

5.22 COMMUNITY-BASED DECISION-MAKING MECHANISMS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS ON LAND RIGHTS AND ACCESS AND CONTROL OVER ESSENTIAL FOOD-PRODUCING RESOURCES TO PROMOTE FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, EQUITABLE LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS, EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE, AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS.

What problem is the solution trying to address?

The initiative is trying to contribute solutions to hunger and poverty caused by inequitable distribution and control over resources, vulnerability of smallholder farmers to climate change and natural disasters, lack of participation in decision-making and governance, and low returns to the livelihood of smallholder farmers.

Specifically, the initiative will focus on contributing solutions to addressing the vulnerability of the communities to the effects of climate change and economic shocks brought by the pandemic - as the landless and people who do not have access to land and resource rights are amongst the most affected sectors by these anthropological phenomena. The COVID-19 pandemic with its travel restrictions, limited physical contact and prohibition of mass gatherings, has disrupted the food system resulting in inadequate food supply to consumers and surplus products by the producers.

With the lack of land ownership and resource rights experienced by the majority of the smallholders, they are often faced with landgrabbing and unfair contracts by businesses - resulting in land conflicts.

Further, with the prevailing food systems favored by the majority of the population, smallholder farmers are usually left with little to no support (in terms of inputs, infrastructure, marketing, and recognition) from the local governments.

Gender inequality in the farming sector has also been a prevalent concern. With women often less recognized as producers, their access to resources and credit is less.

Lastly, during this pandemic, civil society has witnessed national governments enacting laws and programs in response to the pandemic without or with limited consultations with CSOs and communities. The solutions and health/safety protocols enacted are regarded as blanket national solutions, ignoring differences in local contexts and situations.

What, in brief, is the solution?

Seen as a crucial step towards better planning that is suited to the needs of the smallholders, the initiative will conduct a comprehensive situational profiling of selected farming communities focused on land tenure security, resource management, community participation, gender equity, health and food security, socioeconomic status. In particular:

- Land tenure and access to food
- Purchasing power
- Health and quality of food
- Community participation
- Sustainability of agricultural practices
- Views and practices related to gender and women's rights
- Involvement of the youth
- Effects of climate change, plus ways related to mitigation and adaptation
- Peace and presence/absence of land conflicts
- Short, medium, and long-term effects of COVID

(The list of thematic areas will be finalized during the updating of the framework)

The information from the comprehensive profiles will be used as inputs/bases for the preparation of village-level development plans of partner-communities. Resource mobilization, including the lobbying for the integration of community plans into local government development plans, to support the identified programs, projects, and activities in the said community plans will be undertaken.

In addition, the data will be utilized for studying the establishment of food hubs in the communities that will make local food systems more resilient to shocks - by reducing food kilometers. Shortening the food distance means connecting the producers and the consumers through an integrated food value chain. With established linkages, the food supply chain becomes more efficient as production is anchored on consumers' demand, delivery of products targeted, and wastage minimized. By emphasizing shorter supply chains and local territorial markets, food hubs will also stimulate localized development and employment, while reducing carbon emissions that are usually associated with transporting food, goods and people over wide distances.

At the local, national and regional levels, the data from the profiles will also be used for policy works on the protection of land and resource rights, gender equity, building resiliency and ensuring food security

What was/ were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

The identified solutions are sourced from the [ANGOC Statement on Protecting land Rights and Ensuring Food Security in the Time of COVID-19](#) - a result of the collaboration of 12 NGOs across eight Asian countries (who are Members of the ANGOC Network) calling for immediate actions from the global community, national governments, and civil society in resolving the systemic inequities that render people susceptible to the effects of the global pandemic. The Statement calls for, among others, the restructuring of the food systems, asserting that secure land rights for all will be integral to achieving food security in a post-COVID-19 world.

The ideas/solutions identified also came from the sharing of the ANGOC Members during the celebration of the World Food Day in 2020 where various interventions implemented were shared as well as the proposed solutions for short- and medium-term issues.

The identified solutions are also based on a village-level initiative in 1998 called the *200 Village Project*, implemented in nine (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia) Asian countries wherein the food security of smallholder farmers were assessed in the household level. Results of the initiative became instrumental for CSOs' evidence-based advocacies relating to food and land tenure security.

The solutions were also derived as a result of analyses from other ANGOC studies including: (a) 2018 State of Land Rights and Land Governance in 8 Asian Countries, (b) 2018 Land Conflict Monitoring in 6 Asian Countries, (c) 2017 Continuum of Land Rights and Food Security in Cambodia, Nepal, and Philippines, (d) 2018 Philippines study on tenure and climate change, among others.

Having a baseline information (particularly on land conflict records and cases in 6 Asian countries) from ANGOC and Partners' ongoing works have shown its positive uses and relevance in the advocacy work. Through these data, governments have been engaged, and not only the land conflict situation became more visible but the CSOs have been recognized for such initiative - accrediting CSO data thus increasing its credibility.

In 2018, a first attempt to link the relationship of land tenure and climate change was conducted for a Philippine study. At present, with the expansion of this particular initiative to five more Asian countries, the recognition of climate change as a factor of food insecurity is becoming even more evident. Further, the role of climate change in food security has also been amplified as we see and recognize that the current pandemic (caused by a zoonotic disease) is a result, among other factors, of climate change.

Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?

This initiative meets the key criteria outlined in this document.

1. The impact will be broad and wide-reaching in scale, since it will involve multiple small villages in 8 countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka). The information to be gathered will then snowball into the creation of community plans.

2. The initiative is also actionable, since there is foreseen support from both CSOs, villages, and even the government. Local and national governments will benefit from the data generated and analyzed that will be useful in informing their policies and programs, especially because these wide-scale rural community information-gathering initiatives are rarely conducted by governments. The ANGOC network also has enough experience with implementing a similar initiative in 1998. Plus, since most ANGOC members are national networks themselves, it will be able to access a wide outreach of local CSOs and community organizations in the 8 countries.
3. The initiative will be sustainable since the information-gathering will be used to craft community plans that will outline how the issues faced by communities will be addressed through programs that they themselves may implement. The information will be instrumental in planning and execution of local food hubs that will ensure food security at the village level. Moreover, the ground-level information will be used by communities and CSOs to inform further actions and campaigns.

The initiative also addresses the other criteria:

1. It has foreseen positive effects on ensuring equitable livelihood opportunities, advancing human health, and regenerating environmental integrity, with focus on youth, women, marginalized populations.
2. It is a large departure from the usual practice of the top-down approach in policy making and planning, and addresses the lack of importance provided to information from the ground.
3. The impacts are foreseen to persist to the medium- and long-term given that community plans, campaign strategies, and policies will be crafted from the information to be made available.
4. Gender equality and women's empowerment in food consumption and production systems will also be included in the framework.

What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

From the presentations of the results of various efforts on land and land data monitoring and household-level food security assessment (including the 200 Village Project), there has been recognition by the government that available data is not sufficient to assess local needs.

During an engagement initiative of ANGOC and CSO partners with the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) in eight Asian countries in 2018-19, the NSOs have expressed their openness to collaborate with CSOs on improving available data on land, in particular on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 1.4.2 (on tenure security).

In an ongoing implementation of the *Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR)* of the UN Habitat's Global Land Tool Network with the Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. and ANGOC in Northern Mindanao, Philippines, the data from the land tenure inventory of the Project are being recognized by their local government units regarding the house and farm lots of the partner indigenous people.

For this particular initiative, since similar actions have been previously done during the 200 Village Project in 1998, the ANGOC Network will be able to revive and update the framework suited to the present situation.

Through its track record of conducting research and evidence-based policy work, the ANGOC network has established its credibility and reliability among governments in Asia. Some leaders from the ANGOC network are recognized as key resource persons and technical working group members of formal government mechanisms in their respective home countries.

Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, conversely, contexts for which it is not well-suited at all?

The current framework that will be updated has been applied only to rural communities in Asia. The ANGOC network has not yet tested its application outside of Asia or its application to the urban context

What do you think are the key actions required to address this solution?

Public policies

- At the public policy level, memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or partnership agreements between implementing CSOs and local government units (LGUs) are needed to ensure cooperation and the smooth implementation of the initiative, given that the government will also benefit from the data to be collected. Data to be generated will be analyzed, consolidated, and used for policy work on food and tenure security, health and nutrition, climate change, agricultural technologies, etc.
- The implementation of this initiative will also be dependent on the health protocols in place due to the pandemic. The workplan would have to be adjusted based on the restrictions that will be in place in the 8 countries.
- Following-up on the actions that will come out from this intervention will also need LGU/government support.
- **Civil society actions**
 - The success of the intervention will depend on the willingness and commitment of local CSOs to be part of the process, and their understanding of the framework.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The table presents the activities, outputs, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes of the identified components towards contributing solutions to hunger and poverty caused by inequitable distribution and control over resources, low returns to the livelihood of smallholder farmers, and lack of smallholders' participation in decision making. The main components include the (i) Comprehensive profiling of rural households, (ii) Inputs to village-level development plans, (iii) Establishment of local food hubs, and (iv) Local-national-regional level policy work.

	Comprehensive profiling of rural households	Inputs to village-level development plans	Establishment of local food hubs	Local, National and Regional-level policy work
Activities	<p>Participatory assessment/planning involving the CSOs and communities in 8 countries, with ample participation of women and youth</p> <p>Updating of the 1998 200-Village Project framework</p> <p>Creation of questionnaires/ data gathering tools, enumerators' manual, and database</p> <p>Hiring and training of local enumerators</p> <p>Conduct of data-gathering</p> <p>Analysis of findings, recommendations, production of national reports</p> <p>Conduct of local multi-stakeholder dialogues to discuss findings and recommendations</p>	<p>Community meetings to discuss findings from data-gathering in preparation for the updating or creation of their community plans</p> <p>Community's participation in the village-level development planning to input their agenda based on the community plans they prepared</p> <p>Capacity building interventions on planning, negotiation, disaster preparedness, etc.</p> <p>National workshops on good practices and sharing/ exchange among CSOs and local communities</p> <p>Regional workshop on tooling of approaches used for planning, participatory enumeration, etc.</p>	<p>Conduct of feasibility studies on establishing local food hubs based on the information gathered in the comprehensive household profiling</p> <p>Engaging local governments and other stakeholders (i.e., producers and consumer groups)</p>	<p>Presentation of results and dialogue (using the data from the comprehensive profiles, and experiences from the engagement with the local government units and establishment of food hubs) with the relevant government agencies</p>

	<p>National multi-stakeholder dialogues to discuss findings and recommendations</p> <p>Regional workshop and sharing of experiences/findings</p>			
Outputs	<p>Comprehensive profiles of rural households focused on the thematic areas above</p> <p>Analysis of the short- and medium-term impacts of COVID-19 on communities</p> <p>Communities' increased awareness of the analysis of risk and vulnerability of communities to climate change</p>	<p>Village-level (local government unit) plans mainstreaming the proposed projects of the communities on improving their tenure rights and smallholder farming</p> <p>Concept proposals based on needs and resource analysis identified in the community plans prepared by communities with the support of local CSOs</p> <p>Training courses implemented on increasing the resilience of communities to climate change</p>	<p>Assessment of the feasibility of establishing local food hubs, including the identification of appropriate areas for food hub establishment</p>	<p>Policy briefs on tenure, food security, and its relations with gender, governance, youth, climate change</p> <p>Governments expressing support to the advocacy on tenure rights protection, and promotion of smallholder agriculture and establishment of local food hubs</p> <p>Policy proposals to address the short- and medium-term impacts of COVID-19 on communities</p> <p>Policy proposals to mitigate the impacts of climate change on tenure, and food security and nutrition</p>
Short Term Outcomes	<p>Information available to inform local community planning, CSO policy work, and government programs.</p> <p>Information available for comparison of national and regional rural communities across several indicators/ thematic areas.</p>	<p>Implemented projects suited to the needs and resources of the smallholders</p> <p>Support (e.g. inputs, infrastructure, marketing) provided to the smallholders by the local government unit (village level)</p>	<p>Shortened distance between producers and consumers through the establishment of local food hubs</p>	<p>Mainstreaming of the advocacy (tenure, food security, and its relations with gender, youth, climate change, and COVID-19) in the local, national, and regional agenda</p> <p>Formed links between and among communities from the 8 countries, for solidarity and sharing lessons from initiatives</p> <p>Enhanced capacities of communities in defending their land and resource rights, enhancing food security, adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change, improving resilience to pandemics</p>
Long Term Outcomes /Impacts	<p>Baseline that may be used by communities, CSOs, and government for program/ policy monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>Strong, stable, local food supply chains that have fair prices, that ensure food security among communities, and are resilient to external pressures such as climate change and economic shocks</p>		<p>Effective and gender-responsive policies and programs on securing land rights, ensuring food security, building resiliency of local communities to climate change and pandemics, enacted and implemented at local, national, and regional levels</p>

- *If there are any major assumptions that must hold for the theory of change to be valid, these should be stated. Similarly, if there are any key risks or potential unintended consequences of enacting this solution if those assumptions do not hold, those should also be mentioned.*

One major assumption for this initiative is that its implementation will have the support of and will be done in partnership with local governments. This will provide the initiative with a sense of legitimacy and will also allow LGUs to see how this pursuit may contribute to local government planning.

The ongoing pandemic however, makes the mode of implementation uncertain. It is not yet clear whether regulations and restrictions will be lifted by the time this initiative is being rolled out. These restrictions may impose limitations on the workplan.

Another identified risk is the uncertain peace and order situation in local communities. Given that many rural communities are involved in land and resource conflicts, or are caught between armed conflicts. These security situations would have to be assessed before the implementation of the project, to prevent any negative consequences to the communities, the CSOs, and/or the enumerators.

Communities' expectations should also be managed, as there is no certainty that the activities and programs outlined in their plans would be funded and launched as actual projects.