively to increase visibility to land rights as part of global advocacy windows, such as World Food Day, and at global forums.
- Undertake a media campaign on land rights to raise public visibility on these issues
- Monitor and assess the policies, activities and project development processes of international and donor agencies, particularly intergovernmental bodies such as FAO and IFAD that have mandates to strengthen land tenure and improve land access by the poor

Of these recommendations, the one for which immediate action was most strategic was the work to engage the ADB on its policies and programs, as they relate to and affect the land rights of poor families and communities. Groundwork toward this effort will be incorporated into the regional mapping study that ANGOC will lead, followed by a more thorough assessment of the ADB's policies and programs as related to land rights and agrarian reform. Land Watch Asia will develop case studies of specific experiences in engaging ADB at the country level on this issue, which will form the basis for a regional forum, targeted for 2008, to discuss the findings of the studies. Following the results of the various country studies, Land Watch Asia will define more specifically other elements of its regional strategy, drawing on the other recommendations above.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

As a guiding principle, the participants approved the over-all framework of Land Watch Asia campaign and identified the country focal points (CFPs). To move the process forward, the CFPs upon return to their respective countries, shall consult with other groups and then formulate their respective work plan and budget to ANGOC. The CFPs will likewise further refine the outline of the paper to reflect the context and specificities of the country. Henceforth, ANGOC shall review and subsequently prepare the administrative documents to facilitate support to the processes that will be undertaken by the CFPs.

ANGOC will facilitate the flow of information to and from the members of Land Watch Asia. Based upon the agreement that members shall share quarterly updates on campaign activities, land policies, case studies and other relevant materials via an electronic platform, an electronic news bulletin may be prepared by ANGOC. Sample logos of Land Watch Asia will likewise be prepared by ANGOC which will be shared to the members for selection.

ANGOC shall pursue its dialogue with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in conducting a mapping of institutional policies and programs related to land access and agrarian reform. This mapping study will be complemented by the ongoing efforts of the International Land Coalition (i.e., review of land policies of intergovernmental institutions) and drafting case studies of specific projects in relation to access to land. For the latter, ANGOC shall develop the outline as a guide for the conduct of research by the Land Watch Asia members.

Linkages with international campaigns and events will be further explored and planned accordingly. For instance, similar efforts on monitoring land issues will be undertaken by members and partners of International Land Coalition (ILC) in Latin America and Africa. Land Watch Asia will thus share its experiences on the campaign with the other regions.

Efforts will be undertaken by ILC and ANGOC to explore and possibly link the Land Watch Asia members to the country processes of the intergovernmental organizational members of ILC.

A regional dialogue shall be organized around the first quarter of 2008. Results of the various studies will be presented vis-à-vis the Asian Development Bank. Land Watch Asia will optimize such opportunity to discuss on the next phase of the Campaign.