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JOINT ACTION FOR LAND RIGHTS

Lessons and Reflections from the Communities and HR Defenders

The *“Joint Action for Land Rights”* is a project jointly implemented by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), Balay Alternative Legal Advocates for Development in Mindanaw, Inc. (BALAOD Mindanaw), Solidarity Towards Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (Kaisahan), and People In Need (PIN). JALR contributes to the work of civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, working with vulnerable and socially excluded groups. Its particular focus is on supporting the empowerment of farmers and indigenous peoples to claim their rights, including protecting the rights of human rights defenders (HRDs). The project is supported by the European Union’s European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EU-EIDHR).

Prepared by ANGOC, this document summarizes the insights of the 22 representatives of farmers and indigenous peoples partner organizations of BALAOD Mindanaw and Kaisahan, who actively participated in the **Exchange Visit of Land Rights Defenders** last 29 November to 01 December 2017 in San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon. These members from community-based organizations in Leyte, Negros Occidental, Misamis Oriental, and Bukidnon were involved in various activities of the JALR Project: either as training

participants, Project Sub-grantees or recipients of the Protection Fund, or participants of policy dialogues and local media workshops. Special thanks to Ms. Darlene L. Madrona for the documentation of the said exchange visit, as well as PIN and the project staff of BALAOD Mindanaw and Kaisahan for assisting ANGOC in facilitating the focus group discussions designed for this publication.

Conduct of the Exchange Visits

The participants of the exchange visit were divided into four (4) groups representing the main issues faced by the farmers and indigenous peoples (IPs): a) overlapping land claims, b) erroneous notices of coverage (NOCs) and chop-chop titles, c) installation issues/landowner resistance, and d) illegal conversion.

The Overlapping Land Claims group comprised of indigenous peoples’ groups facing challenges in having their ancestral domain/land recognized by the government. This group also included IP groups experiencing difficulties in governing their land, due to the existence of other property rights claims or titles over portions of their ancestral domain/land. Other claimants or title-holders may also be asserting exclusive privilege to the use of natural resources



On Sub-grants Projects and Protection Fund

The JALR Project provided *sub-grants* to the community-based organizations to enable them to respond to issues impeding their land rights and to human rights violations brought upon by such issues, by practicing their acquired know-how through the implementation of small projects. On the other hand, in situations where human rights are threatened, the *Protection Fund* was used to work with community organizations, individual defenders, grassroots organizations, farmers' and IPs' organizations, to put in place security and protection mechanisms to ease the risk and reduce land rights defenders' vulnerability, to enable the HRDs to respond to their specific threats and needs.

within the indigenous peoples' ancestral domain/land.

Those in the group tackling Erroneous NOCs and Chop-chop Titles included agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) who have been awarded for land distribution under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) of the government, but are still unable to claim rights over the promised land due to issues in the legitimacy and/or correctness of the documents necessary for CARP's land acquisition and distribution (LAD) component.

The third group (Installation Issues/Landowner Resistance) was composed of ARBs who still could not be installed physically in their awarded land due to opposition by landowners.

Finally, the last group, facing Illegal Conversion issues, consisted of ARBs who had been displaced from their land to make way for development projects by government and/or the private sector.

The first part of this document highlights the representatives' feedback through a participatory evaluation on their experiences on implementing the Project's Sub-grants and Protection Fund.

The second part of this document presents the representatives' reflections on their most significant change (MSC) in their lives that the JALR Project components (sub-grants, protection fund, training courses, policy dialogues) have contributed to.

Among the lessons that can be drawn from the implementation of this component of the JALR Project, the participants highlighted the following:

- It is important to strengthen the organization and the capacities of its members through organizational development activities and linking with government agencies, CSOs, church, and the media.
- Research, data gathering, and documentation in policy work are invaluable, as in most cases, government officials and employees will not entertain the complaints filed by community-based organizations without any supporting documents. At the same time, such findings and recommendations arising from solid documentation are also used to build consensus among the group and to raise awareness on the rights of its members.
- It is equally important to safekeep/secure important documents relating to the land claim in the case of order reversal or claim contestation.
- There is a need to ensure that the farmer can enter the area after the installation and to provide post-installation support such as the provision of farm inputs, additional training for the farmer-beneficiaries, linking to service providers, and other related services.
- In the case of illegal conversion, before and after the installation, there is a need to secure the farm area to prevent the entry of armed groups and to thwart incidences of harassment. Provision

of security equipment like flashlights to conduct nightly patrols and additional support to security personnel (e.g., Philippine National Police) for the conduct of regular patrols and provision of security to the farmers, are also necessary.

- Regular monitoring and following-up of land rights cases should be undertaken by the human rights defenders vis-à-vis government agencies.

Other details are found in Table 1.

On Most Significant Change (MSC)

Other than *sub-grants* to the community-based organizations and assistance through *Protection Fund*, the JALR Project conducted tailor-made capacity

development interventions (mentorship and courses on human rights, paralegal skills, advocacy, and land monitoring) and convened policy dialogues on land rights. To ascertain the contribution of these interventions to the betterment of quality of life of the human rights defenders, the following questions were asked through a focus group discussion:

- What are the problems encountered before by the members and/or organization?
- What actions were undertaken to address such problems?
- What changes are realized as a result of the actions undertaken?

The three questions should consider the following aspects: organization, security, legal, relationship with

Table 1: Evaluation of Sub-grant Projects/Protection Fund

How did you use the Sub-grant, and who benefitted from it?	What did you like best about the Sub-grant	How did the Sub-grant help you, your family, organization, and community?	How can we further improve the Sub-grant?
Group 1: Overlapping Land Claims			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Information, education, campaign (IEC) materials on the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act (IPRA) or RA 8371 was produced and distributed to IPs and non-IPs. ■ The project also benefitted the following sectors: tribal communities, chieftains (<i>datu, bae</i>), church workers, <i>barangay</i> councils, IP women, and IP youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The budget is sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We were capacitated and our knowledge improved. ■ Our tribal councils (IPs) were respected. ■ The <i>barangay</i> council became aware and informed on the IPRA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We are requesting for the continuation of the JALR component on Sub-grant projects.
Group 2: Erroneous Notice of Coverage and Chop-Chop Titles			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It assisted in the facilitation of our claims to land rights through the development of IEC materials, and lobbying with the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It helped in continuing the initiatives of the organization. ■ It provided us with encouragement to push for the activities and existing processes. ■ It helped to boost the morale of the organization in pursuing the struggle; <i>“we were hesitant before but are now determined to continue.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There had been a change in the morale and values of the organization’s members. ■ We received the full participation of the members. ■ Land rights issues and problems were tackled. ■ It added to the renewed determination to continue the campaign for the issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We hope that the Sub-grant assistance will continue. ■ We hope that the monthly monitoring, financial and project reporting will also be pursued. ■ Consider making the compensation of other project personnel (beyond Coordinator and Finance Officer) an eligible project item.

Group 3: Installation Issues/Landowner Resistance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sent request letters to the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO), Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer (PARO), and the (DAR) Regional Director (RD). ■ Conducted awareness raising activities: training on land rights, legal clinic, financial management training, proposal making workshop. ■ The Sub-grant was also used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather legal documents • Area mapping • Crafting of Organizational Development Plans • Installation planning • Security planning • Case follow-ups • Case hearing • Installation of ARBs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The request and decision-making process is simple and fast. ■ Simple proposal format. ■ Increase in the level of project implementation and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge on financial management and project implementation were enhanced. ■ It was also instrumental in the installation of ARBs; 80 percent of the ARBs have been installed based on the target. ■ There is also an observable increase in the income of convenience stores in the area, because after the installation, farmers now have a steady source of income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We hope that the duration or time frame of the project is longer, especially on providing support to the installation of ARBs, because DAR's implementation is slow.
Group 4: Illegal Conversion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Sub-grant was used for the production of IEC materials; case filing; organizing dialogues; paralegal training; human rights training; crafting an organizational development plan; lobbying; case documentation and research in the empowerment of members; fora with government agencies; and, conferences with a lawyer and the Church. ■ Other groups also used the fund on conflict mediation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It strengthened the members and the affected community, and facilitated exposure and education for the organization's members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The funds provided supported activities to secure the area. ■ It strengthened the community in their efforts to block/prevent the illegal activities of the government and developer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We hope the case can be sustained so that we would not have to forcibly vacate our area.

the government, and awareness/support of the public to the plight of the HRDs.

With regard to the groups that encountered the issue of Overlapping Land Claims, the participants summarized their reflections as follows:

- With increased political awareness among IPs, the representatives from LAMBAGHO recognized the importance of having an IP representative to mandatory bodies in the local government. The IP representatives noted the importance of having a seat in such bodies to elevate their land rights concerns: mining operations in ancestral domains, non-observance of free and prior informed

consent, very slow processing of Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs), among others. However, it should be noted that the governance processes within IPs is distinct from lowlanders. Representation of IPs to any posts is not a matter of election. It has to be discussed with their respective Tribal Councils before a decision may be made.

- Related to the above-mentioned, the IP representatives claimed that there was an increase in their participation in the social activities of their respective communities.
- With the persistent advocacy of the IPs in land rights, it contributed to the strengthening of the

Table 2: Overlapping Land Claims

	What are the issues encountered before?	What are the actions undertaken?	What are the changes observed as a result of the actions?
Organization	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of commitment per <i>barangay</i> regarding the Indigenous Political Structure (IPS). ■ There is no clear process for CADT. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 8 <i>barangay</i>- claimants came together to unify the claim – it became the Dulangan Unified claim. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased unity within the organization.
	<u>LAMBAGHO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leadership crisis across 13 <i>barangays</i> covering Higaonon ancestral domain. 	<u>LAMBAGHO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 13 <i>barangays</i> in Cagayan De Oro were federated to UNIHITRICO (Unified Higaonon Tribal Council), covering 68,000 hectares applied for CADT. 	<u>LAMBAGHO:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 16 <i>barangays</i> from UNIHITRICO turned into LAMBAGHO, with an additional coverage of 28,000 hectares from the additional three (3) <i>barangays</i>, thus increasing the total area coverage to 96,000 hectares.
Security	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No known issues with the CADT before the entry of politicians and investors. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investors were invited by the tribal council for a dialogue. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investors, government or private companies could not enter the area without undergoing free and prior informed consent (FPIC).
Relationship with Government	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The local government does not recognize the IPs or our claim. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducted lobbying to <i>Barangay Councils</i>/ Municipal LGU particularly on the IPRA. 	<u>DULANGAN:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ IP communities are slowly being recognized as an important sector in the broader community. Their claims over their ancestral domain are being recognized as well.

indigenous political system (IPS) and supported the continuing process of the application for CADT.

Other details are found in Table 2.

For the groups facing issues on Erroneous Notices of Coverage and Chop-chop Titles, the participants realized that a strong and committed membership of the organizations is essential to hurdle issues. At the same time, training and mentoring second-liners of the organizations should be promoted early on, as the struggle will be an uphill climb.

The summary of the groups’ outputs are listed in Table 3.

On the other hand, of the organizations that have encountered or are encountering Installation Issues/ Landowner Resistance, the participants highlighted the following changes as a result of the JALR interventions:

- Farmers (who have been installed) have transformed from farm workers to owner-cultivators. As ARBs, the members are now able to avail of government services such as provision of farm inputs (e.g., seeds and fertilizers) from the Department of Agriculture. Hence, members are also able to secure such inputs at lower interest rate from the organization compared to private individuals who charge a 20 percent interest rate per month.

Table 3: Erroneous Notice of Coverage and Chop-chop Titles

	What are the issues encountered before?	What are the actions undertaken?	What are the changes observed as a result of the actions?
Organization	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They were organized but not empowered. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquired help from CSOs/ NGOs and cultivated other linkages for community organizing and advising. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation of farmer-members in organizational activities greatly improved.
	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disempowered, weak participation. 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquired support from CSOs (Kaisahan) and other linkages, partners (Social Action Center) for community organizing and advise 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger leadership and active members.
	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized but not capable. 	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received education, training and support from our support groups. Continued pursuing the struggle. 	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved leadership capacity and strengthened organizational relationship.
	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less participation/ cooperation among members; not capacitated. 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted education and training activities with the support of CSOs. 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization and members became capacitated. Achieved full participation of members.
	<u>CFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization was not attractive among farmer beneficiaries. 	<u>CFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted education, training, seminars through the support of partner CSOs 	<u>CFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased membership. Organization became capacitated.
Security	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members and organization were under threat, bullied and discriminated against by community and <i>barangay</i> leaders. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established security core group. Consistently pushed the struggle through legal means. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization became respected; seem by other farmers as a model organization.
	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats on land conversion. 	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close monitoring/ active coordination among members of organization. 	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolved threats.
Legal	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas not included in Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD) database of DAR. No Notice of Coverage (NOC). 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted lobbying to and dialogue with DAR; sent petition letters to the DAR. Land was occupation by potential farmer-beneficiaries. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is now for CLOA generation. Farmer-beneficiaries are already positioned in the area before the conduct of NOC.
	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Chop-chop</i> title 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted dialogue with and lobbying to DAR. 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage of application has proceeded

Legal	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter of complaint from landowner, existence of other titles, no NOC. 	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted dialogues with and lobbying to DAR. 	<u>HASADIWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter of complaint resolved. Coverage proceeded. NOC issued but is under protest by the landowner.
	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Chop-chop</i> title; erroneous NOC; case versus quarrying 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted lobbying, dialogue, litigation. 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supreme Court issued a decision in favor of farmer-beneficiaries.
	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erroneous NOC 	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbying, dialogue, conference/forum 	<u>OFFWA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOC for 181 hectares issued and has been posted in the billboard.
Relationship with Government	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MARO was unfriendly and they treat the group as squatters. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support groups exerted pressure onto the agency in a persistent but friendly manner. 	<u>PLA/KAMPAT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MARO's attitude towards the farmers has improved.
	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAR was negligent. 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue with, and lobbying to DAR. 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DAR has begun to be accommodating to the needs of the farmers.
	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Barangay</i> LGU, DAR, ENRO (environment and natural resources officer) was unfriendly. 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue, lobbying, policy forum. 	<u>HABENARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Barangay</i> LGU became a partner of the organization.

- Another group was able to access Php 2 million from OXFAM which they used to purchase farm equipment such as a cargo truck, a tractor, a thresher, and a harvester.

The summary of the groups' outputs are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: Installation Issues/Landowner Resistance

	What are the issues encountered before?	What are the actions undertaken?	What are the changes observed as a result of the actions?
Organization	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is not active 	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted re-organization and election of new officers 	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting is regular and members are already active
	<u>VASFA, VACOSFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized but not yet registered 	<u>VASFA, VACOSFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filed accreditation in the city Processed registration to DOLE Linked with NGOs and LGUs 	<u>VASFA, VACOSFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to avail the services of various agencies after accreditation
	<u>SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uninstalled ARBs 	<u>SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathered legal documents 	<u>SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installed ARBs

Security	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Previous landowner hired armed men ■ The landowner uses the military to intimidate the ARBs 	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coordinated with PNP, LGU and NGOs 	<u>TINAMAY, MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased security of ARBs due to direct coordination with PNP and military
Legal	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No legal support 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sought NGOs that provide legal support 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The legal team of Kaisahan provided legal support and the POs were able to make their stand in court.
	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The organization has knowledge on the law and their rights. 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participated in the trainings conducted by NGOs particularly in paralegal, land rights and human rights 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presence of Paralegal/HRD individuals within the organization; they are able to assist PO members in simple legal matters.
Relationship with Government	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There was no effort on the part of the government to help the ARBs. 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Filed accreditation to partner LGUs and other government agencies 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organizations became members of the local special bodies (development council) in their cities.
	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The previous landowner could easily get the assistance of military/police during ARB installation. 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct consultation meeting with DAR, PNP, AFP and other line agencies in preparation for the installation 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Established relationship with PNP, AFP and other line agencies ■ Active support from PNP, AFP and other line agencies during installation
	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Chop-chop</i> title 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducted dialogue with and lobbying to DAR. 	<u>SANVARBA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coverage of application has proceeded
Media/Public/CSO	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experienced bullying; we were called “<i>Sagupa/ Mangilogay ug Yuta</i>” (Land Grabber) ■ People in our area believed that our organizations brought chaos in the community. 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We explained and showed the people that what we are doing is legal and our purpose is for the good of all. 	<u>MOFA, VASFA, VACOSFA, SUFA, SALUFA, AALIVEFA, TINAMAY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The people stopped calling us ‘<i>Sagupa</i>’ because they observed that what we are doing is legal.

Faced with the challenge of Illegal Conversion, the JALR Project provided legal and paralegal support as well as assistance in their advocacies thus gaining respect and credibility in their communities. At the core of this struggle is the mental toughness of the human rights defenders, as they have had to endure

constant harassments, insults, and atrocities in their struggle for land rights.

The summary of the groups' outputs are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Illegal Conversion

	What are the issues encountered before?	What are the actions undertaken?	What are the changes observed as a result of the actions?
Organization	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were not yet organized. 	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked with CSOs and other partners (Social Action Center of the Diocese of Kabankalan). Capacity building training on human and land rights and paralegal through the help of Sub-grant project. 	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization was registered. The members were educated about their human and land rights, and related laws on land rights.
	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were not yet organized. 	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building training on human and land rights was conducted. 	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of Coverage was issued for landholdings. Strengthened organizations and members educated.
	<u>CAYFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were not organized. 	<u>CAYFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted capacity building training on human and land rights. 	<u>CAYFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAYFA was registered.
Security	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our farm area was bulldozed by a construction company. 	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We wrote a letter to DAR and a public hearing was conducted with the support of SAC and Kaisahan. The members were educated about their rights. A paralegal training was conducted through the help of the JALR Sub-grant project. 	<u>ILARFFA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The harassment of HRDs and conversion of land halted.
	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced harassment from developer. Houses were strafed by armed men, and the crops were bulldozed. 	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought advice from DAR. Filed a criminal case against the developer and filed for disturbance compensation. 	<u>PAMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAR National Office told PAMA that they will never be forced by the developer to vacate the area. Gained confidence and support from the community.

Legal	<p><u>ILARFFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The municipal LGU blocked the installation of ARBs which resulted for it to be pending for 16 years. ■ In 2009, the Mayor negotiated to buy back the CLOAs. 	<p><u>ILARFFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Produced IEC materials on their CLOA. 	<p><u>ILARFFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CLOA was released to ARBs.
	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 2008, the organization filed a petition for CARP coverage ■ The landowner filed an ejectment case against the farmer-petitioners. 	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 2009, 30 members of CAYFA conducted a protest. 	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CAYFA was awarded with their CLOAs. ■ A cease and desist order was filed by DAR against the landowner. ■ However, CAYFA could not enter the area due to an issue on their right of way.
Relationship with Government	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 2012, the organization filed an administrative case against the MARO for delaying the installation of the farmers. 	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continuous dialogues were conducted with DAR 	<p><u>CAYFA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Members were installed but one major issue is the right of way.

Conclusion

The human rights defenders (farmers and indigenous peoples) face various causes and intensities of land conflicts. Hence, interventions differed to address and mitigate these conflicts. At the core of these responses however, is the importance of solid organizing, and of strengthening the capacities of community organizations and their members. Such interventions have contributed to uniting the organizations' membership, though they still need continuous capacity enhancement.

At the same time, farmers and indigenous peoples realize that advocacy is a long process which need patience, continuous follow-ups and monitoring, and presentation of evidences documented to convince the bureaucracy to act on their demands.

Finally, the participants acknowledged that it is important to sustain what the JALR project has initiated. There is also an acknowledged need to link with other stakeholders beyond BALAOD Mindanaw, Kaisahan, ANGOC and PIN. ■



Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)

Founded in 1979, ANGOC is a regional association of national and regional networks of non-government organizations (NGOs) in Asia actively engaged in food security, agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development.

ANGOC network members and partners work in 14 Asian countries with an effective reach of some 3,000 NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). ANGOC actively engages in joint field programs and policy debates with national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and international financial institutions (IFIs). ANGOC is the convenor of the Land Watch Asia (LWA) campaign. ANGOC is also a member of the International Land Coalition (ILC), the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN).

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Balay Alternative Legal Advocates for Development in Mindanaw, Inc. (BALAOD Mindanaw)

BALAOD Mindanaw is a non-stock, non-profit legal resource institution providing capacity-building and legal services to its partner communities on resource tenure and other justice issues primarily in Mindanao. It was formally established and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on 11 August 2000 through the efforts of a small group of individuals, lawyers, paralegals and community organizers.

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Kaisahan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kanayunan at Repormang Pansakahan [Solidarity Towards Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Inc. (Kaisahan)]

Kaisahan is a social development organization promoting a sustainable and humane society through the empowerment of marginalized groups in rural areas, especially among farmers and farmworkers, to undertake their own development, participate fully in democratic processes and demand their rightful share in the stewardship of the land and the fruits of their labor.

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Participating People's Organizations

LEYTE PROVINCE

AALIVEFA	Aguiting Alliance of Livelihood Farmers Association
BACOSFA	Barangay Concepcion Small Farmers Association
MOFA	Montebello Farmers Association
SALASAFA	Sabang-Bao, Labrador, San Jose Farmers Association
SALUFA	Salvacion United Farmers Association
SUFA	Sumangga Farmers Association
VASFA	Valencia Agrarian Farmers Association

NEGROS PROVINCE

CFA	Cartagena Farmers' Association
CAYFA	Calumangan Yusay Farmers Association
ILARFFA	Ilco Agrarian Reform Farmers and Fisherfolk Association
HABENARBA	Hacienda Bendito Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association
HASADIWA	Hacienda San Jose Dique Workers' Association
OFFWA	Overflow Farmers and Farmworkers Association
SANVARBA	San Jose Valing Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association

BUKIDNON PROVINCE

IPA	Indigenous Apostolate of Malaybalay
KAMPAT	Kahugpungan Hu Mag-uuma Ta Payapat
PLA	Patpat Landless Association

MISAMIS ORIENTAL PROVINCE

DULANGAN	Higaonon tribe of Dulangan Ancestral Domain
LAMBAGHO	Lambagho Association
PAMA	Pagatpat Landless Association
TINAMAY	Tinamay Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries



People In Need (PIN)

The People in Need (PIN) organization was established in 1992 by a group of Czech war correspondents who were no longer satisfied with merely relaying information about ongoing conflicts and began sending out aid. It gradually became established as a professional humanitarian organization striving to provide aid in troubled regions and support adherence to human rights around the world. Throughout the 25 years of its existence, PIN has become one of the biggest non-profit organizations in Central Europe. In addition to humanitarian aid and human rights, it now also targets education and helps people living in social exclusion. PIN is part of the Alliance2015, a strategic network of seven European non-governmental organizations engaged in humanitarian aid and development projects. This collaboration increases effectivity both in working in the target countries and in campaigns aimed at influencing the attitudes of politicians and the general public in Europe.

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Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines

The EU Delegation to the Philippines is one of 140 diplomatic missions that represent the EU across the globe. It aims to strengthen EU-Philippines relations in particular through promoting

strong economic and trade ties, developing EU-Philippines dialogue through the recently-signed Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, supporting the Government in its peace efforts in Mindanao, and working with the Philippines' Administration to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals.

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The “Joint Action for Land Rights” is a project jointly implemented by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), Balay Alternative Legal Advocates for Development in Mindanaw, Inc. (BALAOD Mindanaw), Solidarity Towards Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (Kaisahan), and People In Need (PIN). JALR contributes to the work of civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, working with vulnerable and socially excluded groups with particular focus on supporting the empowerment of farmers and indigenous peoples to claim their rights, including protecting the rights of human rights defenders. The project is supported by the European Union's European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EUIDHR).

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