



2019  
Annual  
Report

# “Strengthening civil societies and upholding land tenure security for a food-secure Asia”



# **2019 ANGOC ANNUAL REPORT**

**Strengthening civil societies  
and upholding land tenure  
security for a food-secure Asia**



Founded in 1979, the **Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)** is a regional association of national and regional networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development. ANGOC member networks and partners work in 10 Asian countries together with some 3,000 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). ANGOC actively engages in joint field programs and policy discussions with national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and international financial institutions (IFIs).

The complexity of Asian realities and diversity of CSOs highlight the need for a development leadership to service the poor of Asia—providing a forum for articulation of their needs and aspirations as well as expression of Asian values and perspectives.

**ANGOC can be reached at:**

33 Mapagsangguni Street  
Sikatuna Village, Diliman  
1101 Quezon City, Philippines  
P.O. Box 3107, QCCPO 1101, Quezon City, Philippines  
Tel: +63-2 8351 0581 Fax: +63-2 8351 0011  
Email: [angoc@angoc.org](mailto:angoc@angoc.org)  
Website: [www.angoc.org](http://www.angoc.org)

Production team: Nathaniel Don Marquez, Denise Hyacinth Joy Musni, Marianne Jane Naungayan, Timothy Salomon, Joseph Onesa, Lennie Rose Cahusay, Roger Nueva

Layout and design: Joseph Onesa

Cover design: Kazuyoshi Sanada

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## ANGOC Vision Statement

“Vibrant, peaceful, diverse Asian rural communities, living in harmony with nature as stewards of the earth, whose members are able to realize their full human potentials, collectively chart their path to development, provide for their present and future needs, and share equitably the fruits of their labors in community celebrations of Life”

## ANGOC Mission Statement

“ANGOC network will serve as a platform for and enhance capacities of Asian CSOs working on food security and sustainable livelihoods through the promotion of land and resource rights and smallholder agriculture”

## ANGOC Goal Statement

For 2015-2020, ANGOC as a knowledge center shall:

- ⇒ advocate for land and resource rights of the rural poor; and
- ⇒ promote smallholder agriculture towards sustainable food systems and livelihoods

through a broad platform of Asian CSOs (and individuals) that challenges the development agenda, reforms institutions, and fosters the exchange of critical lessons, tools and approaches towards enhanced food security, equitable land rights, effective and responsible governance and sustainable livelihoods.

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# Message of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, and Executive Director

The end of 2019 marks the completion of a decade brimming with opportunities for the advancement of land rights in Asia. As the world slowly recovered from recessions, the food crisis, and massive landgrabs which characterized the 2000s, the world renewed its appreciation for the importance of land rights in the past ten years.

Several noteworthy international instruments have called for the protection and promotion of land rights. These include the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (2011), the *Sustainable Development Goals* (2015), the *International Labor Organization's Revised Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy* (2017), and the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas* (2018).

More recently, the UN Secretary General released a *Guidance Note on The United Nations, Land and Conflict* (2019), which recognizes that land rights issues are at the heart of many sociopolitical conflicts, and directs UN member-States to address such issues.

These developments, are, however coupled by challenges which restrict the translation of these global instruments into realities on the ground. In the past decade, we have also witnessed a new wave of landgrabbing, intensifying land conflicts, contracting space for civil society, and the devastating effects of climate change. Civil society and communities must therefore be equipped and versatile enough to adapt to this evolving landscape.

In 2019, ANGO also celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary. Through several decades, the network has served as a resource hub on land rights and smallholder agriculture, thus enriching and empowering Asian civil society organizations. The past year saw ANGO continue to serve this purpose, through programs and activities that aimed to strengthen land rights movements and campaigns in Asia.

Emphasizing the need to support advocacy with sufficient evidence, ANGO through the Land Watch Asia campaign, undertook several initiatives to monitor land rights with CSOs and communities serving as primary sources. Tools for monitoring harnessing today's technology were also developed and implemented.

ANGO also continued to conduct fora, workshops, and trainings to enhance the knowledge and skills of its participants in areas such as land governance, food security and nutrition, and land data.

Moreover, the network cultivated partnerships with national government agencies and regional organizations, in the course of its efforts to improve land tenure security and food security for farmers, fisherfolk, and indigenous peoples in the region. This is exemplified by the *Regional Workshop on Land Rights and Land Governance* held in Bangkok Thailand last February 2019, where civil society, land agencies, national statistics offices, and intergovernmental organizations, came together to discuss how Asian communities may have full enjoyment of land rights.

In the past year, ANGOC produced a total of 69 knowledge products which cover topics such as land governance, land tenure, food security and nutrition, resource rights, conservation, and indigenous peoples' rights.

ANGOC's achievements in 2019 are its humble contributions to the progressing rights movement. The network also looks forward to the beginning of another decade that would hopefully bring us closer to the goal of achieving secured land rights for all.

Chet Charya  
Chairperson

Jitram Lama  
Vice Chairperson (South Asia)

Iwan Nurdin  
Vice Chairperson (Southeast Asia)

Nathaniel Don Marquez  
Executive Director



## A peek into Asia's land and agriculture status in 2019

The majority of Asian countries is dependent on agriculture operated largely by smallholders or family farms. Small producers typically utilize household labor to work on less than two hectares of farm land. Despite the size of their plots, these farmers produce a significant proportion of countries' food staples such as rice, corn, root crops, and pulses, thus highlighting their important contributions to food security.

Small farms also serve as conservators as they also tend to grow a wider variety of crops and cultivars; these, in turn, serve to increase the resiliency of small farms against pests, diseases, droughts and other stresses. Small farms tend to be more diversified than large farms. They preserve local traditions and food systems, and safeguard food security for local producers, especially marginalized peasants and poor rural households.

Unfortunately, small producers remain stricken by poverty and landlessness. Private land ownership is unsettlingly skewed in most countries, while many smallholders are in the public domain without security of tenure. Meanwhile, large-scale commercial agriculture has retained its allure and has expanded, leading to a global rush to acquire farmlands from overseas.

Since the 1950s, there have been multiple attempts to usher in a more egalitarian distribution of land and to protect the land rights of small producers. However, land reform remains an unfinished task in Asia. In most countries, tenancy reform acts have not been fully implemented, while land redistribution efforts have had limited effectivity. Land reform programs were even reversed in some countries, and had weak implementation in others.



These programs also insufficiently addressed women’s lack of access to land brought on by patriarchy entrenched in religion, culture, and traditions.

Most countries in Asia have existing legislations on the redistribution of public lands, and land registration in support of small farmers and producers – although most of these tenure reforms have become dormant over time due to lack of funding and political will.

On the other hand, based on FAO statistics, Asian governments as compared to other regions in the world have allocated higher percentage of central government spending to agriculture (FAO, 2019).<sup>1</sup> However, whether these spending benefit smallholder farmers is another issue altogether.

The region is also home to 70 percent of the world’s indigenous peoples. Most countries have ratified the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and have legislated forms of protection and recognition for these groups. In many cases though, policies for indigenous peoples do not completely capture the collective nature of their rights.

Meanwhile, conflicts on land and resources continue to increase in coverage and intensity. These conflicts, caused by State enterprises, corporate industries, faulty implementation of policies, and overlapping laws, have resulted to violence against communities and land rights defenders.

There are available mechanisms for smallholders to voice out their grievances and to participate in land governance, though these have still been limited. In some countries, windows for participation consist more of “invited spaces” than established mechanisms.

Despite transparency measures being in place, land records in many countries are still poorly managed and are not easy to access. Moreover, it is difficult for communities to make sense of available data which are often not presented in formats useful for improving land tenure policy.

Civil society has played a huge part in interpreting available information and in cultivating space for the participation of vulnerable and marginalized sectors in land governance. In many cases, CSOs create their own public spaces where community members are freer to communicate their concerns. Civil society organizations such as those in the ANGOC network, have also embarked on several monitoring initiatives that aim to provide information on the state of land rights grounded community perspectives. Civil society serve to narrow the gap between decision-makers and stakeholders on the ground.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/investment/expenditure/en/>

## ANGOC's contribution to pursuing land and resource rights

As the regional convenor of the Land Watch Asia (LWA) campaign, ANGOC has been one of the few regional networks that continue to ensure that access to land, agrarian reform and sustainable development for the rural poor are addressed in national and regional development agendas.

The LWA campaign involves civil society organizations in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

LWA aims to take stock of significant changes in the policy and legal environments; undertake strategic national and regional advocacy activities on access to land; jointly develop approaches and tools; and encourage the sharing of experiences on coalition-building and actions on land rights issues.

Among the key contributions of ANGOC and LWA to land rights in the region include:

- Mainstreamed land rights as human rights, on the premise that respect for people's land rights are crucial to achieving sustainability and prosperity for people and communities. Thus, relationships with national human rights institutions and commissions (NHRIs/ NHRCs) were strengthened in five Asian countries.
- LWA partners examined within their respective country contexts the relevance to land and agriculture of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP BHR). Seen as an added framework and tool that communities can use to defend their rights to land, the UNGP BHR are a set of guidelines that operationalize the UN Framework and further define the key duties and responsibilities of States and business enterprises with regard to business-related human rights abuses.
- Another notable achievement of the LWA was the development of a *Scorecard* as a tool to be used by *communities* to assess *private* investments in land and agriculture at their *initial exploratory stage* or during their initial phase of operations. As public watchdogs, CSOs have been monitoring the impacts of land and agribusiness investments on local communities. As a contribution to enhancing capacities of communities, the tool is an attempt to deliberate on the acceptability of an investment in its initial stages of operation. Noting that developing an effective scorecard system requires a long and thorough consultative process, this tool is not to be seen as a finished product but rather, as a work-in-progress.

- Land conflict monitoring reports were likewise prepared in six Asian countries to highlight the land and human rights violations faced by communities as a result of various challenges: non-implementation of land and agrarian reforms, land grabbing as well as overlapping jurisdiction and tenurial instruments issued by government-land agencies.
- Moving forward, a joint Declaration on Land Rights as Human Rights was agreed upon by CSOs and NHRIs/NHRCs. At the regional level, the Southeast Asian National Human Rights Institution Forum (SEANF) has likewise expressed openness to work with LWA in pursuit of developing national action plans of UNGP BHR and to address the increasing land conflicts in the countries.
- LWA partners also engaged the national statistical offices (NSOs) to talk about developing a methodology and indicators for the sustainable development goal target 1.4.2. As such, country scoping studies were undertaken in eight Asian countries to: a) examine the National Statistical Office (NSO) **institution and system** for gathering land data and reporting on SDG Indicator 1.4.2 under SDG Goal 1, Target 1.4; b) document the **status of land data availability** with NSO on SDG Indicator 1.4.2; and c) explore possible **linkages between the NSO and CSOs** for strengthening land monitoring, particularly on SDG Indicator 1.4.2.
- NSOs expressed openness to continue the discussions with CSOs working on land rights, and on discussions regarding land data and SDG Indicator 1.4.2.
- In 2019, the *Bangkok Declaration on WCARRD @40: Recognize, Defend, and Protect Access to Land, Resources and Tenure Security of the Rural Poor* was recognized and signed by individuals from CSOs, government land agencies, and national statistics offices.

Among the ANGOC members engaged in LWA campaign are the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Community Development Association (CDA), STAR Kampuchea (SK), Association of Voluntary Agencies in Rural Development (AVARD), Ekta Parishad (EP), South Asia for Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA), Bina Desa, Konsorsium Pembaruan Agrarian (KPA), and Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC).

Finally, 59 knowledge products on land rights, rights of IPs, gender equity and land conflicts were produced and published.





## Major Activities undertaken by ANGOC and LWA Campaign

Five major initiatives on securing land and resource rights were undertaken in 2019, two of which were implemented at the regional level with partners from the Land Watch Asia network. The three remaining initiatives were focused on land rights in the Philippines, and were geared towards enhancing indigenous peoples' capacities and their land rights.

### Commitment-Based Initiative 8: Sustainable, Reliable, and Transparent Data and Information toward Responsible Land Governance (CBI 8)

In 2019, ANGOC completed activities for the first phase of the CBI 8 project, which aimed for:

- an expanded LWA campaign where partners shall lobby for the formulation of pro-poor legislation on access to land;
- enhanced capacities in demanding accountability by monitoring the implementation of land laws and programs through evidence-based advocacy and participating in the SDG country reporting processes by engaging the national statistical offices; and,
- contributing to the global initiative of the International Land Coalition (ILC) in defining the country indicators for People-Centered Land Governance.

ANGOC as the convener of the LWA Campaign, led the implementation of this initiative along with CSOs from eight countries: Bangladesh (ALRD, CDA), Cambodia (SK), India (SARRA, FES, EP), Indonesia (KPA), Kyrgyz Republic (KAFLU, NUWUA, RDF), Nepal (CSRC), Pakistan (SCOPE), and the Philippines (AR Now!, CARRD, PAFID, XSF). Through the support of the International Land Coalition (ILC), campaign activities commenced in 2018 – these consisted of engaging National Statistics Offices (NSOs) on reporting information on land tenure and gathering data for the 2018 Land Watch Asia Country Monitoring Reports.

During the first few months of 2019, ANGOC completed three new publications: a) *Scoping Paper on the Readiness of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to Report on SDG Indicator 1.4.2 in Eight Asian Countries*, b) *State of Land Rights and Land Governance in Eight Asian Countries: Forty Years after the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development*, and c) *Asia LandWatch: The PCLG Dashboard Indicators and the Availability of Land Information in Eight Asian Countries*.

The studies on SDG 1.4.2 opened prospects for further CSO-NSO engagement in terms of increasing understanding of land issues; and defining the methodology and indicators in collecting data for SDG Indicator 1.4.2.

CSOs and NSOs ought to work together to improve the quality of land data in Asia which is still plagued by concerns related to completeness of information, standard definitions, proper disaggregation, and access by the basic sectors.

The SDGs offer an opportunity to pursue security of land rights. However, the SDGs by themselves will not lead to any major shifts in land policy and governance without pressure from communities and civil society.

Through the publication on the *State of Land Rights and Land Governance in Asia*, participating CSOs agreed on major recommendations for governments and civil society such as:

- **Formulate comprehensive National Land Use Policies** through broad public consultation and participation. Agricultural lands, prime arable lands, and forests must be protected from conversion to protect smallholder farmers.
- **Promote locally-managed ecosystems**, recognizing the role of local land users in sustainable development and conservation of resources.
- **Fully ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** – i.e., remove expressed reservations on specific provisions which include those that impact on women’s land and inheritance rights.
- **Implement agrarian reforms**. Enact responsive legislations in order to address the sluggishness of past land reforms, and to address deficiencies in agrarian reform policy.
- **Protect the rights of tenants and those without documented tenure or contracts**. In countries where tenancy protection laws already exist, these should be implemented to their full extent, and policies should be reviewed to address factors that impede reform.
- **Provide legal recondition for the land and territorial rights of indigenous peoples**. Constitutional recognition as well as special laws are needed to recognize and protect IP land rights having a retrospective effect.
- **Ensure the integrity of safeguard mechanisms that regulate land investments** by integrating the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP BHR) in land and resource governance.
- **Strengthen local mediation mechanisms**, especially for land conflicts involving civil cases at community level. Conduct capacity building programs for local mediators



- **Strictly implement social and environmental impact assessments, and adherence to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).**
- **Civil society should address the shrinking political and democratic space in their countries** which may be unfolding through subtle, institutional forms – registration requirements, restrictions on foreign funding, investigative inquiries, and others.

A *Regional Workshop on the State of Land Rights and Land Governance in Selected Asian Countries* was convened as culmination of the first phase of the initiative. This event, organized in partnership with the Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) on 14-15 February 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand were able to: a) present the results of the initiative; b) identify key action areas on strengthening land rights and enhancing land governance in the region as articulated in a Declaration; and, c) explore partnerships with other stakeholders in the region. The event was significant as 2019 marked both the 40th anniversary of the World Conference on Agrarian and Rural Development (WCARRD), and ANGO. It was attended by participants from civil society organizations, NSOs, land agencies, and intergovernmental organizations. The regional forum set forth a compelling agenda and strategy towards promoting land rights and people-centered land governance in Asia as encapsulated in the “Bangkok Declaration on WCARRD @40: Recognize, Defend, and Protect Access to Land, Resources and Tenure Security of the Rural Poor.”

### **Commitment-Based Initiative 9-10: Defending Land Rights and Human Rights Defenders (CBI 9-10)**

ANGOC along with partners from ILC-member organizations in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines implemented an initiative which:

- popularized the concept of land rights as human rights through engagement with National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and regional bodies in policy discussions;
- prepared Land Conflict Monitoring Reports in six countries;
- contributed to the popularization of United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP BHR) processes; and,
- undertook the development of a scorecard for assessing prospective private investors in land and agriculture.

After national and regional consultations were completed in 2018, three publications were released in 2019: a) *In Defense of Land Rights: A Monitoring Report on Land Conflicts in Six Asian Countries*; b) *Upholding Land Rights amidst the Land Rush: A situationer on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in selected countries in Asia*; and c) *Regional Workshop Summary Report: Engaging Human Rights Institutions Toward the Promotion of Land Rights as Human Rights*.

The studies mentioned above recommended the recognition and respect for diverse tenure systems including customary, communal, and informal systems. To address land conflicts, governments and CSOs must go to the root causes and work on security of peoples' land rights through agrarian reforms, implementing safeguards for rural folk in business dealings, and addressing overlapping land policies. Governments and businesses on the other hand must adhere to, adopt, and implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Moreover, policies and actions must be in place to protect land rights defenders. Transgressions against human rights of communities and defenders must also be addressed promptly. In this regard, CSOs and NHRIs/NHRCs may work together to monitor land conflicts and to promote the UNGP BHR. Further, these institutions may come up with people-sourced monitoring tools such as the scorecard for business investors for systematic gathering of data and evidence.

The following organizations collaborated with ANGOC through the commitment-based initiative supported by the International Land Coalition (ILC):

- *Bangladesh*: Community Development Association (CDA), Association for the Realisation of Basic Needs (ARBAN);
- *Cambodia*: STAR Kampuchea;
- *India*: Ekta Parishad, Social Development Foundation (SDF);
- *Indonesia*: Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria – Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA);
- *Nepal*: Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC); and,
- *Philippines*: People's Campaign for Agrarian Reform Network, Inc. (AR Now!), Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF).

## Land rights in the Philippines

Following the Philippine general elections in May 2019 and the pronouncement of the Philippine President in July 2019 to complete the implementation of agrarian reform, advocates led by the Peoples' Campaign for Agrarian Reform Network (AR Now!), submitted a letter to the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Secretary Castraciones to discuss plans and activities as follow through to the President's statement. However, no significant progress was realized after the said pronouncement.

In December 2019, a Congress hearing on the proposed Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) was conducted. While it aims to complete the distribution of agricultural lands, it is not clear whether the implementation will be done through the process of completing the remaining/pending Notices of Coverage (NOCs). Hence, CSOs will conduct a review and verification of the provisions of the proposed law.



## Contribution to IP rights in the Philippines

In two related projects, ANGOC also contributed towards strengthening the position of indigenous peoples in calling for the recognition of their land and resource rights over their traditional territories and natural resources. Among the contributions of the ANGOC are:



On Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA), Expanded National Integrated Protected Area System (ENIPAS)

- With the PH ICCA Consortium and the ICCA CSO Working Group, and with the support of Forest Foundation Philippines, ANGOC facilitated the consolidation and articulation of the collective position of indigenous peoples affected by resource governance conflicts with Protected Areas in the Philippines issued to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources through a statement: *“Indigenous Peoples’ Declaration on the Recognition and Respect of Indigenous Governance in Ancestral Domains affected by Protected Areas.”*
- Emanating from recommendations made in the statement, ANGOC together with the PH ICCA Consortium, the Philippine Association for Inter-Cultural Development (PAFID), and the Alternative Law Groups (ALG), lead the formulation and publication of the *“Critique on the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) and its implications on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”* The critique was formally submitted to and adopted by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples to enable them to more effectively defend the position of indigenous peoples affected by Protected Areas in the Philippines.
- With the support of VOICE, ANGOC with the PH ICCA Consortium and the PAFID also engaged with three indigenous communities from the provinces of Mindoro, Aurora, and Bataan to provide an orientation on the ENIPAS and to facilitate the selection of indigenous peoples’ representatives in the Protected Area Management Boards (PAMBs) in their respective localities.

## Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines

Concerns over the food insecurity situation in developing countries are reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030.

Given that land plays an important role in the livelihoods of most people in developing countries, food security and poverty reduction cannot be achieved unless issues of access to land, security of tenure and the capacity to use land productively and in a sustainable manner are addressed.

As such, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is implementing the “Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR)” project through the support Germany’s Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). This project will help achieve the larger goal of ensuring the land and natural resources tenure security of rural smallholder farmers in Uganda, the Philippines and Laos.

Thus, the *“Improving Tenure Security of Smallholder Farmers in Select Areas in the Philippines”* project was developed. It focuses on Bukidnon in Northern Mindanao. ANGOC and the Xavier Science Foundation (XSF) are collaborating on this project that seeks to enhance the land tenure security of about 2,500 families of indigenous peoples in two municipalities in Bukidnon.

Information and data on land and tenure of the IPs were collected and analyzed using the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) as the primary tool. Participatory enumeration was utilized as an approach with the help of 23 IP volunteers (17 females, 6 males; 5 of 23 are youth) who were trained and engaged as enumerators. Boundaries of house, garden, and farm lots were identified, recorded, and indicated in the Certificates of Customary Land Occupancy issued to the IP-beneficiaries.

As of December 2019, the initiative has enumerated 1,958 households, mapping 1,747 house parcels, some 1,888 farm parcels and, 52 garden parcels. Soon after the household enumeration has been done, the encoding in the STDM software process is undertaken. Henceforth, validation by the community members on data generated is observed to ensure accuracy prior to the issuance of the certificate. As of December 2019, a total of 115 certificates of customary land occupancy have been distributed to the IPs in the three organizations.

ANGOC and XSF have also worked together to spur the processing and registration of the Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADTs) of the three organizations, and will continue with such efforts in the succeeding years. According to the members of the target communities, the delineation of their land through participatory enumeration and STDM has contributed in resolving disputes and has enhanced relationships between neighbors in the communities. Community members also developed a deeper appreciation for the importance of their ancestral lands, increasing their motivation to bring their CADT application forward, and discouraging them from selling out their land.

A series of training courses were also carried out by ANGOC and XSF, where participants composed of IP leaders, elders, women, and youth, were re-oriented on land governance, harmonization of government and community plans, indigenous peoples' rights, conflict resolution, and the rights of women and youth. GLTN tools such as the Gender Evaluation Criteria (GEC), Youth and Land Responsiveness Criteria (YLRC), STDM, Tenure Responsive Land Use Planning (TRLUP), and the Continuum of Land Rights were also introduced. Target communities report being equipped with knowledge and skills they may use in effectively defending their rights to their ancestral domain. Participants of the training courses are to echo their learnings from the trainings back to their respective communities.

Through this project, and with the facilitation of ANGOC and XSF, IP communities have also cultivated improved relationships within and among themselves, with other community members, and with the barangay local government units.





## ANGOC's contribution to enhancing smallholder agriculture towards sustainable food systems and livelihoods

In 2019, initiatives under this program further pursued projects and activities on securing land and tenure for small and family farmers towards achieving food security.

ANGOC, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), continued to facilitate the FAO Legislative Advisory Group in the Philippines (FLAG-PH) taking off from its first year of implementation in 2018. Being one of its components, FLAG-PH provided a platform for CSOs and policy-makers to discuss proposed laws related to and may have implications on food security and nutrition – i.e. Right to Food and National Land Use Act (NLUA).



ANGOC, as a member of the working group on Commitment-Based Initiative (CBI) 2 in Asia, has also been involved in the planning for strategies and activities of ILC's CBI on *Strong-scale Farming Systems* in selected countries in Asia for 2019 to 2020. This initiative particularly aims to strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms of the National Committee for Family Farming (NCFF) in each country, and cultivate enabling policy environment for land tenure and sustainable agriculture for family farmers, including women, youth, and elderly at national and regional levels.

Through its annual publication of a World Food Day poster, the ANGOC network has been mainstreaming its position on food security and the important role of smallholder farming, especially in ensuring food security in Asia and the world.

Finally, 10 knowledge products on food security and smallholder agriculture were produced and published.

# Major Activities undertaken by ANGOC in smallholder agriculture towards food security and nutrition

Specific interventions are outlined below:

## 2019 World Food Day Poster

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) released for 2019 the World Food Day Theme: “*Healthy Diets for a #ZeroHunger World*” promoting more of plant-based and fiber-rich diets and less of refined starches, sugar, fats, salt, processed foods, meat, and other animal-sourced products.

Anchored on the above, ANGOC launched its World Food Day Theme: “*Strong Smallholder Farmers for a Healthy, Hunger-Free Asia*” emphasizing the role of smallholder farmers in producing all-natural, locally-grown, and more affordable crops to provide for a healthier and zero-hunger population. The ANGOC network promotes sustainable agriculture which presupposes a holistic, systems approach to agriculture and adopts indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) that store enormous information of biological cycles and demonstrate cultural sensitivity. It should form part of efforts to build a people-centered economy and recognizes the crucial role of women in agricultural production.

## Initiative on Strong Small-Scale Farming Systems

As part of the working group on building strong small-scale farming systems, ANGOC contributed in the shaping of the group’s regional work plan. For 2019-2020, the focus of this working group is the formation and/or strengthening of multi-stakeholder platforms of the National Committee for Family Farming (NCFF) within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF). This initiative shall cover seven countries.

As 2019 covers the initial phase of the project, institutional meetings were organized to clarify the framework and key deliverables of the working group. ANGOC contributed to shaping the agenda of the working group in relation to NCFFs.

Future activities will include meetings with government agencies assigned to UNDF commitments as well as mandated NCFFs in the countries. Networking among CSOs and other stakeholders will also be conducted with a view of building/strengthening a broader platform on family farming.

## **Strengthening the Parliamentary Alliance in the Philippines Towards Achieving Zero Hunger through FAO Legislative Advisory Group in the Philippines (FLAG-PH)**

Taking off from the gains of the FAO Legislative Advisory Group in the Philippines (FLAG-PH) since its launch last January 2018, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) entered into a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the intended outcome of enhancing the partnership between FAO and FLAG-PH members through facilitated stakeholder dialogue on bills relevant to food security and nutrition (FSN) and of following-through with recommendations emanating from policy discussions.

In 2019, FLAG-PH conducted a number of fora among relevant stakeholders on FSN bills (i.e., Right to Food, National Land Use Act, etc.) involving different sectors (such as CSOs, farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, local government units/LGUs, academe).

Other activities included: a) institutional activities aimed at fortifying FLAG-PH such as strategic planning, b) discussions on bills related to food security and nutrition, and c) participation in Congressional hearings.

By the end of 2019, FLAG-PH through the facilitation of ANGOC with FAO's support achieved the following:

- strengthened the organizational set-up of FLAG-PH through the formulation of its vision-mission-goal statements, finalization of organizational framework, approval of its Charter, and refinement of its Sustainability Plan;
- established a viable working relationship with research institutions of both Houses of Congress – the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) for the House of Representatives and the Senate Economic Planning Office (SEPO) for the Senate;
- as a contribution to the food security and nutrition discourse, developed the Food Security Framework through Rural Development and Legislative and Policy Intervention Matrices to assist policymakers in applying the framework and proposing legislations; and,
- provided platforms for discussions on food security and nutrition legislative agenda through the conduct of five workshops involving a total of 148 individuals (71 females, 77 males) from legislative and executive bodies, CSOs and peoples' organizations, media, among others.

With the opening of the 18th Congress of the Philippines, a new set of FLAG-PH members is expected. The newly-elected legislators from the House of Representatives will be serving a term of three (3) years, while the Senators will serve for a period of six (6) years. Some of the former FLAG-PH members already graduated after serving their third term, while others did not obtain seats in the last electoral exercise.

Efforts thus have been made to introduce FLAG-PH to other parliamentarians in the desire of having a more vibrant and participatory crop of FLAG-PH members for this 18th Congress. These activities conducted under this initiative laid the groundwork for the future of FLAG-PH in the Philippines.

### **Campaign for the National Land Use Act in the Philippines**

By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress in June 2019, the National Land Use Act (NLUA) Bill, while passed the Lower House in May 2018, has seen no movement in the Upper House and remained pending in the Senate committee level (Committee on Environment and Natural Resource).

Following the 2019 Philippine general elections in May 2019, various policy makers have refiled the Bill both in the Lower and Upper Houses. As of December 2019, the Bill has been refiled by 16 Congressmen and four Senators.

Apart from the various versions of the Bill refiled in the Houses, the National Land Use Committee (NLUC) of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) drafted a version (adopted by the NEDA Board in July 2019) planned for endorsement and adoption by the different agencies of the executive branch to fast-track its movement and passage upon filing in the Congress. While the President reportedly supports the NLUC's version, the bill has to secure the endorsement of the six Cabinet Clusters to be considered as the official executive version. As of October 2019, NEDA has received the endorsement from the Cabinet Clusters on (a) Human Development and Poverty Reduction and (b) Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.

Led by the Campaign for Land Use Policy Now! (CLUP Now!) and ANGOC, land use partners and advocates have submitted comments to the NLUC's version to be incorporated in the draft Bill and presented before the Cabinet Cluster on Economic Development. Among the major comments on the NLUC's version of the bill include:

- retention of the four categories of land uses for planning purposes – i.e. Protection, Production, Infrastructure, and Settlements;
- inclusion of the basic sector representation in the composition of the National Land Use Council (NLUC) that will be created;
- inclusion of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the composition of the NLUC implementing structure; and,
- revision of the provision under Section 30 where “all land covered by ancestral domain or ancestral land title including lands held under native title shall not be subject to reversion to alienable and disposable lands by virtue of the IPRA”



Prior to the submission of comments on the NLUC's version, ANGOC, together with CLUP Now!, through the project on *Strengthening the Parliamentary Alliance in the Philippines Towards Achieving Zero Hunger* through support of the FAO Legislative Advisory Group in the Philippines/FLAG-PH, conducted a media forum (in October 2019) and a learning session with the Senate and Congress staff on the NLUC's version of NLUA (in November 2019). These platforms also provided avenues for CSOs and NEDA to discuss the CSOs' comments on the Bill.

CLUP Now! and ANGOC have also engaged with and gathered the support of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) towards the passage of the NLUA Bill. PLLO has expressed its intent to assist in fast-tracking the NLUA Bill (filed by Congressman Christopher Belmonte) in the Lower House. With their current activities on providing orientations with local government units (LGUs) on the proposed National Land Use Act, PLLO has been contributing in the initiative for wider public support on the Bill – particularly from Mayors and local government leaders. ANGOC has shared information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to the PLLO for distribution to the LGUs.

In November and December 2019, CLUP Now! and ANGOC has been involved in the development of activities and messaging in the lobbying of Green Bills which include the NLUA – under a project led by the Green Bills Network (GBN). Specific activities under the said project are political mapping of and forum with the policy-makers where, for NLUA, the nine members of the Special Land Use Committee in the Lower House (where the NLUA Bills are filed) will be engaged.





## Institutional Updates

2019 marked the 40th founding anniversary of the ANGO network. It was thus fitting to convene the 15th General Assembly and the 34th Board of Directors of ANGO last 11-12 February 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. The three-year progress of the implementation of the network's strategic plan (2017-2019) was approved by the membership.

Among the major decisions taken by the ANGO members include:

- ratification of the membership applications of Ekta Parishad (EP) and Konsortium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA) to the ANGO Network;
- approval of the proposed work plan and budget for 2019-2020, noting that the following challenges should be addressed: a) addressing food security through sustainable agriculture, b) impact of climate change and natural disasters to tenure, food security, and livelihoods, c) increasing land conflicts, d) criminalization of land rights defenders and shrinking political space, and e) urbanization and the need to enhance rural-urban linkage;
- adaption of the proposal to increase the membership fee for organizations starting 2019;
- approval of the recommendation to create the category of Auxiliary/ Supporting Member
- approval, subject to review, of the composition of the ANGO Board of Directors as follows: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson for South Asia, Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia, Secretary, and Treasurer

On the other hand, playing an important role in the governance of most of these mechanisms, ANGO continues to share the perspective of rural communities and civil society organizations in enhancing food security and ensuring land and resource rights.



## Asia Land Forum and ILC Asia Regional Assembly 2019

From 30 September to 4 October, ANGOC participated in the annual Asia Land Forum in Udaipur, Rajasthan, India, attended by members of the International Land Coalition (ILC) in the region. Organized by ILC under the theme *Land Reform for Justice and Peace in Asia*, discussions during the conference were categorized under six themes:

- Future of the Rural: Youth and Women Land Rights in Asia
- Defending Land Rights Defenders in Asia
- Gender Justice on Land Issues
- LANDex: Principles and Practices
- Pastoralists and Land Rights
- Locally-Managed Ecosystem by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

During the opening ceremonies, ANGOC Executive Director Nathaniel Don Marquez provided remarks on the Philippines' experience in agrarian reform and how this relates to broader land reform movements in the Asian region. He also presented state of land governance and tenure rights in eight Asian countries during the plenary session on the second day, based on studies conducted by Land Watch Asia under the CBI 8 initiative.

Representatives from ANGOC and the network's members (KPA from Indonesia, CSRC from Nepal, ALRD and CDA from Bangladesh) served as co-organizers and resource persons during the breakout sessions in the course of the Asia Land Forum.

The ILC Asia regional assembly took place on 2 October and saw the approval of the *Udaipur Declaration: Land for People, Peace, and Justice*. ANGOC member KPA, which had served as ILC Asia's host since 2014, announced their turnover of the regional office's hosting. Application for hosting was opened to ILC member-organizations based in Indonesia.

ANGOC also took part in two field visits after the Asia Land Forum – in the excursion organized by Prayatna Samiti to witness the efficient common land use and governance of the Meena tribe in the Sagatadi Village, and in the field visit organized by Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) to the Khakrakhuna and Karech Villages where the Harasia and Bhil tribes exercise collective governance over and conservation of natural resources.

On 4 October, around 30 participants of the Asia Land Forum marched in solidarity with Indian farmers and CSOs during the launch of the *Jai Jagat Global March for Justice and Peace* in New Delhi, led by Ekta Parishad, an ANGOC member.

## Global Forum for Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR)

ANGOC is one of two CSO representatives in the new GFAR Steering Committee. Founded in 1996, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation is a global mechanism that aims to enable various stakeholders concerned with the future of agriculture and its role in development to come together and address key global needs.

Internally, there have been changes with the departure of the Executive Secretary on the 31st of December 2018 and the assumption of the Vice Chairperson as Interim Chairperson until the next General Assembly of GFAR. An Executive Committee composed of FAO, IFAD, EC, and the Interim Chairperson was constituted to steer the selection process of the new Executive Secretary.

A transition period has been set-up to complete the report of the previous phase and the development of the new Mid-Term Plan. Central to the work is the restructuring of the GFAR network model towards a more targeted vision, as well as enhancing its governance system.

## Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCA) Consortium

The year 2019 saw the passing of the ICCA torch to its next global coordinator and its new President. As the consortium prepares for its 10th founding anniversary, the following actions shall be prioritized:

- undertake a review of the current membership and continue the process of regionalization
- facilitate the smooth transition within the Secretariat
- develop the major program on territories of life
- develop fundraising strategy

At the regional level, members in Southeast Asia have pushed that membership recruitment should be decentralized and governance should be member-led. It was agreed that members should engage in partnerships in different ways and different levels in order to strategically expand and strengthen the work with ICCAs.



## Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is dynamic and multi-sectoral alliance of international partners committed to increasing access to land and tenure security for all, with a particular focus on the poor, women, and youth. The Network's partners include international rural and urban civil society organizations, research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and international professional bodies. As a member of the Steering Committee, ANGOC represents the rural CSO members of GLTN in discussions on governance and strategic areas of its program of work.

2019 marked the first year of implementation of the third phase of GLTN's work program. Focused interventions revolved on accelerating land reforms in priority countries, contextualization, and institutionalization of land tools and knowledge sharing. A major output for the year was the development of UN Secretary General Guidance Note on "The United Nations and Land and Conflict" which outlined the interlinkages of land, peace and development.

At the regional level, GLTN's civil society partners collaborated in a learning event entitled "Strengthening Land Tenure Security for Disaster Resilience" – where various land tools were introduced to contribute to increasing the resilience of communities before, during, and after a disaster strikes. In that forum, ANGOC shared the results of its research on the link of land tenure and climate change.

In terms of ANGOC's work with GLTN in the Philippines, refer to the section on this annual report on ANGOC's Contribution to Pursuing Land and Resource Rights.



## 2019 Knowledge Products

ANGOC, Land Watch Asia and partners have developed and continue to disseminate these 69 knowledge products:

### Published

Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and Land Watch Asia (LWA). (2019). *Scoping Paper on the Readiness of National Statistical Offices to Report on SDG Indicator 1.4.2 in Eight Asian Countries*. Quezon City: ANGOC.

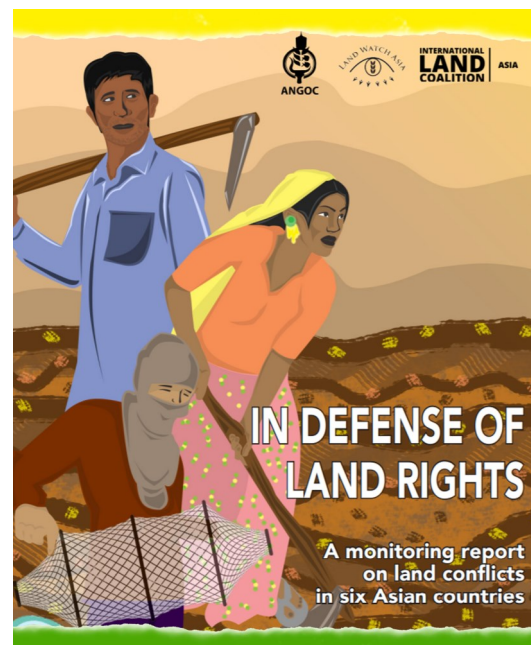
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## Declarations

*A Declaration and Call for Action for Food Security and Nutrition*. 6 December 2018, Makati Diamond Residences, Philippines.

*Bangkok Declaration on WCARRD @40: Recognize, Defend, and Protect Access to Land, Resources and Tenure Security of the Rural Poor*. 14-15 February 2019, Ibis Styles Bangkok Khaosan Viengtai Hotel, Thailand.

## Poster

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## 2019 Calendar of Major Activities

### JANUARY

10-11 FLAG-PH TWG Strategic Planning Workshop (Hotel Dominique, Tagaytay City, Philippines)

### FEBRUARY

11-12 ANGOC 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly cum 34<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting (Ibis Styles Bangkok Khaosan Viengtai, Bangkok, Thailand)

13 Commitment Based Initiative 8 (Sustainable, Reliable and Transparent Data and Information) Planning Meeting (Ibis Styles Bangkok Khaosan Viengtai, Bangkok, Thailand)

14-15 Regional Workshop on State of Land Rights and Land Governance in Eight Asian Countries (Ibis Styles Bangkok Khaosan Viengtai, Bangkok, Thailand)

20 FLAG-PH Food Security and Nutrition Orientation (Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines)

### MARCH

18-19 Outcome Harvesting on the State of Land and Resource Reform in the Philippines (ANGOC Office, Quezon City, Philippines)

25 Forum on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the Philippines (University Hotel, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines)

25-29 World Bank Annual Land and Poverty Conference (World Bank Building, Washington DC, USA)

### APRIL

25-27 Regional Workshop on Knowledge Sharing and Building Strategy of Emergency Response for Land Rights Defenders Coalition in Asia (Grand Istana Rama Hotel, Bali, Indonesia)

29 FAO-CSO National Consultation-workshop in the Philippines: *Strengthening Engagement and Convergence* (Sulo Hotel, Quezon City, Philippines)

30 Engaging Stakeholders in Land Use and Tenure Security in Building Sustainable Communities (Limketkai Luxe Hotel, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines)

### MAY

2 Knowledge Sharing on Tenure Responsive Land Use Planning with National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP Office, Quezon City, Philippines)

6 FLAG-PH and Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department Learning Session on Food Security and Rural Development (House of Representatives, Quezon City, Philippines)

23 FLAG-PH Round Table Discussion on the Right to Food (Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines)

**JUNE**

- 18-21 Landscape Governance Forum and Training of Trainors - Batch 1 (Mallberry Hotel, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines)
- 24 FLAG-PH State of Food and Nutrition Security Forum (University Hotel, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines)

**JULY**

- 2-4 Landscape Governance Forum and Training of Trainors - Batch 2 (Hotel de Susana Resort, Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines)
- 8-12 3<sup>rd</sup> ICCA National Conference (Seameo-Innotech Centre, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 15-18 International Land Coalition Facilitators Workshop (Hotel River View, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India)
- 29-30 7th Asia Pacific Housing Forum (Asian Institute of Management, Makati City, Philippines)

**AUGUST**

- 1-2 National Environment Dialogue (Novotel Manila Araneta City, Quezon City, Philippines)

**SEPTEMBER**

- 2-5 ANGOC Planning Meeting (Infanta, Quezon Province, Philippines)
- 11-12 National Forum on Business and Human Rights (University Hotel, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 16-17 Strengthening Land Tenure for Disaster Resilience (Grand Hyatt Erawan, Bangkok, Thailand)
- 19 Learning Session on Land & Conflict (UN House, Rockwell Business Center, Mandaluyong City, Philippines)
- 20-24 Mid-Term Review of *Secure Access to Land and Resources* (ANGOC Office, Quezon City; and XSF Office, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines)
- 30 2019 Asia Land Forum: Land Reform for Justice and Peace in Asia (Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India)

**OCTOBER**

- 1-3 2019 Asia Land Forum: Land Reform for Justice and Peace in Asia and ILC Asia Regional Assembly (The Amargarh Resort, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India)
- 4 Launch of Jai Jagat 2020: On the March for Justice and Peace (Vishwa Yuvak Kendra – International Youth Center, New Delhi, Delhi, India)
- 8 FLAG-PH National Land Use Act Media Forum (Max's Restaurant in Quezon City Circle, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 16-20 Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) Writeshop (1896 Bed and Breakfast, Baguio City, Benguet, Philippines)
- 22 FLAG-PH Learning Session on National Land Use Act (Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City, Philippines)

- 26-30 9<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian Conference on Human Rights and Business (Lighthouse Hotel, Subic Bay Freeport Area, Philippines)
- 29-31 VOICE Philippines National Linking and Learning Summit 2019 (Loreland Farm Resort, Antipolo, Rizal, Philippines)

### NOBEMBER

- 6-9 Regional Workshop: Learning on Paralegal Community Empowerment (Novotel Bogor Golf Resort and Convention Center, Bogor, Indonesia)
- 11-13 RAMSAR 1009: Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary Conference (Inland Resort Hotel, Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, Philippines)
- 20-27 Learning Exchange Visit of SALaR Partners (ANGOC Office, Quezon City; XSF Office, Cagayan de Oro City, Bukidnon; and community visits in Bukidnon, Philippines)

### DECEMBER

- 10 House Committee on Agrarian Reform Hearing on the Second Phase of Agrarian Reform (House Bill 55702) (House of Representatives, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 11 House of Representative TWG of Indigenous Peoples (House of Representatives, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 11 Orientation on ENIPAS for IP Leaders in Aurora (Maria Aurora Plaza, Maria Aurora, Aurora Province, Philippines)
- 12 Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency Conference (Crowne Plaza Ortigas, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 13 Multi-stakeholder Assembly on Business and Human Rights (College of Law, UP Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines)
- 17 Orientation on ENIPAS for IP Leaders in Bataan (Kai Lodge, Morong, Bataan, Philippines)

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