

# Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground



## A CONFERENCE SUMMARY REPORT

10-11 October 2023

Gulshan, Dhaka, Bangladesh





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 nine 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. Thus, the ANGOC network promotes land and resource rights, smallholder agriculture, and human rights and civic participation, by serving as a platform for Asian CSOs to generate knowledge, share tools, and conduct constructive policy dialogues.

ANGOC is a member of the Fair Finance Asia (FFA), Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR), Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCA) Consortium, and International Land Coalition (ILC).

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Established in January 1991, the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) is a single-focused rights based national networking organization mandated to facilitate the land and agrarian reform advocacy, mobilization, and capacity building of its partners and allies in enabling access to and control over natural resources of the poor and landless and marginalized communities in Bangladesh. In subsequent decades, ALRD has emerged as a professionally trained knowledge network in the land sector to amplify the collective voice of the marginalized communities in Bangladesh.

ALRD has a network of more than 200 NGOs and civil society organizations all across the country.

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# Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground



**Published by:**

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

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**Citation:**

Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD). (2023). Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change -- views from the ground: A Conference Summary Report. 10-11 October 2023, Dhaka, Bangladesh. ANGOC and ALRD. [Proceedings].

ANGOC and ALRD acknowledge the contributions of the Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt/BftW), European Union (EU), Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR), Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat) that made the conference and this publication possible.

The views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the  
BftW, EU, GFAR/GFAiR, GLTN, and UN Habitat.

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The organizers thank the speakers, chairpersons, moderators, and participants for sharing their views and experiences on the theme of this conference.

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## PREFACE

Climate disasters are no longer in the realm of prediction, they are very much real. Disasters hit almost every month in every part of the world. These calamities are becoming more hostile than our scientists predicted. Still, as climate change impacts are being studied, what is being overlooked is that those most affected are the most vulnerable members of the population in all countries and across all continents.

Through experience, we have learned that the people who are already marginalized and systematically neglected are the biggest victims of climate disasters. Land-poor small farmers, rural women, indigenous peoples, and pastoralists are the ones who suffer the most from the effects of climate disasters.

As such, land tenure is an essential dimension in understanding and mitigating the impact of climate change. The lack of tenure security limits people's choices and diminishes their capacity to recover and rebuild when a disaster strikes.

However, even with the growing awareness on climate change, public understanding of the links among climate change, disasters, and land tenure, is still very limited. Thus, responses of governments and policymakers fall short in addressing the nexus of the impacts of climate change, social and policy actions, and need for land tenure security. And while the poor are aware of the risks to their homes to natural hazards, many are forced to accept or ignore such reality, given their lack of options, and in order to carry out their livelihoods.

In this context, civil society organizations (CSOs) should continue to raise the visibility of land tenure rights in the climate change discourse. In partnership with communities, CSOs should document field cases in support of public awareness and advocacy on the need to address land tenure rights in climate responses.

Thus, on 10-11 October 2023, the conference on "Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground" was jointly organized by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) in partnership with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR), Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), and Land Portal Foundation. The Bread for the World (BftW), European Union (EU), and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat) provided financial contribution for this partnership. This conference brought CSOs from Asia and Africa to share their experiences and perspectives on this topic.



Bangladesh was chosen as the venue of the conference given that it is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. The rivers that crisscross the country bring more floodwaters that, together with the changing monsoons, frequent cyclones, and surges of sea water inland, continually destroy homes and farmlands. Coupled with a land tenure administration system that is ill-equipped to manage the exodus of climate affected populations to urban areas and across borders, nor to resettle displaced families, the rural poor face a grim and ever-present danger to their lives and livelihoods.

We have been honored by the presence of Honorable Minister Muhammad Abdul Mannan, Ministry of Planning of the Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. Our appreciation goes to Chairman Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed of the National Human Rights Commission and Honorable Chair Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Parliamentary Standing Committee on MoEFCC and Special Envoy to Honorable Prime Minister for Climate Change. Special thanks to the following for providing their messages through video recordings: Ian Fry, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change; Hildegard Lingnau, GFAR/GFAiR Executive Secretary; and, Robert Lewis-Lettington, GLTN Secretary.

We are deeply thankful to our distinguished participants from Cambodia, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and the United States of America as well as from different areas in Bangladesh, for sharing their experiences and perspectives as we work together to find solutions to the problems that we are facing with regards to climate change and land rights.

**Nathaniel Don E. Marquez**  
Executive Director, ANGOC

**Shamsul Huda**  
Executive Director, ALRD



## KEYNOTE MESSAGE FROM THE UN SPECIAL RAPPOREUR



### MR. IAN FRY

UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change

(video message)

**L**ast year, I made a visit to Bangladesh. During this visit, it became very evident that climate change is having a huge impact on the human rights of people of Bangladesh.

Without a doubt Bangladesh is a highly vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change. A study carried out by the International Institute for Environment Development found that 42.6 percent of rural households had reported exposure to floods, 40.7 percent to storms, and 82.6 percent had been affected by at least one slow-onset climate-related disaster.

The country's geography makes it one of the top 10 most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change.

As part of my visit, I travelled to Sylhet District in the north of Bangladesh and saw the aftermath and subsequent impacts of a flash flood that had struck the countryside in June 2022. The flash flood was unprecedented in the history of the nation, and caused an enormous amount of damage. Some 95 percent of the town of Sunamganj was under water.

I met with a group of rural women from a community near Sunamganj who had suffered greatly from the flash flood in June. Their livestock, including ducks, chickens, and cattle, had been washed away and the peanut and rice crops ruined.

Compounding these losses was the ongoing burden of having to pay rent for the land that they were living on. According to the testimonies from these women it was suggested, it



would take at least two years for the community in Sunamganj to have sufficient yields from their crops to recover from the economic losses they had suffered as a consequence of the floods.

Meanwhile they are paying rent for the land they are using. This was a clear example to me that land tenure issues compound problems associated with the impacts of climate change. If people do not have secure land tenure, their lives are very uncertain .

I also visited a community of Munda people who live by the Chuna River near the Sundarbans. The sea has taken much of their lands through hurricanes and storm surges.

Again, the women I spoke to have been disproportionately affected by the consequences of climate change. This is affecting the right to health, water and sanitation, and education. Land security is also a major issue in the region. Much of the land has been taken over by large-scale shrimp and crab farms, leaving small-scale farmers little opportunities for an existence.

Many hundreds of thousands of people are migrating to the capital, Dhaka. Each year, climate change and the lack of land security have made their life in rural areas impossible.

Inevitably, these people end up in informal settlements where their right to safe drinking water, sanitation, food, health, and education are denied. Some people end up being recruited into modern slavery or trafficked in the sex trade.

I also met with indigenous peoples from Bangladesh. These people are denied their right to land because the government does not recognize indigenous peoples.

Overall, the intersection of climate change and land tenure is creating enormous problems for many people in Bangladesh. For people to be guaranteed a secure future, every effort must be made to reform land tenure systems in the country to ensure that everyone has a right to land unencumbered by the need to pay rent to rich landlords.

So, to conclude, I wish you all the best with your conference and I sincerely hope that you are able to find long term solutions to address the nexus between climate change and land tenure issues.



## INTRODUCTION

The Asia and the Pacific region experience the highest frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events. Around 72 percent of the total frequency of intense natural disasters was recorded in Asia and Pacific between 1971 to 2020 (Thomas, et. al., 2013). Further, data from the Annual Disaster Statistical Review Reports shows that six of the top ten countries most hit by natural disasters between 2006 to 2015 were in Asia, including China, India, Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal (Guha-Sapir, et. al., 2016).

Not only are countries in Asia the most hit by natural disasters, they are also considered the most vulnerable. The high frequency and impact of disasters in Asia is largely due to the size of the continent and landscapes that present high risks of natural hazards, such as river basins, flood plains, and seismic fault lines. Additionally, there are high population densities in many disaster-prone areas of the continent.

Many Asian countries also have large growing populations with a high proportion of poor people living with tenure insecurity that lessens their resiliency to the adverse effects of disasters. Coupled with land degradation, poverty reduces the ability of communities to respond to the effects of climate change. In developing countries of Asia, poverty incidences are high and remain prevalently rural and agricultural. Rural poverty is strongly linked to the lack of access to land – due to landlessness and deprivation, insecure tenure, and contested land rights.

Poverty and the lack of tenure security heighten the risks of people to the effects of natural disasters and climate change. To put disaster risk in its proper perspective, approximately an equal number of people are exposed annually to tropical cyclones in Japan and the Philippines. Yet, a cyclone of the same intensity would kill 17 times more Filipinos due to the country's greater level of vulnerability, including poor standards of housing and infrastructure, and the numbers of poor people settled in at-risk areas (IDMC, 2013).

Thus, rural poor who have weak or no land tenure rights are among the most vulnerable to the direct effects of climate change, both because insecure land tenure reduces the incentives and capacities to take good care of the land to mitigate or adapt to the effects of climate change, and because without secure tenure rights, disasters can easily lead to land loss and migration, exacerbated by land grabbing and the loss of documents. Yet, public understanding of the links between climate change, disasters, and land tenure is still very limited, leading to poor prevention and wrong response, while those without land or are near landless remain voiceless, and are often left out of climate change discussions.



Thus in 2020, the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) prepared a discussion paper as a contribution to this topic (link: <https://angoc.org/portal/no-time-to-waste-climate-action-through-secure-land-rights-and-sustainable-land-use/>).

A major recommendation of the said paper is to build better understanding and appreciation of land tenure issues in climate change discussions by “humanizing” the issue and by amplifying the voice of the marginalized. This can be achieved by collecting more evidence and people’s stories, towards a better understanding and appreciation of land tenure issues in climate change discussions.

In July 2022, ANGOC and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR) organized a webinar to share the findings and recommendations of the study. The participants committed to pursue the initiative, which led to the development of a pilot program of collective action among GFAR/GFAiR, ANGOC, and the Land Portal Foundation (LPF). Such collective action aims to foster better informed and more inclusively designed climate disaster prevention and resilience policies by mainstreaming the land rights of the rural poor in the climate discourse. For more details, see <https://www.gfar.net/content/collective-action-land-tenure-climate-change>.

At the same time, part of the current work program of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is to create an understanding of the cross-cutting dimensions of land with climate change. Even with the growing awareness on climate change, there is still limited understanding and response in addressing the nexus of the impacts of climate change, social and policy responses, and need for land tenure security.

Thus, ANGOC and the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) jointly organized this conference on “Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground” in partnership with GFAR/GFAiR, GLTN, and LPF. This event likewise contributes to the ongoing initiative of ALRD on land rights as supported by Bread for the World.

This blended event – participation was both face-to-face and virtual – created greater understanding and analysis on the importance of land tenure rights in the climate change discourse. It brought some 81 representatives (21 females, 60 males) from rural communities, CSOs, international organizations, Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission, officials of the Government of Bangladesh, media organizations, and academe.

Case studies were documented in selected communities in Asia and Africa regions to:

- ◆ illustrate how the lack of tenure security and resource rights increases the vulnerability of the rural poor, and reduces their capacity to cope with the changes brought about by climate change;

- ◆ identify and analyze climate change responses by authorities and other stakeholders that impact on land tenure security;
- ◆ illustrate the relationships between land tenure, climate change vulnerability, and adaptive capacity; and,
- ◆ recommend policies and/or call to action to address the identified issues/gaps.

The case studies were grouped under five thematic areas:

Theme	Description
Women, land rights, and resiliency	How women’s rights, especially over land, improves the capacities of families and communities to implement resilience
Customary tenure, use, and governance	How recognizing customary land rights and practices of indigenous communities helps build local capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change
Land rights and sustainable land/resource use	How secure tenure rights encourages sustainable land use by communities in ways that protect and restore their environment
Coping with risks and preventing disputes	How those with secure tenure are less likely to be at risk of land disputes, which may affect their adaptive capacity, or vice-versa
Rebuilding after disasters	How tenure security/insecurity affects the post-disaster capacity of people to recover and rebuild

Capturing the main conclusions and recommendations of the conference, the Dhaka Declaration was formulated, discussed and finalized by the participants.



# DHAKA DECLARATION

## **Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change**

We are from grassroots and local communities, civil society organizations, academic and research institutions, international organizations, and a cross-section of the citizenry from twenty-one countries<sup>1</sup> who have participated in the conference on Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground, held on 10-11 October 2023, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

We recognize that the climate crisis is the result of global injustice and continues to create conditions for greater inequality. Developed countries became wealthy through fossil-fuel powered industries that unleashed the carbon emissions responsible for climate change. In a world severely impacted by the climate crisis, developed countries are demanding that poor, developing countries cut their carbon emissions at the cost of their own development pursuits.

We acknowledge the existing global instruments and commitments such as the Kyoto Protocol, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Paris Agreement, Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage, and others.


Climate change affects everyone. Yet the poor, vulnerable, and excluded groups suffer its worst effects. It exacerbates existing inequalities. Women and children are the hardest hit in the face of climate-led disasters and slow-onset climatic changes.

We declare that the lack of land rights such as landlessness and insecure land tenure of the rural poor:

- ◆ render them extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change, as they are forced to settle in areas that are fragile and disaster-prone;
- ◆ inhibits their ability to recover from impacts of climatic events;
- ◆ restricts their capacity to engage in climate adaptation and mitigation which protect and sustain their lives and livelihoods;

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<sup>1</sup> In person and virtual participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, Netherlands, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Vietnam.

- 
- ◆ deter them from implementing sustainable land use and governance practices;
  - ◆ severely limit their right to make decisions and investments that ensure their survival and improve their resilience; and,
  - ◆ disqualify them from government compensation for loss and damage, extension services, and support for resettlement.

We are concerned that climate-induced migration and displacement detaches people from their source of livelihood and can cause socio-cultural disintegration of communities, thereby, increasing conflict.

We express concern that people affected are often treated as a problem rather than an active partner in climate action. The planning and implementation of adaptation and mitigation programs are often top-down, and communities are excluded from discussions and decision-making.

We affirm that the rural poor can lead climate solutions in their communities as shown by experience. These include adopting sustainable land use and governance practices, transitioning to sustainable agriculture, promoting indigenous knowledge, diversifying their livelihoods and crops, including growing climate-resilient varieties, and sustainable and participatory management of community forests and rangelands, among others.

We recognize the close linkages among climate injustices, insecure land tenure, and violations of human rights. A human rights-based approach to climate action requires safeguarding the most vulnerable people while responding to their needs and supporting them to be agents of their own resilience.

We therefore submit the following recommendations to operationalize a human rights-based approach to climate justice that affirms the link between climate action and the land tenure security of the rural poor:

- ◆ Amplify the voices of the poor and marginalized. Those who are most vulnerable to climate change impacts must participate and be represented in political and decision-making processes.
- ◆ Ensure that land governance, land reform, and equitable access to land, water, and natural resources are the building blocks for climate resilience. Secure tenure will increase the capacity of the rural poor to sustainably use their land.
- ◆ Recognize and protect indigenous peoples' rights to land and culture, and support customary use, management, and governance of land and natural resources, including forests, rangelands, and fisheries. Governments and policymakers should enact and reform laws, ratify and implement international conventions to safeguard indigenous peoples' stewardship over their domains.



- ◆ Address gender discriminatory laws, policies, and practices which hinder equal land rights for women. Remove barriers to women’s full participation and decision-making in sustainable land use, management and governance.
- ◆ Ensure the full involvement of all stakeholders, particularly those most vulnerable to climate change, in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy instruments for land-based climate change adaptation and mitigation. People in vulnerable situations who face greater risks and threats from climate change have the right to meaningful and informed participation in all decisions that affect their rights and survival. The rights to free, prior, and informed consent of indigenous peoples and other affected communities must be respected.
- ◆ Respective governments should adopt open data principles and standards when publishing land governance and climate change data in accordance with FAIR<sup>2</sup> and CARE<sup>3</sup> Principles. Open data is a precondition to the right of people to meaningful and informed participation in decisions that affect their rights and survival.
- ◆ Governments should uphold, protect and enforce the rights of all persons that have been internally displaced due to climate change – in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and international obligations.
- ◆ Develop new normative arrangements to respect, protect, and enforce the rights of persons displaced across international borders due to climate change. This includes the development of a protocol to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to ensure that the human rights of persons displaced due to climate change across international borders are formally acknowledged and enforced.<sup>4</sup> The global community has an obligation to care for these displaced persons.
- ◆ As governments and multilateral institutions have committed to establish climate funds, these funds must reach local communities and must align with community-identified priorities to build resilience and address loss and damage due to climate change.

We pledge our commitment and solidarity in pursuit of the above recommendations.

<sup>2</sup> In 2016, the “FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship” were published in *Scientific Data*. The authors intended to provide guidelines to improve the Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse of digital assets. The principles emphasize machine-actionability (i.e., the capacity of computational systems to find, access, interoperate, and reuse data with none or minimal human intervention) because humans increasingly rely on computational support to deal with data as a result of the increase in volume, complexity, and creation speed of data.

<sup>3</sup> The “CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance” (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics) were developed by the International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group (within the Research Data Alliance) – a network of nation-State based indigenous data sovereignty networks and individuals – in consultation with indigenous peoples, scholars, non-profit organizations, and governments. The CARE Principles are people and purpose-oriented, reflecting the crucial role of data in advancing innovation, governance, and self-determination among indigenous peoples. The principles complement the existing data-centric approach represented in the “FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship.”

<sup>4</sup> Promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change mitigation, loss and damage and participation. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, Ian Fry. Document A/77/226. Seventy-seventh session of the United General Assembly, 26 July 2022.





## Signatories:

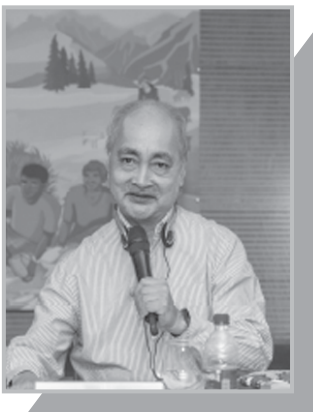
- ◆ Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)
- ◆ Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD)
- ◆ Huairou Commission
- ◆ Center for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (CARRD)
- ◆ Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC)
- ◆ Community Development Association (CDA)
- ◆ Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA)
- ◆ Landesa
- ◆ Law and Society Trust
- ◆ Namati
- ◆ OXFAM
- ◆ South Asia Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA)
- ◆ STAR Kampuchea (SK)
- ◆ Abima Cultural Development Forum (ACDF)
- ◆ Association for Rural Development (ARD)
- ◆ Association for Realization of Basic Needs (ARBAN)
- ◆ Badabon Sangho
- ◆ Beneficiaries Friendship Forum (BFF)
- ◆ Charbangla Bittohin Samobay Somiti-Patuakhali
- ◆ Centre for Development and Peace
- ◆ CHT Headman Network
- ◆ Gono Kallyan Sangstha
- ◆ Gram Unnoyan Sangstha
- ◆ Haor Area Upliftment Society (HAUS)
- ◆ Landless Development Organization (LDO)
- ◆ Maleya Foundation
- ◆ Poribesh and Haor Development Society
- ◆ Onnochitra
- ◆ Reach to Unreached (RUN)
- ◆ Rural Underprivileged & Landless Farmers Organization (RULFAO)
- ◆ Speed Trust
- ◆ Sundarban Adivashi Munda Sangstha (SAMS)
- ◆ Women Commission for Development in Bangladesh



## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

### Examining the links of land tenure and climate change

#### An Asian CSO Perspective



**Mr. ANTONIO QUIZON**

Former Chair and Executive Director, ANGOC


**I**n 2022, about 15,000 scientists told us something that we know already. Planet Earth is in Code Red.

Today some 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in situations like this, that is 30 to 40 percent of humanity. We only focus on the sudden changes in weather, but not the slow changes brought about by climate change like droughts and rising sea levels.

While climate change affects all of us, the poor are most vulnerable. People without security of tenure and who are politically weak face the greatest risk to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Poverty pushes people to live in vulnerable areas and conditions. And while the poor are aware of the risks, they are forced to accept or ignore their reality. They have no options, and need to live and carry out their livelihoods. They are the first to be hit, and the last to recover.

Indeed, there is a direct impact of climate disasters on land and people.

- ◆ There is loss of land, due to erosion, landslides, flooding, salinization and loss of vegetation. Lives are lost, families are displaced, homes and crops are destroyed; and livelihoods disappear.

- 
- ◆ Diseases proliferate, especially among children. Almost 90 percent of all climate change related disease are borne by children under the age of five.
  - ◆ Families lose their documents and identity.
  - ◆ Holders of secondary rights – sharecroppers, pastoralists, and those who lease, use or occupy land – become vulnerable to evictions.
  - ◆ Women are the main victims. 80 percent of people displaced by climate disasters are women.

In terms of recovery from disasters, those with no security of tenure, have the least capacity to recover and rebuild and may fall into recurring cycles of vulnerability. They usually have three options when disaster happens. They either (1) fall deeper into poverty (and debt); (2) move back to their former areas, or relocate to unsafe land; or, (3) form residual caseloads of landless people without access to land and permanent housing.

Those without land tenure rights are likely to face difficulty in reclaiming their occupied lands – boundaries may disappear and conflicts may arise with new occupants.

Further, many are forced to migrate, but without social ties, many face the prospect of conflict and violence, and the threat of eviction.

Natural disasters and extreme weather events can intensify conflicts over land. For example, pastoralists may veer away from their migratory routes and bring them into conflict with farming communities. Or farmers may shift to other livelihoods that bring them into conflict with existing users of forests and public lands. Disasters also provide opportunities for land grabs.

Government responses to disasters, also impact on the land tenure rights and resilience of people and communities. Examples of these are prohibitions, zoning, and “no-go” areas, and re-assigning land rights to other users.

Relocation and resettlements are typical government solutions for victims of climate related disasters but these are hampered by lack of public lands and funding. What mostly happens is that only a portion are resettled and most victims have to fend for themselves. In terms of resettlements sites, the typical shortfalls are they are unsafe, in remote areas, lacking in utilities and services, and far from sources of livelihood. Thus, land tenure security is crucial for disaster prevention and adaptation. People with secure tenure rights are more likely to invest in better housing, embankments, terraces and protection against damages and risks. They have more choices and decisions – what farming system to use, what to plant, when to harvest. They are likely to invest long-term on trees, soil fertility, regeneration of pastures, among others. Indeed, land tenure security can impact a farmer’s risk management decisions.



Also, securing land tenure rights for women is key for adaptation and resilience. Concerns for nutrition and food security, economic stability, security of shelter, health, safety, and family well-being — are essential for resilience. When productive assets such as land are placed in the name of women, this enhances their own security and decision-making, and allows more benefits to flow to their children and dependents. When adaptation needs to be implemented on a larger scale, organization and collective action become indispensable.

In terms of climate change mitigation, land is both a source and a sink of greenhouse gases (GHG). According to the IPCC (2019), people use about a quarter to one third of the world's land's potential production for food, feed, fiber, timber and energy.

Land also provides the basis for many other ecosystem functions and services. The land sector (agriculture, forestry and land use) accounted for 13 to 21 percent of global total human GHG emissions in the period 2010 to 2019. The way in which land is allocated, used and governed, impacts significantly on overall GHG emissions and climate change. Much of the world's remaining forests lie in customary lands of indigenous peoples who have acted as stewards of the world's most valuable remaining ecosystems.


In the Philippines, for instance, 96 out of the 128 key biodiversity areas lie within the traditional lands of indigenous peoples. A study of 36 countries by RRI (2016) showed that forest lands legally-owned or traditionally-held by indigenous peoples contain at least 54.5 million metric tons of carbon or at least 24 percent of the total carbon stored aboveground in the world's tropical forests. Ensuring the land rights of indigenous communities, along with education, will be vital to preserve and enhance these carbon stocks.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation in Asian agriculture should also address rural poverty, which is strongly linked to the lack of access to land. Poverty incidences in developing countries remain prevalently rural and agricultural. About 54 percent of land in Asia is agricultural, and is home to 75 percent of the world's farming households, of which about 80 percent are small-scale farmers and producers. About 87 percent of the world's 500 million small farms — with a farm size of two hectares or less — are found in Asia and the Pacific.

The climate-response measures we take may impact directly on land rights and on the tenure rights of smallholders and producers.

The global biofuel industry has been one of the primary drivers of global land acquisitions and displacement of small producers.

Biofuel production has affected agricultural production by shifting land use from forests and food, to biofuel crops. Biofuel production is capital-intensive and favors large-scale plantations. Palm oil is one of the major crops for biofuel. Biofuel is produced also from food crops — sugarcane, corn, and soybean. Food on the table competes with fuel for cars.



Carbon payment or trading systems are complex, and efforts will be needed to ensure that poor people are not shut out of such benefits through social exclusion or limitations on land-use rights. Payments are linked to those who are legal holders of land rights. Indigenous peoples and those without legal tenure are not likely to be compensated, or worse, they are left out or even displaced with the increased competition for forest lands. Payments favor new carbon sequestration (e.g., reforestation) rather than prevented deforestation, which creates new competition for control of forests. Carbon has become the new crop.

Climate change mitigation has to be examined using a human rights lens. Resolution 7/23, UN Human Rights Council stated that climate change “poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and [climate change] has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights.” “While climate change affects people everywhere, those who have contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., the poor, children, and future generations) are those most affected.”

According to Oxfam and the Stockholm Environment Institute, the richest 10 percent of the world’s population was responsible for more than half of the cumulative carbon emissions from 1990 to 2015, whereas the poorest half was responsible for (only) seven percent in the same period. Roughly half the emissions of the richest 10 percent – constituting almost a quarter of global emissions – are related to citizens’ consumption in Canada, the USA, and the EU. According to the IPCC, the 10 percent of households with the highest per capita emissions contribute 34 to 45 percent of global consumption-based household GHG emissions, while the bottom 50 percent contribute 13 to 15 percent. Greenhouse gases can remain in the atmosphere for decades, and they have a cumulative effect.

Until today, much of climate change discussions have still remained under the exclusive realm of scientists and governments. We need a more compelling vision of how climate change is felt around the world. We need to humanize the discussions on climate change.

We were always taught to “think globally, and to act locally”. However, today, the reverse message could even be more compelling. We also need to think locally, and act globally.

Poor people – who are often left out of climate change discussions, those without land, the most marginalized and voiceless – who suffer the most as direct victims of climate change disasters – they are the face of climate change.



## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

### Examining the links of land tenure and climate change

#### Country Perspective: Bangladesh



**MS. ROWSHAN JAHAN MONI**  
Deputy Executive Director, ALRD


**B**angladesh is a major climate vulnerable country because it is located in the low-lying Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Delta. The country ranks seventh in the *2021 World Climate Risk Index*.

Changing climatic patterns, including increased frequency of floods, cyclones, and droughts, threaten productivity of agriculture and food security. River erosion increases land scarcity, made worse by the lack of land governance, which results in highly unequal land ownership patterns.

The Sundarbans mangrove forests are at risk of erosion and inundation, and urban areas faces heat island effect and waterlogging.

Climate change impacts are felt in Bangladeshi lives and livelihoods. Agro-based livelihoods of the marginalized communities are highly impacted. Landless people in the rural areas fall prey to landlessness, degradation of forest and water resources, and loss of biodiversity and vital ecosystems.

A report from the Asian Development Bank revealed that climate change could reduce Bangladesh's agricultural productivity by up to 30 percent by 2050.



For the country's indigenous communities, climate change severely limits their scope to practice subsistence-based knowledge. Climate change also puts women, the elderly and children in poverty and hunger, leading to chronic malnutrition and even death.

Health hazards also increase due to climate change. Heat waves cause illnesses and leads to high mortality, stagnant water turns becomes breeding ground for dengue and cholera, salinity causes skin diseases, infertility in women, reduces the availability of safe drinking water.

Climate change also causes displacement. Cyclone Sidr in 2007 affected approximately 8.9 million people and displaced over two million individuals. According to the Stern Review Report, 1 in every 7 persons or about 22.8 million people will be displaced by 2050 due to climate change impacts. Loss of land and livelihoods lead to internal displacement because of out-migration. An IPCC study said that a one-meter rise in sea levels could lead to displacement of around 17 million Bangladeshis by 2050.

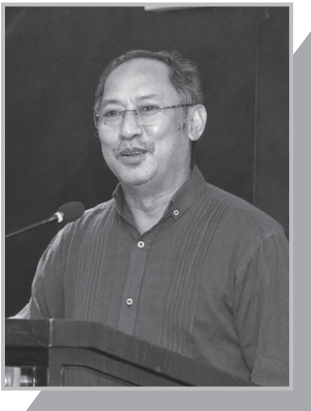
During the last 12 years (from 2010 to 2022), a total of 468 projects have been implemented under Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF). Responses are mostly not demand-driven. Construction of embankments and other protective structures often encroach on agricultural lands or restrict access to fisheries, affecting livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

The country is not lacking in legal frameworks to mitigate the impacts of climate change. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), launched in 2009, provides a comprehensive framework for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Act of 2010 established the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) as an autonomous body responsible for financing climate change projects. The Disaster Management Act of 2012 provides a legal framework for DRR and emergency response. The Government of Bangladesh has initiated the Climate Change Trust Fund's Community-Based Adaptation project, providing financial support to community-led initiatives. The Renewable Energy Policy of 2008 and subsequent amendments have facilitated private sector investments in renewable energy.

There are also emerging entry points and opportunities for pursuing discussions on climate change and land tenure issues. The National Action Plan acknowledges the need for land tenure security as a foundation for climate resilience and emphasizes involvement of local communities in decision-making processes. Land tenure is a crucial aspect of community-based adaptation; as secure land rights enable communities to make long-term investments in adaptation measures.

## REFLECTION ON THE KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

### Views from an Indigenous Person



**Barrister RAJA DEVASISH ROY**

Chakma Circle Chief, Chittagong Hill Tracts

**Mr.** Antonio Quizon has been working for a long time on land rights and has given a very detailed presentation. Ms. Rowshan Jahan Moni has presented a clear picture about Bangladesh, particularly on how climate change affects indigenous communities who mostly live in vulnerable areas. Mr. Ian Fry also had a very rounded discussion on the topic.

In the coastal regions of Bangladesh, the mangrove forests have evaporated and converted into shrimp farming areas. We have heard about these issues from indigenous peoples. A few days ago, we talked with the Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. We had a discussion on the vulnerability to climate change of Bangladesh and we told him that we want to work closely with the government of Bangladesh. As Mr. Quizon said, the majority of the world's ecosystems is on indigenous land. In Bangladesh for instance, the Sundarbans are mostly populated by IPs.

I was actually in Glasgow talking to IPs on climate change. One of them was an elder of a reindeer association on the Arctic Circle, where they have more than 100 words for ice. Talking to him made me come to a realization that we need to translate indigenous knowledge to something that you can put in the box of scientific knowledge.

As Minister Mannan said, there have been some revisions to the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act of 1950. However, the very land law is still not responsive to the needs of the country's indigenous peoples.



## OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDIES

### Theme 1: Women, land rights and resiliency

How women's rights, especially over land, improves the capacities of families and communities to implement resilience actions



#### Navigating Climate Change and Land Tenure Insecurity: A Case Study of Rural Women's Resilience Efforts in Analamanga Region, Madagascar



**Ms. Mino Ramaroson**  
HC, Madagascar

**T**his case study highlights the vulnerability of women in Fiaferana, who are disadvantaged, first, by their gender and indigenous heritage, and second, by their lack of tenure security in the midst of climate change. However, the women of Fiaferana have met these overlapping



challenges head-on through innovative and empowering strategies, including sustainable land use management.

## Key Messages

- ◆ Gender and land rights inequality pose a two-pronged challenge for the women of Fiaferana. Women are denied inheritance rights, further limiting their access to and control over land resources. A key contributing factor to this disparity is a discriminatory land tenure regime in rural settings which relies heavily on customary practices that are not gender-sensitive.
- ◆ Climate-related effects intensify. The intersectionality of rural women's vulnerabilities and the climate crisis is creating a complex web of challenges that need to be addressed holistically.
- ◆ The current land policy framework in Madagascar, while avowedly gender-sensitive, does not incorporate a gender dimension, and neglects the specific challenges and rights of women in the implementation of land reform.
- ◆ Integrating customary land tenure systems within formal land governance structures can significantly strengthen community resilience but only if social norms and practices are not gender-biased.
- ◆ Fiaferana women have adapted to climate impacts such as hailstorms and cyclone induced flooding by embracing sustainable land management, including the adoption of organic agriculture, and by replenishing forests and protecting natural habitats, among others.

See link:


<https://angoc.org/portal/ip-women-challenge-the-intersection-of-gender-and-land-rights-inequalities-a-case-study-of-rural-womens-resilience-efforts-in-analamanga-region-madagascar/>

## Climate resilience in Munda Community in South Western Coastal Area of Bangladesh



**Mr. A.K.M Bulbul Ahmed**  
ALRD, Bangladesh

**T**his case study challenges assumptions that disaster-hit communities that have lost their houses and possessions would willingly pack up and leave, believing that it is easier to



migrate than to remain in their communities. However, for indigenous people like the Munda in Shyamnagar sub-district, migration is not the answer to achieving climate resilience. Because their lives are inextricably linked to their ancestral home, uprooting themselves exacts a toll on their identity and undermines the continuity of their culture and traditions. Thus, following the destruction of their houses, cropland, and other properties in the wake of Cyclones Sidr and Aila, a number of Munda families were forced to migrate to other places, but they continue to affirm that they would have been become self-reliant with better adaptive capacity if they had been allocated agricultural land.

## Key Messages

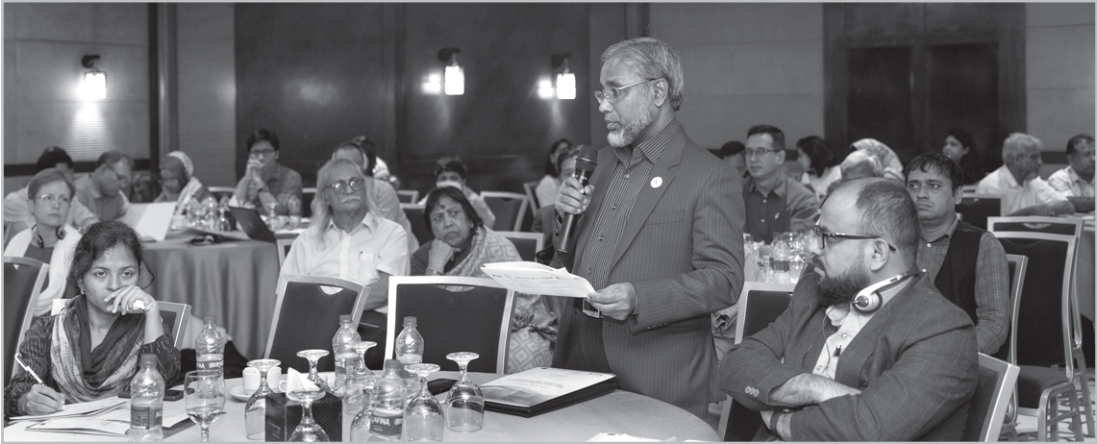
- ◆ The Government of Bangladesh has not yet recognized indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge, customs on conservation, nor their right to govern and conserve the Sundarbans — the home of the Munda people.
- ◆ To improve their livelihood resilience, the Munda people maintained that land tenure security is indispensable. They proposed a special policy initiative for land-based resilience building among the community.
- ◆ The current policy on agricultural khas land distribution among the landless can address the land rights deprivation of Munda women. If they are granted land, either individually or jointly with their husband, Munda woman are capable of sustainable use of it.
- ◆ In consultations with the Munda community, they expressed what is necessary to achieve resilience. They all agreed that migration is not a sustainable solution for them, because their culture and livelihoods are closely linked to the Sundarbans. To improve their livelihood resilience, they all affirmed that land tenure security is indispensable.
- ◆ The Munda community demands their participation in any decision-making that concerns them. The top-down approach, along with the corruption and insensitivity, has undermined ongoing projects and activities that are supposed to enhance their resilience. The community said that the scenario would be much better if they could take the lead.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/home-is-where-climate-resilience-should-be-built-a-case-study-of-climate-resilience-in-the-indigenous-munda-community-in-the-south-western-coastal-area-of-bangladesh/>

## Theme 2: Customary tenure, use and governance

How recognizing customary land rights and practices of indigenous communities helps build local capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change




### Beyond Land Titles: Pastoralists Find Security Amid Climate Change in Community Land Governance Mechanisms in Kenya



**Mr. Arach David James**  
Namati, Kenya

**T**his case study presents the unique example of pastoralist communities in Kenya who had traditionally been able to rely on their customary land governance systems to ensure their access to grazing land and to help them sustain their livelihoods in the face of drought. However, land laws that were passed by the colonial and post-colonial administrations in Kenya progressively replaced customary structures and practices with artificial formal/legal structures that bore no connection to the communities' customs. Apart from weakening customary structures, these laws also created opportunities for powerful individuals to privatize communal land. As a result, pastoralist communities now require legal recognition of their customary tenure. With insecure land tenure and their inability to govern their lands, local communities cannot effectively benefit from their rich traditional knowledge on climate



resilience. Furthermore, without legal registration, communities will continue to lose their lands to large-scale land acquisition and bad deals. The government's wholesale endorsement of carbon trading as a climate adaptation strategy raises questions regarding the potential of such projects to build the communities' climate resilience. Communities have not been able to participate in related discussions because of their insufficient understanding of how carbon trading works. Moreover, elite groups within and outside the communities have monopolized the development and implementation of carbon trading projects in Kenya.

## Key Messages

- ◆ Kenya's land laws, passed by colonial and post-colonial administrations, have replaced customary structures and practices that had served pastoralist communities well by enabling them to govern communal land effectively amid recurring droughts.
- ◆ The communities' heritage of robust resilience building practices is being eroded as more and more of their land is privatized or controlled by external interests. The new owners stand in the way of the communities' continued practice of their rich adaptation and resilience-building traditions.
- ◆ A land title is merely evidence of a community's land claim. Tenure security, however, is dependent on good governance at the community level and making sure that community members understand the law – and how to use it – to protect their rights and lands.
- ◆ In the face of current challenges from outside interests, pastoralist communities require legal recognition of their customary tenure and local community land governance structures. With strong governance mechanisms at the community level, communities will not only have improved tenure security, but will also be able to effectively implement their climate resilience strategies. In particular they will be empowered to participate in environmental governance, such as in the carbon trading projects.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/beyond-land-titles-pastoralists-find-security-amid-climate-change-in-community-land-governance-mechanisms-a-case-study-of-how-stronger-local-community-land-governance-promotes-the-climate-resilience/>

## Theme 3: Land rights and sustainable land/ resource use

How secure tenure rights encourages sustainable land use by communities in ways that protect and restore their environment



### Through Deluge and Drought: A Village Overcomes (Cambodia)



**Mr. Te Sokkhoeun**  
SK, Cambodia

**T**his case study shows the various faces of climate change that are witnessed by communities living in Trapeang Rumdenh Village, including flooding, drought, and other extreme weather events which destroy their livelihoods. Every time, these communities find a way to recover from setbacks. Every time, the lessons they learned from the most recent disaster gird them to anticipate and adapt to the next one. In the process, and as they overcome disaster after disaster, they build their resilience against what is bound to confront them as a result of climate change.

## Key Messages

- ◆ Diversification of income sources is vital. This can help to protect people from the impacts of climate change, such as crop failure or loss of livestock.
- ◆ The lack of funding and support for climate change adaptation is a major challenge that the central government must address by allocating more resources to the government agency responsible for disaster management as well as to local organizations so that they can better respond to the needs of vulnerable people affected by climate change.
- ◆ As part of the process of securing land tenure security, the community must begin to establish and document proof of their occupancy and use of the land.
- ◆ The community must consider forming a community land trust – a legal entity that takes ownership of, or authority over, a piece of property on behalf of a community. This can help to prevent land from being sold or developed by outsiders without the community’s prior knowledge and consent.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/through-deluge-and-drought-a-village-overcomes-case-study-of-trapeang-rumdenh-village-kbal-trach-commune-krakor-district-pursat-province-cambodia/>



## Theme 4: Coping with risks and preventing disputes

How those with secure tenure are less likely to be at risk of land disputes, which may affect their adaptive capacity, or vice-versa



### Tribal Communities Fight to Lift the Yoke of Landlessness Amid Climate Change: A Case Study of the Yanadi and Yrukula Tribal Communities in Andhra Pradesh State, India



**Ms. Rohini Reddy**  
SARRA, India

The story of the Yanadi and Yrukula tribes, two of India's Scheduled Tribes living in Andhra Pradesh State, shows how the impact of land tenure insecurity amid climate change is magnified among people who are extremely poor, have limited livelihood opportunities, lack education, and whose recovery from climate disasters relies on the charity of strangers. At the same time, this story underlies the critical role of civil society organizations, where government support is insufficient and slow. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of these two tribes, they are clear and strong in their conviction that what they need is land and the knowledge to use it in a sustainable manner.



## Key Messages

- ◆ The Yanadi and Yrukula tribes have not developed adaptation practices to help them cope with the impact of regular cyclones. However, they assert that they need a piece of land to build their home on and to grow food; and timely financial support to purchase seeds, fertilizers, and plant protection farm inputs.
- ◆ These communities cannot rely on aid from the government to help them cope with their disaster losses. Such aid could stop at any time, according to changes in government priorities.
- ◆ Gaps in research on the links between land tenure and food security must be remedied. Mixed methods are needed to analyze the complex casual linkages. Household-farm panel data collected over longer periods of time, combined with simulations, can also provide valuable insights about the linkages between tenure security and food security.
- ◆ CSOs employ a variety tools and approaches to explain the link between land rights and food security, including awareness-raising campaigns, community mobilization and engagement; partnership building and networking; policy dialogues; and research and documentation, among others. At the same time, they educate the tribes on sustainable agriculture and support them in their adoption of natural farming techniques, especially among women and the youth.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/tribal-communities-fight-to-lift-the-yoke-of-landlessness-amid-climate-change-a-case-study-of-the-yanadi-and-yrukula-tribal-communities-in-andhra-pradesh-state-india/>

## Communities face off with a river that swallows lands and homes (Bangladesh)



**Ms. Shanjida Khan Ripa**

ALRD, Bangladesh

**T**his case study tells the story of Yusuf Matubarer Dangi Village as a microcosm of the existential threat posed by river erosion and flooding to the country of Bangladesh. This village also encapsulates the experience of communities who are rendered landless when floods swallow up their properties and who then have to wait for new land to emerge from



the river in the simultaneous erosion and accretion of land when the river swells. Like other landless people, the affected community in this village expect that the government would grant them parcels of this newly created land, in accordance with the law. The Khas Land Management and Settlement Policy, 1997, provides that such lands, which are classified as public or khas land, can be distributed to, among others, families who have lost their land due to river erosion. However, like the rest of Bangladesh, residents of Yusuf Matubarer Dangi Village have been denied access to agricultural khas land which end up being controlled by powerful people.

## Key Messages

- ◆ The social and economic impact of climate induced disasters on vulnerable families has been devastating. They have been forced to abandon their ancestral profession and migrate to cities in search of alternative livelihoods. They are not covered by social security programs of the government, largely because they have no permanent address. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the government to fulfill the basic rights of displaced due to river erosion.
- ◆ During the consultation, the residents of Yusuf Matubarer Dangi Village decried the “massive complications” resulting from displacement from their homes, to boost their livelihood resilience against climate change. However, fragile housing, financial constraints, and lack of their own land are the greatest impediments to the sustainability of their adaptation efforts.
- ◆ The community advocates for the distribution of khas lands to enable them to recover from the losses they have suffered as a result of disasters. Access to khas land is expected to increase the adaptability of affected communities to face the risk of climate change, especially if land distribution is accompanied by training and financial assistance in aid of implementing income generating programs.
- ◆ There are limited opportunities for members of the community to participate and provide feedback on climate adaptation programming. People do not even feel comfortable providing feedback. Community members say many vulnerable people are left out of adaptation programs, citing favoritism and mismanagement.

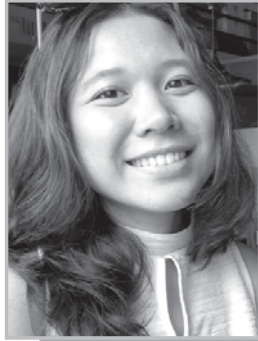
*See link:*

*<https://angoc.org/portal/communities-face-off-with-a-river-that-swallows-lands-and-homes-a-case-study-of-river-erosion-in-yusuf-matubarer-dangi-village-in-north-channel-union-of-faridpur-district/>*

## Land rights security improves sustainable rice farming: Increasing climate mitigation in upland communities in Passi City, Philippines



**Ms. Marie Joy Demaluan**  
CARRD, Philippines



**Ms. Caryl Pillora**  
CARRD, Philippines

**T**his case study demonstrates how secure land rights, especially when backed by a land title, can hasten the livelihood recovery of farmers who have lost everything because of a climate-induced disaster. The farmers of Passi City already possessed a collective land title — the next best thing to individual land titles — when one of the most destructive typhoons to hit the Philippines laid waste to their land and livelihood in November 2013. Unusually for typhoon-affected communities, the Passi farmers bounced back quickly from their losses on the strength of their collective ownership of the land. Having previously been trained in organic agriculture by a non-government organization, the farmers resumed growing organic rice. With no landlord to dictate to them, the Passi farmers were able to make their own decisions on how and what to plant. Through a series of strategic decisions and actions, the farmers not only rebuilt their livelihood but succeeded in having their rice certified as organic and sold at a premium price in mainstream markets. Climate resilience in the case of the Passi farmers entailed the freedom to choose and pursue their own pathway to recovery.

### Key Messages

- ◆ The government must ensure that land titles are not just awarded to farmers but that farmers actually occupy and make use of the land. Though the collective Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) received by the farmers in Passi City provide them with the right to occupy and till the land, the government should support and expedite the process of parcelizing collective land titles and issue individual land titles without delay. Individual titles offer stronger land tenure security.
- ◆ The experience of the Passi farmers has shown that the practice of organic agriculture offers an effective pathway towards livelihood recovery and resilience in the aftermath of climate-induced devastation of croplands. Organic agriculture promoted the use of seeds with high adaptive capacity; increased farmers' income, thus reducing their need to take out loans; improved soil texture and fertility; and, opened up access to government support services for organic farmers.

- ◆ In order to incentivize the practice of organic agriculture, the government must offer and strengthen its support for organic farmers so that they would not be lured to go back to conventional farming. The government must promote organic agriculture both for its environmental and commercial values.
- ◆ In the absence of civil society organizations (CSOs) that help promote organic agriculture in the communities, local governments should provide dedicated technical person/s with in-depth knowledge of organic agriculture who could educate and guide the farmers in shifting to organic agriculture practices.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/collective-land-ownership-empowers-farmers-to-choose-their-pathways-to-recovery-and-resilience-a-case-study-of-how-land-rights-security-improves-sustainable-rice-farming-and-increases-climate-mitigat/>

## The sinking island of Ghoramara, West Bengal, India: a case study of community resettlement



**Ms. Jennifer Brown**  
Sr. Land Specialist, Landesa

**T**his case study highlights important lessons for non-government and community-based organizations working to support communities for post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation. In particular, in cases where the affected community has been almost completely destroyed, the most important task is to facilitate their managed retreat to the most suitable resettlement areas, guided by a plan that is developed jointly by the affected community, the local government, and support organizations.

This case study likewise provides an eye-opener for land rights advocates that land tenure security, while crucial in the long-term, is no guarantee of successful in-place recovery and rehabilitation in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Thus, land rights advocates and other organizations must focus their energies on ensuring that plans for managed retreat are in place, are developed with the community's approval, and are implemented automatically to ensure the safety, health, and livelihood security of the resettled community.

## Key Messages

- ◆ Managed retreat is becoming increasingly necessary in a variety of coastal and delta contexts. The case study of Ghoramara Island may be used as an example of the important considerations that should be reflected as more governments begin devising plans for resettlement through managed retreat.
- ◆ Current relocation efforts are largely “one-off” and devised as needed. No systematic institutional frameworks, policies, or funding mechanisms exist to support the relocation of entire communities when needed for managed climate-related retreat.
- ◆ Governments and stakeholder groups working on resettlement plans should be guided by specific considerations, including: (a) how beneficiaries will be identified, including the assurance that women are included; (b) how the land for resettlement will be acquired, when no available land exists; (c) how much land will be allocated to each family; (d) what laws and regulations may need to be adopted to streamline, standardize, and make transparent and participatory the process of resettling communities; (e) how the process of resettlement will be kept participatory and transparent, especially as the community is concerned; (f) how can women and marginalized groups be ensured an active voice in decision-making; (g) how can governments leverage the resettlement process to support and strengthen conservation and climate mitigation efforts; and, (h) how will the government fund the resettlement program; among others.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/managed-retreat-as-a-pathway-for-community-recovery-and-rehabilitation-in-the-wake-of-disasters-a-case-study-of-community-resettlement-in-the-sinking-island-of-ghoramara-west-bengal-india/>



## Theme 5: Rebuilding after disasters

How tenure security/insecurity affects the post-disaster capacity of people to recover and rebuild



### Drowning in despair: The story of a dream washed away by a flood (Nepal)



**Mr. Jagat Deuja**  
CSRC, Nepal

This case study illustrates how people's lack of land rights or land tenure insecurity subjects them to new inequalities following a climate-induced disaster. These disparities— all created by landlessness — are evident in their lack of access to disaster loss compensation from the government, their ineligibility for livelihood loans, and their exclusion from government resettlement or shelter assistance programs.

In any case, government sponsored resettlement efforts have not been able to keep up. As a result, resettlement remains a distant dream for displaced families. To this day, not a single family from the Melamchi area has been resettled. Some affected people are forced to move to areas in Melamchi that are highly vulnerable to floods and landslides, such as floodplains and steep hills, which puts them at risk of new disasters.

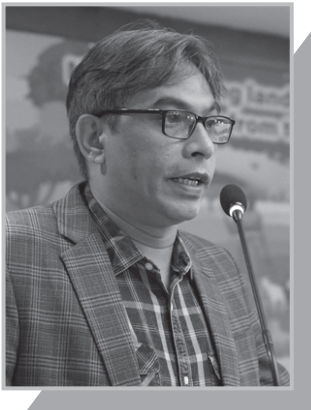
## Key Messages

- ◆ Policies on climate change are largely silent on land and tenure issues. Organizations working on land and climate change need to work collaboratively to increase understanding on how to integrate the two issues.
- ◆ In post-disaster response, recovery and reconstruction, land tenure or possession of land ownership certificates must not be the exclusive eligibility criteria for availing of the government compensation package.
- ◆ The government and all stakeholders concerned must immediately secure the resettlement and proper rehabilitation of all displaced families. The government must allocate “safe” land areas to resettle the displaced families.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/climate-change-affects-us-all-but-the-landless-more-than-others-a-case-study-of-how-tenure-security-insecurity-affects-the-post-disaster-capacity-of-communities-in-helambu-and-melamchi-municipalities/>

## Climate response and tenure rights in Char Bangla, a riverine char land in the coastal region



**Mr. Rafique Ahamed Sherajee**  
ALRD, Bangladesh

This case study shows the challenge of securing land rights and land tenure security among a sector of Bangladesh’s landless poor whose claim to land is among the most tenuous in the world — the char dwellers. Their settlement on land that was created by river erosion and accretion of silts, and could at any time disappear in the same way provides a compelling case for the grant by the government of land rights that are not presently provided for by current land laws.

The increasing risk of disasters, particularly flooding, threatens char dwellers equally if not more than other landless poor. Thus, the government must urgently match the determination of the char people to triumph from disaster to disaster by enacting and enforcing laws that address the specific circumstances of char dwellers.



## Key Messages

- ◆ Land titling will enhance the adaptive capacity of the char people. Otherwise, they will exhaust their resources and undergo physical and mental stresses in the process of securing land titles and addressing land conflicts.
- ◆ Char Bangla dwellers have adapted to climate change through a variety of ways, including changing their cropping patterns along with the seasons, timing their cultivation according to predictions of natural disaster, switching to occupations that are more adapted to the weather and climate; diversifying their crops; changing their eating habits, among others. But an injurious coping strategy that they have resorted to is to cut their spending on health and on their children's education, with all the negative anticipated outcomes.
- ◆ Char landless families in the coastal areas will continue to face the frequency and intensity of cyclones and other extreme weather events. Unless their land tenure security is strengthened, they will continue to struggle to face disasters and to rebuild in the aftermath.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/land-emerges-land-disappears-char-dwellers-continue-fighting-for-land-tenure-security/>

## Land Rights Take Center Stage in Asia's Fight for Climate Resilience



**Ms. Pubudini Wickramaratne**  
OXFAM



**Ms. Rashmini de Silva**  
Law and Society Trust-Sri Lanka

**T**he impacts of the climate crisis on land are immense: it causes loss of land, soil erosion, and land degradation that forces changes in land use. It threatens the land rights of communities, causes displacement, affects food security and aggravates land inequality. These impacts have led to greater competition for land, and increased pressures on land use. Communities



struggle to cope with loss and damage, unable to recover from them or to improve their climate resilience.

Oxfam listened to women and men from Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste who shared their stories on how the climate crisis has caused loss and damage to their lands, and the impact this has had on their lives.

The stories demonstrate that land ownership is a key factor in determining people's eligibility to receive assistance to recover from loss and damage. Those who could prove land ownership received compensation and alternative land or relocation benefits, while those who did not own the land or could show proof of their rightful ownership and tenure struggled to obtain these benefits. Similarly, land ownership gave access to membership in farmer societies through which government extension services relating to climate adaptation and mitigation as well as climate finance were channeled.

See link:

<https://angoc.org/portal/land-rights-take-center-stage-in-asias-fight-against-climate-change/>



# RAISING THE VISIBILITY OF LAND TENURE IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE DISCOURSE: Shaping knowledge and communications



Chair:

**Mr. Nathaniel Don Marquez**

Executive Director, ANGO



Presenter:

**Ms. Romy Sato**

Land Portal Foundation (online)

This presentation talked about efforts to raise awareness to land tenure issues in the climate discourse that took place in the frame of the GFAR/GFAiR Collective Action "Mainstreaming Land Rights of the Rural Poor in the Climate Discourse". These awareness raising efforts revolved around two main areas: a) the development and promotion of research and open knowledge pieces by the Land Portal and its partners in the Collective Action, and b) the implementation of a social media campaign also in collaboration with multiple partners.

The awareness raising strategies were meant to address two challenges identified within the Collective Action: that land issues still have limited importance in the climate agenda, and that climate-affected communities are still mostly portrayed as victims in the climate discourse.

Examples of how the Land Portal addressed these issues through awareness raising included the update of the Bangladesh country profile (see <https://landportal.org/book/narratives/2023/Bangladesh>), where a special section about climate change was added. In a special edition of the "What to Read digest" (see <https://landportal.org/what-to-read/climate-land-insecurity>), a blog with recommendations about the latest and most relevant readings about a particular issue, the Land Portal suggested publications that reinforced the role of local knowledge to adapt to the effects of climate change with case studies from Bangladesh and India.

Until September 2023, the social media campaign included 15 posts in Twitter and Facebook, three email campaigns (Mailchimp) sent to over 24,000 subscribers, and 40 land

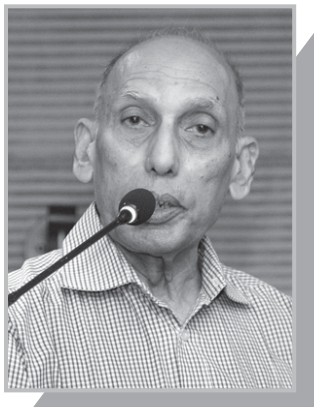
communication professionals contacted to help disseminate the preliminary results of the Collective Action.

To measure the effectiveness of the social media campaign, we analyzed the visualization rate (impressions) of some of the posts and the engagement level. Data showed a higher open rate for some of the information sent via mailchimp than the usual campaigns by the Land Portal. For example, 24.4 percent of open rate for the What to Read digest mailchimp compared to the average of 21.8 percent for other campaigns by the Land Portal. Nevertheless, we observed a lower click rate of the Collective Action campaigns (one percent) compared to the click rate of other campaigns (2.1 percent). Data suggests that the GFAR/GFAiR campaign on Twitter/X was, overall, very successful. The performance of the GFAR/GFAiR-related tweets is consistently above average (between 332 to 1,497 impressions per tweet compared to the average of 320 impressions per tweet). The values for the engagement rate show a more erratic trend, recording values above average in some cases, but below average in other cases. The campaign appears to have been more successful on Twitter than on Mailchimp, but both channels suggest that the campaign was well tailored to boost impressions and visibility, rather than engagement.

Overall, the implementation of both awareness raising strategies confirmed the importance of the collaboration with partners to build a collective action which is coherent with its objectives, as well as the potential of social media channels to expand the outreach of messages that may otherwise have been limited to the countries that are most severely affected by climate change.



## WELCOME REMARKS



### **Mr. Shamsul Huda**

Executive Director

Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD)

**A**s we gather here in Dhaka, Bangladesh, both in person and virtually, we must first acknowledge the gravity of the challenges that many communities in Asia and Africa face. Our regions bear the impact of natural disasters, making them the most affected and the most vulnerable. The intertwined issues of poverty, land tenure insecurity and climate change have left countless lives in a state of jeopardy.

Let us not mistake this conference as a mere academic exercise — it is, in fact, a powerful call to action. We have heard the voices of the marginalized and are committed to amplifying their stories. The "humanization" of this issue lies at the heart of our mission. We seek to bridge the gap between public awareness and the harsh realities faced by those who lack secure land tenure rights, often losing their homes and livelihoods in the wake of natural disasters.

We aim to create inclusive climate disaster prevention and resilience policies. By weaving the land rights of the rural poor into the fabric of climate discourse, we aspire to bring about lasting change and empowerment.

Furthermore, we are deeply committed to exploring the cross-cutting dimensions of land concerning climate change. Despite the growing awareness of climate change, the connection between its impacts, social and policy responses, and the importance of land tenure security needs to be more understood and adequately addressed. Therefore, the case studies documented in selected communities in Asia and Africa are not mere research findings; they are narratives of resilience and struggle that demand our attention and action.

As we embark on this conference over the next two days, I encourage every one of you to participate actively. Share your experiences, ask questions, provide insights, and engage in the discussions that will take place. Through your active involvement, we can collectively pave the way for greater awareness and action on the importance of land tenure rights in the climate change narrative.

Let this conference serve as a platform for meaningful change. Let us emerge from it with a Joint Statement that captures the essence of our deliberations, providing a roadmap for increased visibility of land tenure issues in the climate change narrative.

# STATEMENT

## Message from the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR)



**Ms. Hildegard Lingnau**  
GFAR/GFAiR Executive Secretary  
(video message)

**T**hanks to the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), a member of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR) that is also representing civil society in our Steering Committee, for coordinating the GFAR/ GFAiR Collective Action on land tenure and climate change, called "Mainstreaming the land rights of the rural poor in the climate discourse". GFAR/GFAiR is happy to welcome all participants in this workshop in the context of this Collective Action (CA).

We thank the local partner, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) for organizing this event in Dhaka and the government of Bangladesh for their endorsement and participation. We also thank GLTN for bringing experiences from countries in Africa, which will surely enrich the conversation.

This CA took shape after GFAR/GFAiR convened, at the request and with the help of ANGOC, a number of members in Asia and globally to explore common interests and identify common priorities to address the issue of extreme vulnerability of landless or near landless rural poor to climate change led disasters. This was done first through a webinar and then through discussions among interested GFAR/GFAiR and ANGOC members. Discussions led to an agreement among a few key partners on a common approach to address the issue, based on increased awareness, better documentation, and inclusion of affected communities in decision-making.

This CA is potentially global but it is now taking place in the Asian region, coordinated by ANGOC in partnership with the Land Portal Foundation, ALRD in Bangladesh, and GLTN.

It is perhaps not by chance that the CA starts in Asia, as countries in the region face the greatest impact from natural disasters and are highly susceptible due to many vulnerable rural poor experiencing insecure land tenure, which reduces their ability to withstand disasters.

This conference contributes to the first two objectives of the CA: (1) create greater awareness on the importance of land tenure rights in the climate change discourse among policy makers and the general public; and, (2) clarify and stress the role of rural communities in documenting the issue and participating in policy-making. This second dimension is particularly interesting for GFAR/GFAiR as it is part of our mission to empower rural communities and give them a voice in decision-making.

I look forward to listening to the case studies that will be presented - these "views from the ground" as the event name says - and GFAR/GFAiR will be happy to disseminate the findings and recommendations emerging from this meeting.



## Message from the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)



### **Mr. Robert Lewis-Lettington**

Chief, Land, Housing, and Shelter Section;  
Secretary, Global Land Tool Network  
(video message)

**L**and touches and shapes all of our lives, and is essential to welfare and prosperity. It is also one of the most contested of natural resources. When those characteristics are added to the prevalent disruptive trends of population growth, migration and climate change, there is no doubt that we face major challenges. We are already experiencing these challenges, and nowhere more so than in the Asia-Pacific region. However, if we do not strengthen and monitor our responses, the pressure will only grow in the next 20 to 30 years. The population in many cities and towns may still double or triple. Unfortunately, extreme weather events and slow burn climate change will likely accelerate. Land may continue to be degraded at an unsustainable rate. Perhaps most importantly, if we do not improve equity in access to and the use of land, our ability to adapt and to protect the globally recognized rights of all to an adequate standard of living and to their land-related cultural rights will be severely hindered. As is almost invariably the case, such a situation will harm those facing the greatest vulnerabilities – such as women, youth and indigenous and local communities – the most.

Despite this, as the agenda for the next two days show, clearly there is hope. The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) was founded on the premise that technical solutions that could deliver tenure security for all in resource-poor contexts are not only possible but can be readily identified and employed at the local level. I can see that those of us who are collected here today believe the same. Pluralistic approaches to tenure, what we in GLTN think of as the continuum of land rights, provide a flexible tool that recognizes the diversity of need and land use and that promotes access by the poor. This contrasts with the rigidity and regressive nature of many conservative titling and registration systems. Similarly, a clearly stated determination to take a gender transformative approach to providing and recognizing land rights can deliver change almost immediately – not over the course of generations.

I recently visited a GLTN project where the traditional authorities changed centuries-old practices and protected the rights of women and children to the land they occupy. I spoke



with a widow who would once have been evicted but now feeds and educates her six children with the income from a thriving livestock business. We also know that the most resilient landscapes are those that are built around people, not those that exclude them. Whether it is mountainous water catchments or low-lying wetlands, history and current practice show that well-designed and managed land use systems – with the people.





## Message from the Chief Guest



### **Mr. Muhammad Abdul Mannan**

Honorable Minister, Ministry of Planning,  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

**W**e are here to highlight the importance of land rights in the context of climate change. Globally, we are facing a crisis on climate change and we are faced with a quandary on how to help people, especially those who are destitute, cope with the effects of climate change. I see a lot of organizations gathered here today, among them ALRD whom I have known them for many years.

On behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, I would like to welcome all our colleagues working in the area of land rights and climate change both foreign and local.

We are here to discuss the relationship between landlessness and vulnerability to climate change and disasters. Thus, much of the discussion will center on landlessness.

I am not going into a theoretical discussion on land tenure because we know what the reality is. Land legislation has changed over time. Historically, landlessness is a result of re-allocation of land by those in positions of power, from the ancient empires, to the British, and up to those who wield political and economic power in these modern times.

When the government promulgated the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act in 1950, it dissolved the old land laws and formulated a new land act. However, because the landlords were also in parliament, they made sure they become the main beneficiary of this Act.

Throughout the years, the Government of Bangladesh enacted many amendments to rectify the imbalances in land ownership. Most recently, laws on digitization of records were enacted to make it easy to identify land and its ownership.

We can see that the number of homeless people is increasing. These homeless people survive by working for other people as farmers and laborers for their livelihood and survival.



You as NGOs are working in bigger sphere, in that you are working for the rights of other people, especially the marginalized and the most vulnerable members of humankind.

I have recognized that in our country, we are introducing the modernization in agriculture. Initially, we had concerns that people are no longer interested to work in the agriculture sector but the introduction of modernization and technology made people interested again because they see that they can have income. They can benefit by either working in agriculture or investing in it.

Our government is very much aware of the plight of landless people and our Prime Minister (PM) is particularly concerned about women. Our PM is quite sensitive and she is very much accountable to the poor and downtrodden, so I do not have doubt that she is duty bound to do right by them.

We still have hope and with this hope we can create a joint force, which will create a bigger force so we believe that we should support our government.

As a citizen of this country, I can definitely resonate with your work because I came from a small village. I did not experience poverty firsthand but I saw it in people living around me.

We are progressing to an era of justice and our government has made tremendous progress and it would not be possible without this endeavor that you are doing.

I always appreciate conference and dialogue. As a government, we listen to the voice of the stakeholders and we respect it and we will do as much as possible to uphold it.

There is a lot of injustice in the land system, not only in Bangladesh but also in many countries. These are mostly due to rules and regulations, enacted in Parliament, with divine right from above. Land is a primary resource. Every nation has an inalienable right to land. But we have been deprived from owning land, pushed out of the land by cliques for their own gains. Thus, we have to establish a minimal notion of justice and provide opportunities for landless and marginalized farmers for them to have a better deal than what they have now.

The British made the land model here in Bangladesh from their own feudal system. However, the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act made the biggest impact in shattering that model in 1950 when we abolished the Zamindar system. However, we did not fully succeed because powerful people were still in the way. But the present government, under our PM who has led the way in reforming the land system, has digitized land registration and we now know who owns what.

This government is committed to reform, not only on land but for other sectors. I appeal to committed NGOs like ALRD to support the government so that we can continue with these reforms.

## Message from the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh



### **Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed**

Chairman

National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh

**R**elating to the topic of “Mainstreaming Land Rights in the Narrative of Climate Change”, it is undoubtedly sad that sometimes we do not understand the linkage between the two. We understand that there is poverty, so there is a link in terms of land rights. Limited or no access to land and resources is a big problem because those who are victims of this become more vulnerable more disasters.

The IPCC report said that land tenure is essential. States have an obligation to respect, protect, and promote human rights for all persons.

If I put disaster risk in proper perspective, approximately an equal number of people are exposed to cyclones to Japan and the Philippines, but these calamities would kill 17 times more in Bangladesh due to number of people settled in vulnerable areas.

This conference puts in perspective the link between land tenure and climate change because it brings together different views coming from different people from different countries.

Tenure can exacerbate the ability to combat climate change. People have nothing to say when their rights are insecure. They hesitate to invest on land and this hinders their ability to react to disasters.

In Bangladesh, if we look at tenure systems before the arrival of western colonizers, there was problem with lands. Land used to be abundant. Unfortunately, the people lost their land gradually during the colonial period. Zamindars used the land for their own ends. The people suffered mercilessly; some were tortured, even killed. Bangladesh has a bloody history of people fighting for land tenure.

In 1950, land reforms were implemented; taking back land from zamindars and given to people. But upon close inspection, ownership patterns are still not equal.

The government tried to remedy this by introducing Proclamation No. 98 in 1971, which limited the amount of land a single person can own to 100 biga. While there are still landless, there is now a limit to how much land an individual can own.

Mainstreaming land rights in talks on climate change is really important because if there is insecurity people cannot do anything. Poverty and access to land is directly linked. And in an agrarian economy such as Bangladesh, there is really a strong link because livelihood depends on land. Take away this vital source of livelihood and you not only have poverty, but a host of other issues such as economic limitations, social exclusion, migration, and disputes, among others.

Disasters are not natural, they are man-made. Believing that disasters are natural makes people fatalistic.

If there is any injustice done to anybody, that becomes a matter of human rights and people must fight for that, despite limited resources, limited infrastructure, and limited courses of action.

For the indigenous peoples, their traditional systems and are at most at risk to climate change. The ILO estimates that at least 70 percent of IPs live in and depend on forests for their survival. Thus, biodiversity and conservation, are essential in combating climate change.

Women's rights are also being neglected, which is also contributing to vulnerability.

The Human Rights Commission has been relentless in its work to protect the inalienable rights of people. It has an extensive mandate as a watchdog for human rights. We have 12 thematic committees, which include climate change and disaster risk reduction.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that land tenure rights is crucial to addressing the effects of climate change. Respecting and protecting land tenure rights is essential in climate change mitigation strategies.



## Message from the Chief Guest of the Closing Session



### **Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP**

Honorable Chair, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Special Envoy of Honorable Prime Minister for Climate Change

**T**his event draws from case studies that are very powerful and carry a big message. Plus the Declaration hopefully will spread the word of the immediate need for the world to focus its attention on this very important link.

The challenge however, is how to implement the Declaration. A change in mindset is required.

We need to look at the root causes, not just the symptoms. When we look at climate change we need to look at a system change.

A change in mindset is therefore needed. How did we respond to disasters before? We waited and then responded. This time, we need to be proactive in dealing at disasters, which is crucial in mitigation.

As for vulnerable people, we need to look at what makes them vulnerable in the first place. Once we determine and accept this, then we can reduce vulnerability.

The agreement that is not mentioned in the Declaration are the SDGs, which aspirationally say that no one has to be left behind. Unfortunately, those that are left behind are those without land rights.

Land rights is a political issue, a human rights issue, and now also a climate issue. We are now moving from global warming to global boiling. This situation is going to get worse.

So how can we make the necessary changes in governance, land rights, and forest management? I do not disagree with any of the statements, but I think where we also need to work is the greenhouse gas inventory. How can we address this as a global issue. With COP 28

coming up, how are we going to bring this up through our group? I agree that there is a lot that we have to do in Bangladesh. We need to also address the issues we have at home. A declaration is fine, but maybe we can immediately address one or two areas, low lying fruits, for quick gains. We have elections coming up, and whoever wins will listen to these issues.

Bangladesh has led the international discourse on the environment and we are in solidarity with what you wish to accomplish.



## CLOSING REMARKS OF THE CHAIR



### **Ms. Syeda Rizwana Hasan**

Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh and  
Chief Executive, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association  
(BELA)

**B**angladesh remains one of the most land scarce countries in the world. We need to understand whether our level of development is just. We have a report that tells the government that by 2050, Bangladesh will not have agricultural land. Based on extreme climatic changes, our country will lose one-third of its land mass.

Second, when the Land Act took away the landlords, very little change happened because management of land was turned over to the government. Forest management is still an issue due to the antiquated 1927 Forest Act which was enacted during the time of British colonial rule.

A High Court ruling directed the Forest Ministry to restore a 44-acre forest (which is now only three acres). The High Court told the Forest Ministry to form a supercommittee, but until now, no such committee has been formed.

So when we go to the international level to present this, our position is weak if we do not implement the same in our country.

Worldwide, there is tenurial tension between government forest departments and forest dwellers, but there have been little gains on improving this. In Nepal, they brought back a forest through a model of community forestry program. In the Philippines, they have a good model of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

So what actions can be done? If we can collect good models, we can help government agencies implement these good models. We need to invest on collecting these good practices. We really need to be serious in saving our wetlands, forests, and traditional practices of people living in these areas.

Our work seems like an endless task, we always have a hurdle to overcome. But we are on the right path and cannot lose hope. If we lose hope, then the people we work for are going to be more hopeless.

## CLOSING REMARKS OF THE ORGANIZERS



**Ms. Khushi Kabir**  
Chairperson, ALRD

**O**ur conference theme is how to mainstream land rights in the context of climate change. This is a very crucial issue. Climate change is a reality. At this point, there are no two thoughts about it.

What we can discuss about is how much the world is taking climate change as seriously as it could. Despite all the resolutions and decisions made in global multilateral conferences, I do not think there is real interest or real commitment to follow those up.

For most part, the commitments are only on paper. In reality they do not really work at the country level because they do not have the proper intent.

We are all victims of climate change, especially countries like Bangladesh. Not only have we been victims of the western world's emissions, but we should also analyze our actions – what are we doing about it? Our country may not contribute to mitigation, but we have initiatives that help mitigate climate change for women, farmers, fishers, and indigenous peoples.

On top of everything, how can we mainstream land tenure? This is very important. Our honorable minister is the chief guest of the conference and he has highlighted the importance of land rights.

Maybe we can look at the means how land is being made more productive, since if the character of the land changes completely, then it changes the way land is owned.

If we prioritize profit maximization that reduces and demeans the rights over land and prioritizes commerce, and businessmen have more control over the land, what is sold in the market is controlled by those who control the land.



If we can bring this context to the discussion, then we will see climate change in a different light and overlook land rights. Thus, commercialization of land should not be the priority.

Finally, my appreciation to all the participants (in person and virtual), presentors, session moderators, our special guests from the Government of Bangladesh, the ALRD team, and our co-organizers – ANGOC, BftW, GFAR/GFAiR, GLTN, and LPF.





The Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/ GFAIR) is a unique global multi-stakeholder platform operating in the agricultural Research and Innovation (R&I) system and driven by more than 900 members from 13 constituencies. This inclusive nature rooted in the regions brings to our dialogues and actions diverse interests, capacities, and perspectives, but with one focus: agricultural R&I that recognizes small-scale producers as key global actors and co-innovators.



The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is an alliance of global, regional, and national partners contributing to poverty alleviation and the Sustainable Development Goals through increased access to land and tenure security for all. The Network's partnership of organizations is drawn from the rural and urban civil society, international research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and international professional bodies. GLTN takes a more holistic approach on land issues and improves on global land coordination through development, dissemination and implementation of pro-poor and gender responsive land tools. These tools and approaches contribute to land reform, good land governance, inclusive land administration, sustainable land management, and functional land sector coordination.



The United Nations Human Settlements Programm (UN Habitat) helps the urban poor by transforming cities into safer, healthier, greener places with better opportunities where everyone can live in dignity. UN-Habitat works with organizations at every level, including all spheres of government, civil society and the private sector to help build, manage, plan and finance sustainable urban development. UN-Habitat envisions cities without slums that are liveable places for all, which do not pollute the environment or deplete natural resources.



The Land Portal Foundation believes access to information is crucial to achieve good land governance and to secure land rights for vulnerable people. The Foundation creates, curates, and disseminates land governance information through linked and open data technologies, and support our partners to take the same steps.



Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World or BftW) is the globally active development and relief agency of the Protestant Churches in Germany working towards empowering the poor and marginalized to improve their living conditions. BftW and partners address issues related to food security, access to water, strengthening of democracy, respecting human rights, keeping peace, and the integrity of creation. BftW takes steps to make sure that there is enough food for everyone.

This publication contains the highlights of the conference on “Mainstreaming land rights in the narrative of climate change: views from the ground”, held on 10-11 October 2023 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The conference brought together CSOs from Asia and Africa to share their experiences and perspectives on land tenure as an essential dimension in understanding and mitigating the impact of climate change. The event was jointly organized by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) in partnership with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR/GFAiR), Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), and Land Portal Foundation. The European Union (EU), the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat), and the Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt/BftW) provided financial contribution for this endeavor.

