

Appendices: 2, SOLAR Program Outcome

Case: 1

Khasland Possession by Landless Peoples Organization (PO) of Agra Village

Abstract: Conflict and vested interest on khasland are common phenomenon in rural Bangladesh due to impact of colonial exit. Landless poor are living upon other's land which is very painful in their life at the age of modern state. Many landless poor are living without having legal access to Government khas land. Ensuring access to Government Khasland by the landless poor legally they are entitled with the National Land Rights Policies such as Land Reform Order 1984, Land Reform Action Program-1987, Agriculture Khasland Management and Settlement Policy-1997 and many circulars and memos are available by the respective authorities but khas land distribution system does not function in favor of the right holders (landless poor) due to illicit linkage of the fake elites with power structure and state functionaries. Consequently, the contest of grabbing by forcing or depriving the poor illegally by the vested interest groups for Khas land often results in violent clashes and threatens human security. Distribution of public khas land among the landless people is highly political- economic requires a visible mobilization by the landless people collectively.

In Agra Village, a numbers of Landless Poor (Legal Right holders of khasland) & their own Self-Help Organization namely Peoples Organization (PO) established land rights and took possession on khas land within the village collectively considering their strength and legacy.

History of Land: Earlier Agra village was surrounded by agriculture land including watershed (beel /low wet land) totally led by the Zamindar of Raja Tango Nath Roy (Land lord). They left for India in 1950, after removal of Zamindari system. Consequently, huge amount of cultivable land, water bodies & watersheds measuring about 38.70 acres (under Mouza G.L. number -145) were left as vested property within Agra Village. Conflicts of Land Governance rooted during the absence of law in relation with land reform during partition and the departure of the British ruler in 1947, but the removal of "Zaminadari" (landlord) system adopted through Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950. After reformation of Law there was so many amount of additional land were as abundant till so many years. After independence of Bangladesh, the land was recorded under S.A. the name of District Commissioner, Thankurgaon district. According to C.S, S.A. and B.S. land survey it was declared khasland /public land property (1 no. khas khatian). At the present total 33.45 acres of land are completely khasland/public lands under the 1 no. khatian. Now some powerful & influential land grabbers are illegally occupied the public/khasland & threatening through false S.A. record & false deed.

Introduction: Agra Village is located in 9 no. Sengaon union at Pirganj Upazila under Thankurgaon district of Bangladesh. There are living 97 landless families (Muslim-4 families & 93 Hindu minority families). On the basis of livelihood context, they are landless, day

labor, Face food insecurity, socially disempowered and deprived from state rights which are legally entitled by the Constitution and different Government policies, Act, Laws & circulars etc.

CDA intervention: According to CDA's vision and mission, CDA is mobilizing rural landless poor people in Dinajpur and Thakurgaon district. Agra is a village in Pirganj Upazila under Thakurgaon district where majority of the peoples are landless. CDA started its development activities during the year 2017 in this village. According to CDA's core program "Building Sustainable Organization" CDA started facilitation to mobilize the landless families and formed para based small association (Samity/group) towards establish broader village based Peoples Organization (PO), for greater solidarity and collectivism to



Sign Board of People Organization (PO)

ensure their right assertion specially on Khasland, access to government agrarian services, economic, social, civil and political rights. Finally declared People Organization (PO) in this Agra Village through united and federated of all para based landless men and women association (Samity/groups) dated 6th June 2017. Part of SOLAR program, CDA facilitated technical knowledge base information through flipchart demonstration session & different training programs for members of Agra Peoples Organization (PO) to increase their capacity in terms of different rights base issues.

Activities:

- Firstly, CDA select a village on the eye survey and started primary work upon action plan with the villagers of Agra for selecting real landless poor and mobilizing Para (Partial area in the village) level landless poor by forming small groups/Samities. Provide awareness building on social, economical, cultural, and ecological & gender related abstracts on the basis of problems in their respective villages/Local context. Landless poor people are aware and find out specific steps to solve the problems. CDA facilitate to make an entry plan to mobilize



Para level groups/samities upon this process as designed as a part of the model of intervention.

- Secondly, Village Level samity/groups are United to federated village based Peoples Organization, started to identification khasland, mobilizing their own resources, developing an integrated planning & mapping, awareness on values, land rights as human rights and building local networks for engagement of civil society.
- Capacity building training for human resource development of Peoples Organization:
 - Different development issues (Institution building/Sangothon Nirman, savings management, Gender issues, Land rights, mobilization & networking, Local government institution services, organic agriculture, different tier base federation building etc) facilitation through flipchart demonstration in group/samity & Peoples Organization (POs) meetings.
 - Provide training on Sustainable Organization and alternative leadership development, Land rights, Role & Responsibilities of land administration & Cooperative management.

Changes Results: After these technical facilitation services, Landless PO members of Agra village built up a strong collective bondage to attain their rights and increase accountability of duty bearers of land officials. They are visited union parishad, union base land office, Upzila Parishad (Sub district level political tier) and sub district land official for khasland information of Agra village. Finally they identified 34 acres of khasland (watershed & paddy land) under Agra Mouza (Khotian # 1, & Dag # 436).

A part of this process, Agra landless People Organization (PO) members seat together and organize meeting to set up their legal strategies. According to opinion and confirmation code of land official “the land is completely khasland /public land and only legal entitlement of certified landless people in this area”, then Agra PO members moved forward to possession of this khasland collectively. First initiatives, they took possession 10 acres of khasland (watershed/beel/lowland) and formed a Fishery Group with 20 members among the landless People Organization (PO) and submitted application to Upazila Fisheries office in sub district for legal registration process. At present, total 97 families are the beneficiaries of these khasland (watershed/beel/lowland). Still 24 acres of Khasland are under the control of power full land grabbers.



Pictures views are possession of khas land by Agra Landless Peoples Organization.

Case study by: PMES team, CDA

Case: 2



khasland reclaimed from land grabbers by the landless poor.

PO members with legal application for claiming their khas land rights

Abstract: Land Rights related conflicts are rooted during the absence of any meaningful land reform since departure of the British in 1947, remove the "Zaminadari" (landlord) system in pre-partition period, and adopted Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950. The Government Republic of Bangladesh took many legislative initiatives such as Land Reform Order 1984, Land Reform Action Program-1987, Agriculture Khasland Management and Settlement Policy-1997 and many circulars and memos were issued by respective authorities for distributing khasland to the landless poor people. Landless poor are living with other land which is very painful in their life under the part of modern state. Many landless poor people are living others peoples land without access of Government khasland. Still millions acres of Khasland are not distributing according to the Government policies and laws because khasland distribution system does not function in favor of the right holders (landless poor) through the link of the elites with power structure and state functionaries. Consequently, the vested interest groups are grabbing khasland illegally and depriving the landless poor from their constitutional rights that often results in violent

clashes and threatens human security. Distribution of public khasland to landless people is high political commitment which needs to be visible through mobilizing landless people. Choto Balihara Village Landless Poor (Legal Right holders of khasland) & their Peoples Organization reclaimed khasland from land grabbers through collective strength and legal base.

History of Land: The earlier Choto Balihara village and surrounding agriland including water bodies are controlled by the Zamindar (Land lord) of Nagendra Nath Roy. They left India after removal of Zamindari system and consequently left huge land & water bodies of about 1400 acres (under C.S. & S.A record). Zamindar Nagendra Nath Roy owned and controlled this land from the year 1840 to 1965. This land is acquired and declared khasland according to Land Reform Order 1972.

Introduction: Choto Balihara Village is located in Atgao union at Bochaganj Upazila under Dinajpur district of Bangladesh. The village is 53 km faraway from Dinajpur district town. CDA facilitated to form People Organization (PO) with 40 nos of landless poor families. On the basis of livelihood context, they are landless, day labor, food insecure, living with other land without dignity, socially disempowered and deprived from citizen rights which are legally entitled in the National Constitution and different Government policies, Act, Laws & circulars etc.

CDA intervention: Institution Building (IB) is a core program of CDA in the name of **Peoples Organization** is constructed with the village people parallel to the local Government Institutions are attainable as a unique people centered pluralistic development efforts as a tool of sustainable intervention strategy inspiring to undertake the supportive role for achieving all sorts of demand driven issues for the rural landless poor especially for defending the ancestral land of ethnic minorities and Indigenous People against the grabbers throughout the plain land. Village Based Institution Building is not only the program of CDA it is also a Process in implementing or mobilizing any People Centered activities or reform/governance issues for social change and development meaning change the lifestyle, attitude and the behavior of the rural disadvantage communities by themselves getting information about their rights as a citizen from local, national and international sources through CDA as a facilitating organization

Activities:

- Firstly, CDA select Choto Balihara through criteria of village selection and started primary work upon action plan with the villagers of Choto Balihara for selecting real landless poor and mobilizing Para (Partial area in the village) level landless poor by forming small groups/samities. Formed 4 nos. of small samities (2 men and 2 women). The names of small samities are Khushi Nari/women Samity (formed-17/03/2017),

Surjamuki (Sunflower) women samity (formed-10/4/2017), Mohana men samity (formed-17/03/2017) and Shyamal men Samity (formed-12/04/2017). CDA facilitate to make an entry plan to mobilize Para level groups/samities upon this process as designed as a part of the model of intervention. Taking decision on social, economical, cultural, environmental and gender related issues.

- Secondly, Village Level samity/groups are united to federated village based Peoples Organization and formally declared Choto Balihara People Organization. PO started to identification of khasland, mobilizing their own resources, developing an integrated planning & mapping, awareness on values, land right as human rights and building local networks for engagement of civil society.
- Capacity building training for human resource development of Peoples Organization:
 - Different development issues (Institution building/Sangothon Nirman, savings management, Gender issues, Land rights, mobilization & networking, Local government institution services, organic agriculture, different tier base federation building etc) facilitation through flipchart demonstration in group/samity & Peoples Organization (POs) meetings.
 - Provide training on Sustainable Organization and Alternative Leadership Development, Land rights, Agriculture land reform & Organic Agriculture.

Changes Results: After formed of Choto Balihara People Organization (PO), Landless PO members are visited Bochaganj Upazila Land Office and meet with land surveyors for identifying of khasland of Choto Balihara Mouza. PO members identified 1.38 acres of khasland in Choto Balihara Mouza (dag # 371 & Khas katian #1). After identification of the khasland, 12 nos. of landless PO families applied for khasland possession according to the legislative process dated 25/09/2017. Local land grabbers Mr. Foyezuddin illegally grabbed this land for many years with the support of local land officials. According to the procedure of application of landless PO members, the land official did not take any legal measure in favor of the landless people. Finally PO members decided and built up a strong collective unity to attain their rights and increase accountability of duty bearers of land officials. A part of this process, Choto Balihara landless People Organization (PO) members seat together and organize meeting to set up their legal strategies. According to regulatory right of landless people, PO members moved forward to reclaim and possession of this khasland collectively. Land grabbers attacked to these land families by terror gangs and broken their houses and litigate false cases to landless PO members. PO members submit application to CDA for legal aid support. During this conflicting event on public khasland, local government chief (union parishad chairman- a local level political tier) is playing of disfavor role with landless people. Beyond this threats and straggles, the landless poor families are living in this khasland.



Picture views are possession and reclaimed khasland from Land Grabbers.

Case study by PMES team, CDA.