

1 General information.

1.1 Title

[Short title, no more than 10 words]

Recover & Protection of Land from Grabbers through Strengthening Peoples Organization (PO).

1.2 Abstract

[Summarise the case study in 50-100 words]

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. According to the Bangladesh land reform ordinance 1984, landless poor villagers of Dalla, 9 no Vyail union, Chirirbandar, Dinajpur district is started move forward to recover public (Khasland) land from land grabbers. Distribution of public khasland to landless people is high political commitment which needs to visible through mobilize landless people. Landless villagers are carried out a long drawn struggle to establish their rightful ownership of khaslands.

1.3 Principal organizations involved

[List full name and acronym of the organisations that had a principal role in the case study – max 5]

Community Development Association (CDA)

1.4 Location

[Specify name of municipality, district, country, region - as applies]

Village: Dalla, Union Parishad: 9 no Vyail union parishad, Chirirbandar sub district, Dinajpur district, Bangladesh

Dalla Village MAP:



1.5 Target audience

[Indicate the target audience –the type of organisations– of this case study]

Civil society organizations, land rights activists, human rights defenders, think tanks, research organizations, Policy makers, Parliamentarian, caucus etc.

1.6 Timeline of the case

[Start and end of the activities described in section 2.3]

1995 to 2015

1.7 Keywords

[List up to five keywords not mentioned in the title]

Public land (Khasland), Landless poor, Peoples Organization (PO), land grabbers, access to land and natural resources, Right, Inheritor, Possession, Land Governance, Violence, Threat

1.8 ILC Commitments

[Indicate to which of the ten ILC commitments this Case Study contributes – indicate at most 5]

✓	respect, protect and strengthen the land rights of women and men living in poverty;
	ensure equitable land distribution and public investment that supports small-scale farming systems;
✓	recognize and protect the diverse tenure and production systems upon which people's livelihoods depend;
✓	ensure gender justice in relation to land;
	respect and protect the inherent land and territorial rights of indigenous peoples;
	enable the role of local land users in territorial and ecosystem management;
	ensure that processes of decision-making over land are inclusive;
✓	ensure transparency and accountability;
✓	prevent and remedy land grabbing;
✓	Respect and protect the civil and political rights of human rights defenders working on land issues.

2 Case description

2.1 Background issues

[Describe in 200-400 words the context of this case study, starting with the general (global/national) context, followed by the local context, and ending with a precise formulation of the problems that needed to be addressed.]

Global and National level context realized that land is one of the key resources to facilitate the maximization of social and economic rights towards equitable society and sustainable use. After exit of the colonial era, the land and natural resource related conflict are ground

reality over the sub continent. Bangladesh is high densely populated country rather than natural resources and existence of inequality, discrimination & lack of legislative enforcement. Land Rights Defenders involvement is being increased due to conflict over the rights to land and natural resources multiply in country context overall Bangladesh. Day by day the growing number of threats resulted dispossession from land, forced displacement, land grabbing, killings and violence victimized the activists, land rights defenders, IPs, ethnic minorities, and poor landless in a planned way by both states and non-states actors. The risk of human rights violations is particularly heightened when the rights of poor, landless and indigenous peoples and the needs of their local communities are not taken properly into account. Northern Region of Bangladesh especially the context is related with land and agrarian political-economy. Majority of the land is still in the hands of a few people; about 71% of cultivable land is owned by 22% of rich and absentee landowners compared to 5% land owned by 45% of small and marginal farmers, 40% of rural people are absolutely landless. Million hectares of public land/khaslands are still undistributed among the landless poor households due to lack of policy related information and lack of implementation measures relating to good governance as well as the land grabbers are more powerful connected with high officials.

The propose case is symbolic of the struggle by the landless poor to establish their rights over public land. The earlier Dalla village and surrounded agriland under the Zamindar of Mr. Kalinath Baksi and his inheritors Mr. Protab Baksi and Mr. Dhiren Baksi. They left in India after removal of Zamindari system and consequently left huge of land & water bodies it about 1000 acres. Part of these results, huge public (khas) land are under the controlled & used by different elites land grabbers. There are living many landless poor who are day labouring and sharecropping with elite land grabbers. **After 1984, landless poor is identified 11.82 (homestead land -2.99 acres & water bodies-8.83 acres) of public (khasland)** through visit the district land record office which is grabbing with false information and illegally. After discover the status of these khas land, started thinking to visualize through mobilizing landless poor of Dalla village.

2.2 Solution

[Describe in 200-400 words the solution, i.e. the “good practice”, proposed in this case study.]

At first they negotiated with Union Parishad Chairman (Chief of local Government Institution), union level land officials, sub district level officials and finally district level officials. None of them not taken it properly into the account to solve this according to the constitutional rights of landless poor. Once upon, the landless poor of dalla village became united strongly and refused the part of share of crops to the Land grabbers (illegally land occupants and user as fake owner) after the harvest. Consequently, land grabbers started threats and physical violence to the landless poor. As a result, very often the Landless poor were facing physical attack on the way of going to market, Prayer place (Mosque) and to Agriculture field by the gang of land grabbers. During the year from 2002 to, 2013 & 2015 land grabbers done remarkable violence and continue inhuman behaviour and attack time to time to the landless poor and burnt their houses with properties. Afterward, that inhuman events by grabbers came to the knowledge of CDA, CDA started its mission work

along with the press media against the grabbers and the vested interest groups. So that the threatened landless people are brought under the security and can enjoy fundamental human rights. Besides CDA, started providing legal aid support to the victims of Dalla village to face the dozens of false cases lodged against the landless poor.

During the year 2014, Community Developed Association (CDA) started to form Community-based self-help organization and facilitate to set-up an institutional mechanism as Village Based Peoples Organization (PO) with a view to build unity, mutual cooperation, planning & mobilization and connecting to organize networking under the theme of Sustainable Organization for Land Rights and Agrarian Reform (SOLAR) program. Such unity is organized as an association namely "Dalla Jonosongthon" constituted with 110 members equally male and female members under 4(2 male & 2 female) Para level samities/small groups. CDA' has been providing them a comprehensive support to strengthen their capacity in terms Institution building, mobilizing to have access to land rights , legislative function, protection through legal support, negotiating skills, leadership development, linkage building and convergence with the local Government.

The major challenges are being faced by landless poor in attending schedule visit in the court. Besides, regular threat and false cases are still are lodged in the court in the same way..

During, long struggle & regulatory movement by the landless poor collectively along with the moral support from the local and national engagement of the civil society the Government Officials has circulated an Order to provide the land lease contract among the landless poor according to entitlement procedure for living on Khas land. Currently, all the landless poor are mostly enjoying the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Civil and Political Rights.

2.3 Activities

[Describe in 500-800 words the activities implemented to achieve the solution of 2.2. This description should be as concrete as possible, indicating the order of the activities, their timeline, and the partners involved.]

- Firstly, CDA select a village on the eye survey and started primary work upon action plan with the villagers of Dalla for selecting real landless poor and mobilizing Para (Partial area in the village) level landless poor by forming small groups/samities. Provide awareness on social, economic, cultural, and ecological & gender related abstracts on the basis of problems in their respective villages/national context. Landless poor 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 of khasland land, 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 facilitation through flipchart demonstration in group/samity & Peoples Organization (POs) meetings.
- Provide training on sustainable organization and alternative leadership development, Land rights & role of land administration, financial management, land rights, land laws and land administration, Land rights and land laws on IPs and land administration, communication, networking and advocacy & mobilization..
- Networking and advocacy: Meeting with union parishad chairmen, meeting with police officials, communication with land officials, memorandums submit to sub district authority, district authority and land ministry, media campaign & organize meeting with press media.
- **Legal Aid Support:** The decision of the **Janosongthon(PO)** members to occupy the land and water bodies faced an immediate challenge from a group of people who claimed to be the legal owners according to land rights laws & policy instruments like 1974, 1984, 1987, 1997, 2001, 2009

2.4 Importance of the case for people-centered land governance

[Describe in 50-200 words the importance of this case study for people-centred land governance. People-centred land governance is the term adopted by ILC members to define forms of land governance (referring to formal or informal land tenure arrangements and/or land reform measures) that promote human dignity and wellbeing, poverty eradication, social justice and gender equality, inclusive and diverse societies, and protection of human rights. The values and principles that underpin people-centred land governance are in line with international benchmarks including the Voluntary Guidelines. In Antigua in 2013 the members of the International Land Coalition agreed on ten commitments that are essential to achieving people-centred land governance.]

The case is sign of the history under regulatory struggle for ensuring the land rights of landless poor men and women who are living in poverty. It is a significant message to local land grabbers and other vested groups for their future caution, prevention and remedy against land grabbing. The case is demonstrates the strong need to respect and protect the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Civil and Political Rights landless poor and human rights defenders who are working on land issues. Secure right to land is the key to have access to shelter, employment-income, food,health,clothings,and dignity as well as access to guarantee scheme of the government services, and the right to association is a greater mechanism for decision-making through democratization from the household to community levels. Land right is best fit to achieve four of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) like **Goal-1:** Ending Poverty, **Goal-2:** Ensuring food security, **Goal-5:** Achieving gender equality and empowering women and **Goal-11:** Making cities and human settlement inclusive. Land rights are best placed under **Target -1.4:** would capture gender equality and progress of all people's on –the-ground rights to land, property and natural resources. The case is very important to address preliminary objectives (Part-1, SL#1) and Principles of implementation (Part-2, SL # 3B) of Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

3 Changes

3.1 Baseline

[Describe in 50-200 words, and with concrete qualitative or quantitative data, the baseline situation in the area implicated by the activities]

Earlier, poor villagers are Landless and disorganized, no formal organized mechanism among the landless poor. No recognition of their human dignity, faced discrimination under rule of law and land reform, lack of awareness on equity, justice and gender discrimination, lack of collective engagement for tapping their land rights.

- Earlier living 80 households and 60% households are Landless.
- Landless poor, living with poverty, living with other land, vulnerable house structure with low cost traditional materials.
- Income scope was only day labouring, no work no food.
- Labour wage was very poor. Saling advance labour for maintaining livelihood.
- Poor income, absent own production scope.
- 80% landless poor households have no capacity to rearing of livestock (Cow & Goat).
- 80% population was living with food insecurity.
- 80% landless poor household living through day labouring.
- No public facilities, road, electricity, safety net services, lack of education (primary, secondary & tertiary) facilities

Khasland Rights Instruments:

- East Bengal Acquisition and Tenancy Act-1950
- Bangladesh Land holding limitation order-1972 (PO-98)
- The Bangladesh State Acquisition and Tenancy(4th amendment) Order-1974 (PO-135)
- President's Order LXI-1975
- Land Reform Order-1984
- Land Reform Action Programme-1987
- Agriculture Khasland Management and Settlement Policy-1997
- Circulars and memos.

3.2 Achievements

[Describe in 200-400 words, and with concrete qualitative or quantitative data, the achievements in the area after the implementation of the activities. If the activities described in 2.3 finished many years ago, describe also the current situation in the area.]

Finally Dalla village landless poor and their Peoples Organization (PO) took possession of **11.82 (homestead land -2.99 acres & water bodies-8.83 acres) of public (khasland)** through CDA's facilitation support. The homestead land (**2.99 acres**) is divided in individual parcels by 45 households (25 IPs, 15 Muslim & 5 Hindu) whereas the water bodies (**8.83 acres**) are put under collective management of the PO where engaging 120 households (75 IPs., Muslim 40, Hindu-6 households). Through this, the members undertake fishery projects with collective investment and the profits are shared among all of the landless households'

members. Finally got legal lease document by the land official and sub district administration authority.

Earlier situation changed after the settlement in public khasland and other services: Improved the baseline situation.

- 160 households are living and 80% landless poor households living on the public (Khasland).
- Landless poor are now living without hunger, living in their own houses on leased khasland, thatched house structure is changed and living with improved house made by C.I. Sheet roof.
- Income option increased and food security improved.
- Labour wage significantly improved.
- Income increased by own means of production.
- 100% landless poor households created scope to rearing of livestock (Cow & Goat) in their homestead.
- 100% of population are living with food security.
- 100% landless poor household build their confidence through diverse production options & day labouring.
- 100% of population are enjoying public facilities such road, electricity, safety net services, education (primary, secondary & tertiary).
- 100 % of landless poor are enjoying the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,..
- NGO services are increasing like micro credit & other extension services/support etc
- Increasing Identity, leadership, mobility & negotiating skills collectively and representing
- Reduce health related morbidity.
- Finally, **the changes that the ownership of land brought about in the lives of the PO members genuinely transformed their life, ensuring their human rights and dignity.**

3.3 Evidence

[List or describe in 50-200 words the evidence or independent reports that testify the achievements described in 3.2]

The biggest proof of the successful struggle by CDA and the village based Peoples Organization (PO) members is their ownership over the land and the water bodies in its working areas..

CDA's struggle also contributed to the broader debate and subsequent policy changes in the administration of 'khas' land in Bangladesh. This has been documented quite widely in various INGO visit reports, regular circulated by monthly update, CDA barta (quarterly bulletin)/ publication to NGOs, GOs, & INGOs. During the year 2017 (from 28th July & 1st July), Mr. Gobinda Shaha (Cell: +880 1755508983, email: cssgobinda@gmail.com), Consultant, Consultancy Support Service (CSS), Bangladesh for Bread for the World, Germany visited the site and reported to BftW, Germany. Other evidences are Memorandum, Application letter to Land Ministry Office, Deputy Commissioner, False cases document, Sub district level NGO coordination meeting minutes, Jonochesta (a fortnightly voice of poor people) news and POs resolutions etc.

4 Lessons learned

4.1 Lessons for civil society

[Describe in 100-200 words the lessons or advise for civil society organisations that would want to replicate the same solution. The lessons need to derive directly from the activities described in section 2.3 or from the changes described in section 3. The lessons need to reflect the view of the organisation that implemented the activities.]

Landless poor is suffering by the discrimination role by the state actors and consequently they are facing diverse & complex livelihood environment. Regarding Khasland distribution, policy and grabber's level challenges & its consequences are injustice, human rights violation & social insecurity. The distribution system does not function in favour of the poor through the link of the elites with the power structure and state functionaries. A collaborative & convergent approach with all the relevant stakeholders is necessary for the successful conclusion of any initiatives. The role of civil society and civil society organization are requiring towards supportive for ensuring human security. According to vision and mission, CDA is played a remarkable vital facilitating role on regulatory mobilization of landless poor in Village base People Organization (PO) to set up People Centred Development strategies for building unity, organization/association, issue identification, solidarity, networking, mass mobilization towards protect, respect and fulfilment, grass-roots policy advocacy and engagement, control over the land and natural resources. As results, Dalla village landless poor moved forward and protected their land rights through utilize unity, organizational strength, collective strength/power and communal harmony among similar groups in same village like, Muslim-hindu-Christian along with non-religious group the Indigenous peoples (IPs) and other ethnic minorities are together as well.

4.2 Lessons for policy makers

[Describe in 100-200 words the lessons or advise for policy makers that would want to replicate the same solution. The lessons need to derive directly from the activities described in section 2.3 or from the changes described in section 3. The lessons need to reflect the view of the organisation that implemented the activities.]

The growing assertion of the poor and marginalized for their rights is a reality across Bangladesh and also all over the world. The quest for social justice, human rights and dignity and decent livelihood is the driving force in this upsurge. Policy makers should be aware of the fact that an apparently isolated incident, however insignificant, can lead to broader changes if not properly understood and addressed, as CDA's case demonstrates. The lone struggle of CDA and its CBO/PO members finally made important contributions to policy changes governing 'khas' land distribution and agrarian reforms in Bangladesh.

A mutual supportive role and voice are required by the states globally for the non state actors by distributing land as a natural resources for overcoming inequalities. Ensuring MIS and establish appropriate monitoring & evaluation system for measuring the effective implementation of policies, laws and institutional frame work, land official activities. Upon findings on monitoring and evaluations, it is require to policy adjustment or review for addressing inconsistency, contextual inappropriateness and governance issues.

4.3 Challenges

[Describe in 50-200 words the main challenges encountered during the implementation of the solution. The challenges should be related to the activities described in section 2.3 and should reflect the view of the organisation that implemented the activities.]

Land grabbers site challenges:

- Continuing constitute of false cases and threats.
- Land grabbers under the umbrella of vested groups, consequently landless poor deprive support from different corner.
- Hardship to maintaining cost for attending schedule visit in the Court against False cases by land grabbers.
- Inadequate legal aid support.

Policy level Challenges:

- State Actors are not implementing actual policy clauses which is mandatory for landless poor and denial the policy clauses.
- Jalmohal (public/khasland water bodies) Management Policy -2009 (23rd June 2009-191) is not landless poor friendly which completely bias with the name of fisherman & its association.
- Corruption.
- Political biasness & influences.

4.4 Follow-up

[Reflect in 50-200 words on the potential for replication or scaling up of the solution. In this reflection, take into account the contextual factors that facilitated/complicated the implementation of the solution.]

The case can offer an example for potential replication in other regions of the world. What is necessary to take into account here is an inclusive approach that involves all stakeholders for strategy and a determination to continue with a long drawn-out process in terms of legal redress (any short-term approach is unlikely to yield the intended outcomes). CDA is facilitating following follow up for addressing contextual factors: Strengthening Village Based Peoples Organization (POs)

- Establish strong leadership of Peoples Organization (POs) for reducing poverty
- More inclusion of Civil Society for ensuring human rights, good governance, and people centred land governance, protect ecology.
- Raising People Voice and advocacy for Agrarian policy reform, peace building and social harmony, exercise national values to protect and prevent extremism.
- Build relationship with local and national institution.
- Legal aid support.
- PO will transform in Cooperative Society and take registration from Cooperative Department.

5 Supporting material

5.1 References and further reading

[List the publications referenced in the text above, other relevant publications, and articles in the media. Give the full bibliographic reference for each publication/article. Limit the number of references to the five most relevant ones.]

- CDA News bulletin (English).
- CDA monthly news update.
- Jonochesta (a voice of poor people) news.
- Quarterly CDA Barta (Bangla version)
- INGO visit reports

5.2 Photos, vidéos

[List up to five links to web pages with photos, maps, videos, or other audio-visual material]





5.3 Callouts

[Transcribe 1-2 quotes of people implicated in this good practice that exemplify the spirit of the good practice]

Bishu Saren-IP: Chairperson of Dalla People Organization expresses his feeling that our land rights assertion through Peoples Organization (Jonosongotton) become unity, collective strength and built social harmony among our three communities; Indigenous People (IPs), Muslim and Hindu.

Md. Foizur Rahma: Secretary of Dalla People Organization expresses his feeling that success of land rights struggle, attain freedom to live in homestead, able to planting fruit tree in our homestead land, cow & goat rearing in homestead, now we have existence & dignity, children educating soundly and able to collective fish culture in water bodies & get benefit collectively, such kind of rights are completely absent in our livelihood in earlier.

5.4 Contacts

[Full address and contact details]

Community Development Association (CDA)

Shah I Mobin Jinnah, Executive Director

House No-51, Bloc No-01, Upa-Shahar

Post Code-5200, Dinajpur, Bangladesh

Phone: +880-531-64428

Cell phone: + 88 01713195000

Email: edcda08@gmail.com,

Last update: [November 23, 2017]

Authors: [*author from partner organisation*] and [*author ILC Secretariat*]

Author from partner organization of CDA:

Tapan Kanti Dey

Md. Abdus Sattar

Eng. Md. Mostafizur Rahman

Mst. Shamim

Bimola Roy

Md. Minhazul Islam Chowdhury

Suggested citation: Mr. Dey, Tapan Kanti, Md. Sattar, Abdus, Eng. Md. Rahman, Mostafizur, Shamim, Roy, Bimola, and Chowdhury Minhazul Islam. (2017), Recover & Protection of Land from Grabbers through Strengthening Peoples Organization (PO), Case study of the ILC Database of Good Practices. Rome: ILC.

[Total word count: 2500 - 3000 words]