



Cambodia



Meeting on women's land rights in Anglong Thnout Commune, Krokor District, Pursat Province.
Photo by STAR Kampuchea

Condensed from Scoping Study on Women's Land Rights in Cambodia 2013 by STAR Kampuchea. For more details of the study, contact: star-director@starkampuchea.org.kh.

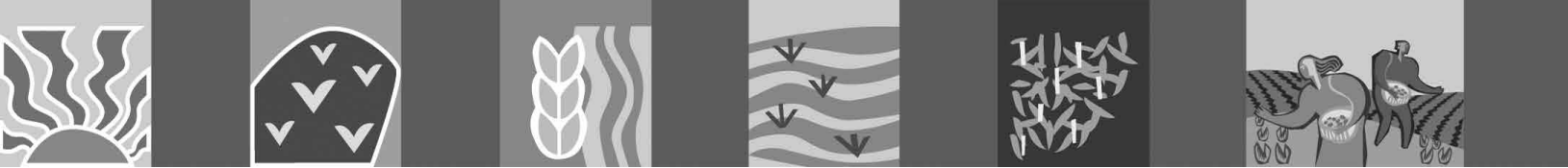
Knowing exactly the position that women in Cambodia occupy in terms of women's access to land and natural resources is a daunting challenge. This is primarily because of the lack of reliable and accurate information.

There are precious few studies or statistics that focus on gender realities in terms of land ownership, thus severely limiting informed discourse on women's land rights, their participation in communal life, their representation, the challenges they face, and factors hampering their access to and use of land.

Despite these constraints, this paper still seeks to present available information on these issues in an attempt to assess the extent to which women in Cambodia exercise their rights over land.

Status of women's land rights

It was not until a decade after the Khmer Rouge was ousted that private ownership of land was recognized. The first real change took place in 1992 when a Land Law was passed, allowing Cambodian nationals to own and transfer land. Changes continued throughout the 1990s, thereby increasing private land ownership in the larger towns, especially in the capital of Phnom Penh.



Then in 2001, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) improved the Land Law and affirmed private ownership of land. The new 2001 Land Law set in place a framework allowing individuals to register their land and have their ownership recognized.

The situation continues to improve, but the task of registering land in Cambodia is a complex and challenging undertaking, especially as the majority of land ownership documentation has been destroyed or is insufficient.

The establishment of the Land Law in 2001 led to the passage of a number of regulations that provided the legal framework for land registration and set out the roles and responsibilities of Cambodia's cadastral authorities.

For more than a decade, the Cambodian government, with support from its development partners, has been working to develop the country's land administration capacities, with the aim of eventually registering all of Cambodia's land parcels.

The rationale behind this is that, by formalizing and documenting ownership, land tenure security will increase, which will in turn reduce poverty by improving access to credit, developing a functioning land market, and increasing investment.

Systematic land registration (SLR) was initially conducted under the donor-funded Land Management and Administration Project (LMAP), which originally focused on 10 provinces and the capital, Phnom Penh. This project has since ended but SLR continues and is now active in 15 of Cambodia's 24 provinces, plus Phnom Penh.

SLR involves identifying a specific area for land registration, after which land registration

teams (LRTs) conduct a coordinated survey and demarcation, land claims are adjudicated, and land title certificates are finally issued.

Cambodia's land registration program has had considerable success. Some 108,000 systematic land titles were distributed in 2011 alone. By 2012, Canada helped the Royal Government of Cambodia issue nearly two million land titles.

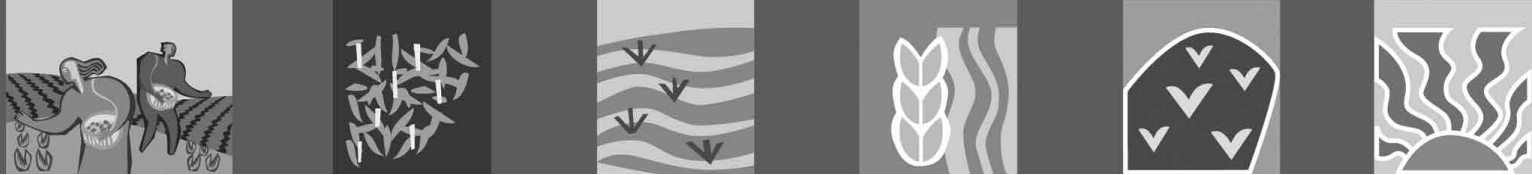
Land ownership, however, is concentrated in the hands of a very small elite, which emerged as the new ruling class after years of civil war, causing deep social rifts in the population of Cambodia.

A mere 1% of the population owns between 20% and 30% of the arable land of the entire country, whereas the percentage of landless households who own no farm land has increased from 13% in 1997 to 30% in 2012.

The RGC claims to recognize the important role of women in the unpaid sector of the economy. Such recognition means little, however, since economic and social benefits are not afforded to these workers. Women in the unpaid sector do not have access to medical care, maternity leave, and other basic rights under the labor law.

The state has promised to "promote economic development in all sectors and remote areas," and yet there are many women living in rural areas who have had little to no opportunity to improve their economic wellbeing due to constraints from home and lack of training, education, and skills" (NGO-CEDAW, 2013).

One fact which needs particular attention is that, in conservative Cambodia, about 20% of all land titles are registered by single women in contrast to only 5% by single men. The majority is registered with couples (70%). There are no research results



available which verify this rather surprising fact, thus leaving room for speculation.

One possible explanation could be the high number of widows after decades of civil unrest during and after the years of the Khmer Rouge regime. Another could be that women find it much harder than men to remarry after they are widowed or separated, due to entrenched beliefs which tend to blame women for a failed relationship or even the death of a husband.

Another fact, though not widely discussed in literature, is that wealthy and influential men in public positions (e.g., government officials) hide their accumulated wealth under the names of their wives, sisters, etc.

A Land Monitoring Report (STAR Kampuchea and Sothnath, 2011) states that the “majority of the land certificates were issued for land in the rural areas. Disaggregated figures available from RGC (2010) data indicates that approximately 75% of the titles were issued for rural land parcels. The rest (25%) were issued for land in urban area.”

“With regard to types of ownership over the land, the lands that were registered as shared properties of couples occupied 70% of the issued titles, followed by 20% registered as properties owned by women. Other (5%) owned by men and the rest (5%) owned by monasteries” (STAR Kampuchea and Sothath, 2011).

Only about 20% of the land in Cambodia is owned by private persons, while the majority (80%) or about 14.5 million hectares (ha) is owned by the state. The latter have mostly been turned into long-term Economic Land Concessions (ELCs), which are usually owned by conglomerates of Cambodian and foreign investors.

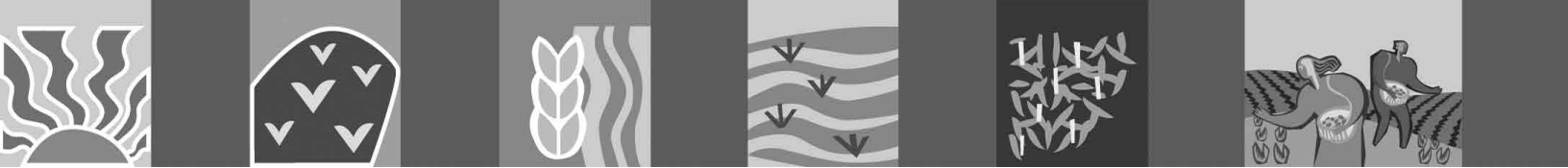
“In general, there is limited information, mainly published by NGOs and foundations, about the land-rights situation for women in the country.”

In terms of land access, the latest data show that the proportion of Cambodians who own or operate agricultural lands remained unchanged at 74% between 2004 and 2007. Also, the poorest quintile of the population in Cambodia had better access to agricultural lands over 2004-2007. In 2007, 89% of the poorest quintile owned or operated agricultural lands, representing a 6-percentage point increase from that in 2004.

In contrast, the data show that the proportion of the richest quintile having access to agricultural lands fell by 9 percentage points from 48% in 2004 to 39% in 2007 (STAR Kampuchea and Sothath, 2011).

In general, there is limited information, mainly published by NGOs and foundations, about the land-rights situation for women in the country. Though a wealth of literature on development in Cambodia in general is available, these papers usually provide only scarce information on the gender-specific aspects of this burning issue of land rights.

It is striking that NGO documents as recently as 2011 do not make even a single mention of the word “women”, or at best contain a typically short paragraph referring to the vulnerable groups: women, children, and indigenous peoples, who together constitute more than half of Cambodia’s population.



Legal framework

International agreements have repeatedly reiterated the importance of women's land and property rights, and one of the most important is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which underscores rural women's rights to equal treatment in land and agrarian reform processes. Cambodia ratified CEDAW in 1992 and the Optional Protocol in 2010. But while Cambodia ratified the treaty formally, implementation has remained slow until very recently.

In February 2013, the Cambodian NGO-CEDAW Committee, which monitors the government's implementation of CEDAW, reported at a UN CEDAW meeting on the situation of women, especially those from indigenous communities. The report said that, as of December 2012, about 2.66 million ha of land had been granted to or reserved for private companies, representing a 16.7% increase from 2011, despite a moratorium on further concessions declared in May 2012.

Although the government has ramped up its program of individually-owned land, it has proceeded very slowly and many indigenous communities who have requested titles face extreme pressure and conflict with local authorities. This has a disproportionate effect on women in a number of ways.

Local communities report increased gender-based violence against women from private company workers. In addition, individual land titling increases pressure to move away from traditional sustainable methods of agriculture. It also reduces cooperation and solidarity in indigenous communities. Land disputes increased sharply in 2012, with women often at the forefront of

protests and suffering abuse and imprisonment alongside loss of land and livelihoods.¹

Rights entrenched in the Cambodian Constitution

The Constitution, as adopted in 1993, provides, among others, that men and women are equally entitled to own property.

Unfortunately, while the Constitution states that men and women are equal in all fields, the *Chbab Srey*, the traditional code of conduct for women, reinforces the belief in women's inferior status within the family, thus promoting inequality.

The *Chbab Srey* is a written, customary law dating back centuries. Although it has never been turned into official law, its influence on Cambodian society remains deeply rooted.

The women's code *Chbab Srey* explicitly assigns a lower status to women, prohibits them from voicing opinions, and advises them at all times to respect and obey their husbands and avoid embarrassing their families.

Chbab Srey used to be taught in schools, but in 2007, it was pulled from the schools' curriculum due to efforts by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Yet, for many women, its admonitions still run deep in Cambodian culture, thus affecting their fight for their rights.

Reports state, for example, that 45% of women are illiterate (70% are functionally illiterate); only 16% of girls are enrolled in lower secondary school (grades 7-9); only 5% of girls are enrolled in upper secondary school; only 30% of upper secondary school students are female; only 20%

¹ Cambodian NGO-CEDAW Committee Submission to pre-session working group on CEDAW, Feb 2013



Women’s participation in Cambodia: quick facts and figures

	%
Females who are illiterate	45%; (functional illiteracy is at 70%) ^a
Females who are enrolled in lower secondary school (grades 7-9)	16% ^b
Females enrolled in upper secondary school	5% ^c
National Assembly members who are female	10% ^d
Percentage of the female workforce that is paid	6% ^e
Judges who are female	7% ^f
Females who have suffered physical domestic violence	23% ^g

Sources: as cited from UNIFEM, WB, ADB, UNDP and DFID/UK. 2004. *A Fair Share for Women: Cambodia Gender Assessment*. Author. Phnom Penh, ISBN:1-932827-00-5

^a UNDP/UNESCO, 2000

^b EMIS, 2001/2002 and Department of Higher Education, MoEYS

^c Ibid

^d Media Business Network, 2003

^e CSES, 1999

^f Data from Ministry of Interior and FUNCICEP’s websites

^g CDHS, 2000

of university graduates are women; only 10% of National Assembly members are women; only 6% of the female workforce is paid; only 8% of Commune Council members are women; only 7% of judges are women; and 23% of women have suffered physical domestic abuse.

A 2004 USAID study reports that limited awareness of their rights – coupled with poor access to legal aid and advice – makes women more vulnerable in contractual affairs, including when others make claims on their land (SIGI, nd). No valid data exists on Cambodian women’s awareness of their land rights.

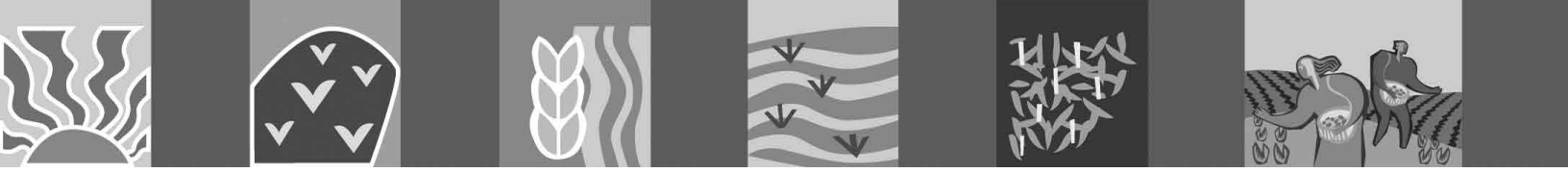
As for the 2001 Land Law, it provides for joint land titles for husbands and wives. In practice, however, such rights are not recognized due to traditional rules that consider women as subordinates in the family. As a matter of fact, women often need their husbands’ permission to include their names on land titles. And while the law says that property cannot be sold without

the consent of a co-owner, men have proceeded to sell land without their wives’ consent. Married women also usually leave all decisions related to property to their husbands and do not claim their right to be a shareholder of joint property. As a result, when a divorce occurs, women lose their rights to joint property (FAO, 2009).

New Land Law, 2001

This law aims to overhaul the distribution and management of land as well as to protect property rights. It seeks to determine the regime of ownership for immovable properties “for the purpose of guaranteeing the rights of ownership and other rights related to immovable property, according to the provisions of the 1993 Constitution.”

Women’s property and use rights in personal laws The Marriage and Family Law, 1989, provides, among others, that men and women are equal in all aspects of the family and have equal rights



Protesters appealed for Prime Minister Hun Sen to take action in the illegal resettlement
Photo by the NGO Forum

to use, obtain benefits from, and manage joint property.

But according to the Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW (NGO-CEDAW) Shadow Report, from 6 September 2013, “The Cambodian law on Marriage and Family has many discriminatory clauses deeming women unequal to men. Women have unequal property rights in Cambodia.

Although Article 70 of the Marriage and Family law permits women to inherit property after divorce, it is common, however, for there to be joint ownership of land, and sometimes without the woman’s knowledge, her husband’s name will be added to the land title, claiming primary ownership to the property after the marriage has been dissolved” (NGO-CEDAW, 2013).

Indigenous land rights

There are approximately 24 groups of indigenous peoples in Cambodia and their formal recognition is found in the Land Law of 2001. However, there are no available studies on women’s land rights in Cambodia that delve into common ownership of land, forests, and water bodies in IP communities.

Best practices

There is insufficient credible information available to determine “best practices” in Cambodia for an extensive topic like women’s land rights, especially indigenous women’s rights.

A few groundbreaking studies (e.g., by the German Development Agency or GIZ or by the Böll Foundation) have been conducted. However, since these are mainly case studies, it is not



advisable to generalize their findings for the entire country.

Trends

One major contributing factor to the recent increase in land conflicts is the growing issuance of ELCs, which are long-term leases, usually for 99 years, over state property. ELCs are purportedly intended to promote industrial agriculture development.

Information about lease terms and negotiations, however, as well as information about estimated returns to the public or expected job growth as a result of the concessions, is rarely if ever disclosed or discussed. There is a comprehensive lack of transparency surrounding these potentially highly lucrative leases for private enterprise.

“As of February 2012, the government has leased at least 2 million ha of land to private companies under its current concession schemes. Approximately 800,000 ha were awarded in just 2011. This stunning increase in ELCs has left relatively little arable land in Cambodia unfettered by long-term leases to private companies” (LICADHO, 2012).

In its presentation, the Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW stated that “Current land-grabbing trends have a disproportionately negative effect on women. Often times, when a family loses their land, the husband will stay in the city in order to find work while his family is sent to a relocation site. Women are then victimized twice, losing first their home and land, and second their husband and provider. Women are left vulnerable to sexual violence and increased rates of alcoholism. The RGC concludes that, based on its programs, the situation for rural women will be improved gradually, but includes no goals as

far as dates to complete this improvement, and no process for evaluation or monitoring” (NGO-CEDAW, 2013).

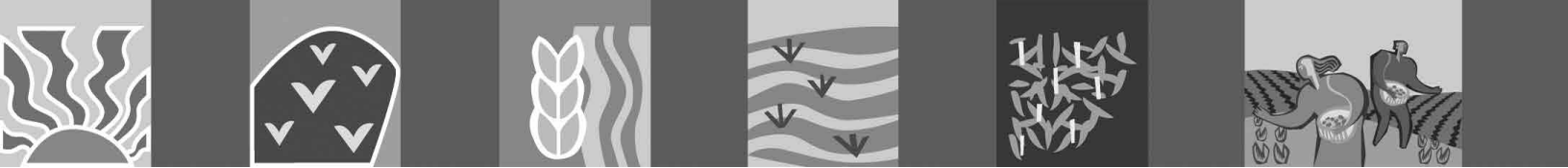
Indigenous women’s land rights

For indigenous women, the biggest challenge confronting them stems from forced displacement of communities from their lands because of environmental degradation, and natural resource depletion due to widespread land grabbing. Cambodia has seen an epidemic of large-scale land allocation deals to private interests, in the form of economic land concessions for agri-industrial, mining, and hydro-electric production purposes. These projects have led to systematic violations against the individual and collective rights of the affected communities such as forced relocation, threats and harassments against protesting indigenous peoples, and loss of livelihood among others (NGO-CEDAW, 2013).

Indigenous minorities are rapidly being displaced from their ancestral lands in Cambodia’s uplands as a result of government-supported lucrative activities, like the granting of ELCs, mining concessions, etc. with hardly any regulation.

Insufficient implementation of the Land Law

“The past couple of years have seen a marked deterioration of the human rights landscape in Cambodia. The issuance of long-term, large-scale land leases has accelerated significantly, while the safeguards expressly provided for in Cambodian land laws have continued to be almost entirely ignored. Human rights defenders have been targeted for harassment, threats, unjustified criminal charges and violence, particularly when their activism has been related to land rights” (Schueller, 2013).



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Assessment of the key actors promoting or impeding women’s land rights

The Cambodian Minister of Women’s Affairs, Ms. Ing Kantha Phavi, has established her ministry as a champion of advancement and progress for women. However, given the cultural and political environment in Cambodian society, where the ruling party has been dominated by men for more than three decades, progress is slow in the field of politics.

But the same is true for other Cambodian political parties, meaning that women are by far under-represented in the political landscape.

Ministries and agencies responsible for the implementation of land-related laws and regulations, like the Cadastral Commission, which was set up in 2002 as a dispute resolution mechanism, are often inefficient because of bureaucracy and corruption or are hampered by conflicts of interest.

NGOs have widely taken on the responsibility, partly in response to donor requirements, to promote equality of women in many sectors. But

even in this sector inequalities remain and need to be addressed.

The special focus on women’s land rights is still in its infancy and the demand for it needs to be addressed more adequately, promoting equally the personal or common land-rights of both Khmer women and indigenous women.

In Cambodia today land issues, especially land grabbing, are red-hot topics/major concerns which cannot be tackled by only one player – not by civil society organizations, by the donor community, by a single ministry, nor by the opposition party alone.

Government agencies

The Cadastral Commission for the Resolution of Land Disputes was established in 2002 under the Ministry of Land. One of its main duties is to investigate and resolve land disputes over unregistered land. Disputes may be transferred to the courts if the disputing parties are not satisfied with the ruling of the Cadastral Commission. However, due to the massive increase in land disputes in recent years and the inability of the Cadastral Commission and the courts to resolve them, the government established the National Authority for the Resolution of Land Disputes (NARLD) in 2006. The NARLD is mandated to take up cases or complaints that are beyond the jurisdiction of the National Cadastral Commission.

The Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction is responsible for land management and cadastral affairs. The Ministry’s responsibilities include: the development of land policy, land registration, distribution and administration of land titling, including oversight of the granting of social concessions.



The provincial and municipal departments of land management are responsible for carrying out at the local level the duties of registration, distribution, and administration of titles.

The provincial and municipal cadastral offices are responsible for conducting surveys in coordination with other local authorities, maintaining the Land Register, updating the Register on a regular basis under the supervision of the Central Cadastral Administration, and maintaining documents and providing information to any person who requests information.

Political parties

Effectively Cambodia has been governed for more than three decades by one ruling party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). In the parliament elections in July 2013, the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP) emerged as a strengthened opposition, taking on the role as the people's advocate and remaining in boycott of the parliament for allegedly flawed elections.

Local government

The provincial and municipal departments play a key role in the implementation of the SLR process. At the outset they conduct preliminary assessments on areas yet to be adjudicated and advise the Governor on selecting adjudication areas. LRTs report to their respective departments of land management.

The SLR process is heavily dependent on the support and cooperation of the local authorities. Local officials will indicate village and commune boundaries to LRTs and provide demographic data. They also provide support to the LRTs during the adjudication process and assist households in preparing their documentation. Local officials

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help resolve disputes that emerge, and are also represented on the Administrative Committees.

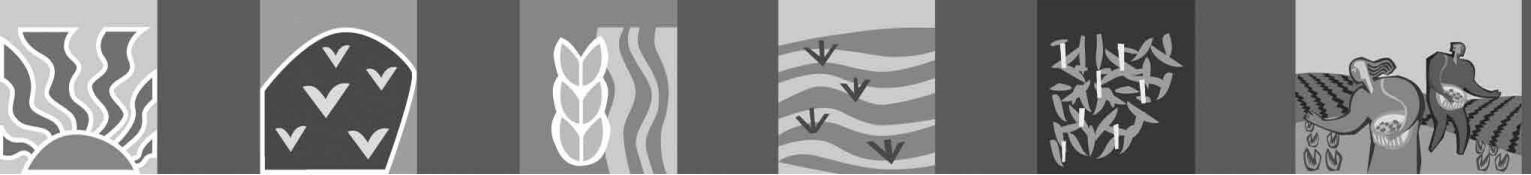
The RGC states that each commune (*sangkat*) should have at least one woman in charge of women's and children's affairs through the Committee for Women and Children. But there is no information to show if this is being implemented.

Donor agencies and international institutions

The available literature on women's land rights in particular is insufficient to make an informed statement on the influence of donors and international agencies on this specific right of women in Cambodia. The World Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Commission, and development agencies, especially GIZ, support the Cambodian government and its agencies in more general areas, such as reducing poverty and landlessness in Cambodia.

Private sector

As members of their communities, women are affected by issues such as land-grabbing which



contribute to significant shifts in the Cambodian economy. Within the framework of this study, however, only general statements can be made on the situation of men and women since there is no available evidence exclusively on the topic of women's land rights.

Civil society and social movements

In Cambodia a movement specifically for women's land rights is still in its infancy. NGOs who work on land rights and natural-resource issues usually do not specifically target the concerns of women. On the other hand, NGOs that focus specifically on women's issues are, in most cases, not involved explicitly in land-rights issues.

Opportunities

Partnerships

There is a general interest among NGOs in establishing partnerships to improve people's access to land. There are initial calls for the formation of regional or local partnerships that prioritize project implementation and specific cases. These would benefit from the effectiveness of lower levels of administration in resolving land disputes.

Risks and challenges

- ***Lack of equitable and effective land partnerships at the national level.*** This has a strong bearing on local level decision-making and should be addressed as a priority concern.
- ***Limits and constraints to progress of land partnerships in Cambodia.*** To promote land partnerships in the country, strong networks and linkages among NGOs need to be established. Dwindling sources of funding are forcing NGOs

to compete rather than cooperate. NGOs need to understand the benefits of networking and partnerships, find ways to support each other, and even to recognize which among them is best able to represent their sector in dealing with the government.

Important information from the government continues to be inaccessible, and the government often ignores recommendations put forward by NGOs. Partnerships with the government have not been effective because the political environment precludes transparency on the part of the state, resulting in a lack of trust between the two groups. The government has little regard for NGOs and often tries to intimidate them and restrict their rights.

A clear example of the government's unwillingness to work with NGOs is its lack of interest in joining the Land Partnership Study that was conducted by STAR Kampuchea and the NGO Forum on Cambodia. These two networks believe that the government's reluctance to participate in the study epitomizes the current problems of lack of communication and trust, which hinder opportunities for partnership on land issues (STAR Kampuchea and Sothath, 2011).

- ***Disharmony between donor and government programs.*** While international donor organizations declare their intent to work in harmony with the government, the uncoordinated donor support for different methods of land use mapping in Cambodia is proof to the contrary.
- ***Political apathy of donors.*** International donor and development organizations are primarily oriented toward providing technical support. The majority of them avoid getting enmeshed in controversial or political issues. They have never used their political clout to pressure the



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government to improve its human rights record, and observers believe they will not begin any time soon, i.e., become advocates against landlessness and root causes of land disputes.

- ***Constraints to strengthening NGO–donor–government relationships.*** Firstly, there is a power imbalance between national NGOs and international development and donor organizations, and this is tilted against the former. Secondly, donors feel that the inherent mistrust between the government and NGOs restricts progress for tripartite cooperation with regard to land and natural resources management, and believe that land distribution would be more effective if the government and the private sector were to team up instead.

Thirdly, donors and development organizations question the legitimacy of NGOs to represent affected communities and vulnerable groups, since the latter do not normally elect which NGOs would speak on their behalf. Donors prefer increased direct representation and organization by affected peoples. Donors are also concerned that a number of NGOs are not genuinely interested in empowering people, but operate more as private enterprises concerned with turning a profit (FAO, 2009).

Media

The Cambodian media remains one of Southeast Asia’s liveliest, although a lack of professional

journalism training and ethics, and intimidation by both government and private interests, limit the Cambodian media’s influence.

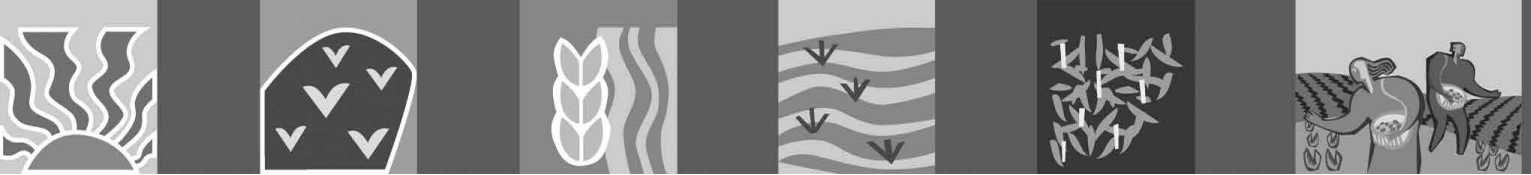
There are more than 100 newspapers in Cambodia. However few maintain regular publication schedules or have paid staff. Many newspapers are run by political parties or individual politicians, so news coverage is often slanted.

Sensitive land issues, cases of land grabbing, and violent evictions are covered by the English language newspapers Cambodia Daily and Phnom Penh Post but this medium is restricted to educated people, major cities, and citizens who can afford to purchase daily newspapers. Even less pricey newspapers have often proven to be too expensive and usually not available in rural areas.

Thus, radio broadcasts are the medium of choice for most Cambodians and are, wherever possible, used by NGOs and other civil society organizations to disseminate information on many topics, land rights and advocacy for natural resource management being among them.

Key opportunities, strategies to advance women’s land rights

In the context of implementing the land law, special efforts must be directed at strengthening women’s access to land ownership and dispute resolution. Legal codes are urgently required that



ensure women's rights to a fair and equitable division of land in the event of divorce and inheritance. Women must also have some legal guarantees that ensure their access to fair and impartial dispute resolution.

One important step in this regard concerns the need for active collaboration between the government and civil society organizations to provide women with information about their rights in the context of the new land law, as well as provide support to enable women to advocate for their rights.

“There needs to be much more awareness raising by donors and civil society organizations to change entrenched cultural norms and to design policies, programs, and projects that benefit especially rural women and ensure women’s participation in land registration processes.”

In terms of promoting women's access to land titling, consideration should be given to implementing preferential rates for land titling fees. This may be especially relevant in cases involving female heads of households. Authorities at all levels of the land-management and dispute-resolution administration should also receive training and instruction about the rights of women with respect to land titling laws.

Strategic linkages civil society can pursue

According to the official count in the 2013 election, the CPP won 68 of the 123 seats in the National Assembly while the CNRP won 55. The CPP maintains that the vote was free and fair and has refused opposition demands for an independent investigation (*Sokheng, 2013*).

The stalemate in the political situation is not likely to be resolved soon and it remains to be seen how the government and the opposition party will be able to shape the development of the country in the next five years.

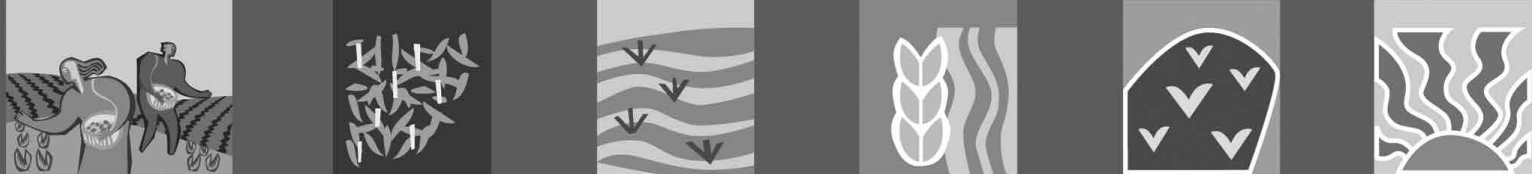
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Opportunities for civil society to pursue land issues

Women in politics after elections in Cambodia in July 2013

The newly elected Cambodian Government has filled only two minister positions with women, one being the Minister of Women's Affairs and the other the Minister of Culture and Fine Arts. This limits women in government positions from having any strong political influence on politically sensitive land issues.

Without a strong group of female lawmakers in the National Assembly: “Decisions are going to be from a male perspective,” said Ms. Khus, chair of the steering committee of the Committee to Promote Women in Politics, adding that such a



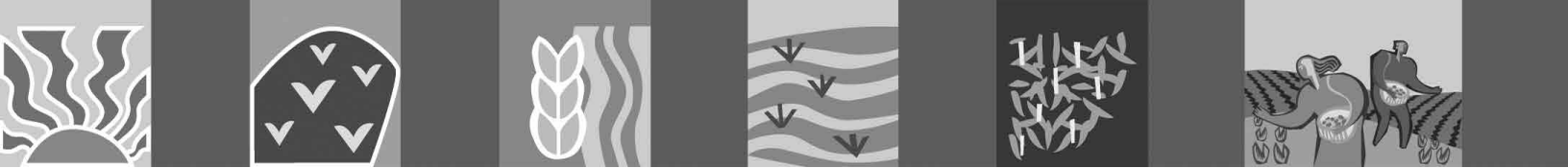
situation would negatively impact areas such as social and community development.

Recommendations to promote secure and equitable access to land for women

Cambodia has the potential to develop its land sector, agriculture, and forests to alleviate poverty. Countless recommendations have been made by national and international NGOs as well as development partners to institute proper land regulations, natural resource laws, an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment law, an Access to Information Law, and last but not least an Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI).

To place women on an equal footing with men in this process requires major cultural changes and a different self-perception of mostly rural women, as well as a change in the attitudes of responsible authorities, NGOs, donors, and the private sector regarding the following:

- Active involvement of community women in social, development, and political programs
- Design of programs and projects in the land sector that are inclusive of women's most pressing issues and cognizant of their perceptions
- Agricultural programs that specifically target women
- Integrity of cadastral titles for women, including land inheritance and succession without unreasonable financial and bureaucratic obstacles
- Cadastral services organized as a One-Stop-Shop (e.g., GIZ pilot-project in Battambang, routine practice in Vietnam)
- Legal aid for vulnerable women, especially women heads of households
- Greater public confidence in the system of land registration and the functions of the cadastral department with regard to women's land rights in particular
- Active government support for small-holders, especially targeting women
- Awareness campaigns about gender justice, and on women's empowerment and inclusion in decision-making processes in terms of land rights on all levels, from communities to the National Assembly
- Access to information especially by rural women, relevant to their specific living conditions and needs
- Standards set by the non-governmental sector to include and empower women in:
 - Land rights campaigns
 - Formal registration of forestry and fishery communities, with women in committees
 - Formal consultation processes on ELCs and Social Land Concessions (SLCs)
 - Negotiations with local and national authorities
 - Legal actions
 - Access to information to encourage greater women's participation
 - Local and national networks of women's groups in the land sector
 - Capacity building, preferably from women for women
 - Collaboration with regional and international partners to address land issues
- Improvement of judicial training for women and recruitment of more women into the judiciary
- Public debate (media and social media) on the portrayal of women and how best to adapt this to the needs of a changing society
- Proper monitoring of progress by national and international agencies (e.g., the UN's CEDAW)
- Effective monitoring of results of gender mainstreaming in Cambodia's National Poverty Reduction Strategy



- Decentralization or deconcentration of government's efforts to be in tune with women's needs, and ensure that they are heard equally in decision-making processes
- Promotion of women-leaders as positive role models to make female leadership an integral part of Cambodian mainstream culture
- Further in-depth research to fully understand the specific land-related problems of Cambodian women and their particular perspectives; with a special focus on indigenous women and their communities and on changing gender perspectives, behaviors, and roles amongst younger Cambodians, both female and male
- Support from ANGOC and the Land Watch Asia Campaign for Cambodian stakeholders in the land sector to help identify and close information gaps in relation to women's land rights, with a specific focus on indigenous women and their roles and rights but also focusing on women from the Cham minority. ■

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For the complete list of references, please contact the author of this study as indicated at the beginning of the article.