

## Concept Note

### **Expert Consultation Workshop on Land tenure and disaster and its social and gender impact in the Asia and the Pacific Region**

**14-15 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand**

#### **Background**

Land is a scarce resource, especially since we consume more resources in our search for a better life. Effective land management is critical to the well-being of the planet, its people and their livelihoods. The lack of efficiency in land planning and management is leading to disasters, such as floods, land slides, land degradation and desertification, climate change and biodiversity loss. The last Rio+20 conference reiterated the economic and social significance of good land management, and its contribution to economic growth, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food security, eradicating poverty, the empowerment of women, addressing climate change and improving water availability. Effective management of land becomes a critical factor in the face of increasing demand for land from individuals and corporates for subsistence and profit.

As population increases, there is a corresponding increase in demand for land, natural resources and finished goods, not to mention luxury goods and exotic items. To feed this need, large-scale exploitation of land and other natural resources for dams, mines, plantations, farming, industry and housing are increasing in the developing and least developed countries. For example, development of plantations on hill slopes is leading to large-scale destruction of forests, displacement of indigenous people, soil erosion, flooding and land slides. The rampant mining in the mineral rich zones is leading to health hazards for people who live around the mines, often very close to the mines since there are no zoning regulations with respect to mines. The pollution from the mines affects both people and their livelihood.

However, the impact of such land exploitation is not well-understood, especially in the context of disasters. Far less attention is paid to the gendered impact of such disasters. This workshop will compile and review case studies that document the gendered impact when disasters and land management intersect.

For the purpose of this workshop, the term disasters will include incidences that impose both acute as well as gradual impact on human beings. Specifically, it will include land tenure issues caused by natural disaster (such as flood) and development-induced land tenure problems such as through infrastructure development, agriculture development, mining, etc. Special focus is given to the gendered impact under such changes.

Following FAO's policy on gender equality, there is a need to develop evidence-based cases on the gender inequality situations and to disseminate women's needs and priorities in all aspects of rural life. With rapidly changing socio-economic and political situation scene in Asia, it is essential to understand the recent development on the linkages between investment, land tenure/ land use, and its social and gender impact. At the same time, a better analysis is required to examine the relations between such changes in land tenure/ land use and natural disaster. Studies about the social and gender impact of such situations will illuminate how policies and programs may improve the resilience of poor women and men and ensure equality and social justice in the communities.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of workshop are:

- 1) to develop and share case studies that illuminate the issues and concerns in this interdisciplinary juncture of gender, disaster and land tenure;
- 2) to learn and understand the dynamic situation with respect to gender, land tenure and disasters in Asia-Pacific region;

- 3) to identify topics for future research to contribute to the improvement of policies and programmes to support rural women and men.

## **Output**

- 1) Stocktaking of present knowledge and practice related to issues at the intersection of gender, disaster and land tenure;
- 2) Publication of case studies that highlight the issues and concerns in this area;
- 3) Future research agenda / problems identified related to gender, disaster and land tenure in Asia.

## **Expected participants (10-15 case studies will be presented; total about 30-40 participants)**

One or two participant(s) each from countries in Asia (10-15 countries), representatives from FAO, AIT, and other international organisations in the region. The target countries are Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, PNG, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

## **Structure of the Workshop and Provisional Agenda**

The two-day regional workshop will be organized as follows:

**Day 1** will begin with a key note address. This will be followed by the presentation of case studies from different countries. These case studies will highlight the issues and concerns in the field of gender, land tenure and disaster through the case studies documented. Presentations will be followed by a Q&A.

**Day 2** will summarise the case studies and end with a final discussion on the future direction of research and possible support to policies and programmes to ensure more equitable justice to all rural poor women and men.



## **Expert Consultation Workshop on Land tenure and disaster and its social and gender impact in the Asia and the Pacific Region**

*14-15 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand*

### **Workshop Agenda**

#### **Context**

Land is a scarce resource, and effective land management is critical to the well-being of the planet, its people and their livelihoods. The lack of efficiency in land planning and management is leading to disasters, such as floods, land slides, land degradation and desertification, climate change and biodiversity loss. Land tenure is an integral part of effective land management in the face of increasing demand for land from individuals and corporates for subsistence and profit. With increasing globalisation, large-scale exploitation of land and other natural resources for dams, mines, plantations, farming, industry and housing are increasing in the developing and least developed countries.

However, the impact of such land exploitation is not well-understood, especially in the context of disasters. Far less attention is paid to the gendered impact of such disasters. Through a collection of field level case studies, we plan to document the issues and concerns at the intersection of several fields including land management, disasters, livelihood and gender. These presentations will build an evidence-based case for a gender sensitive approach to land tenure is disaster preparedness as well as rescue and rehabilitation efforts.

#### **Objective**

The objectives of this expert consultation workshop is to **open new areas of discussion and action** in existing national and regional policies and programmes; to **ensure gender equity and justice to poor rural women** and men who are caught between eroding control over land and natural resources, especially in times of disaster and post-disaster.

#### **Expected outputs**

- A casebook highlighting some of the key issues and concerns in the area of gender, disaster and land tenure.
- An increase awareness of the gendered impacts of land tenure systems in the context of disaster.
- Future direction for research and action in the areas of gender, disaster and land tenure.

#### **Participants**

Participants will be researchers, government officials, and activists working in the areas of gender, land tenure and disaster from the Asia-Pacific region.