Cambodia Land Reform Project

Presented by Mr. Vann Sophath, Land Reform Project Coordinator
Overview of Land Situation in Cambodia

- Flawed land registering and titling process → insecurity of land tenure
- Illegal and unjust land grabbing
- Land concessions granted to private companies
- Forced evictions for development → landlessness
  Threats and intimidation by the authorities/company staff within a culture of impunity
- Injustice in land conflict resolution → arrest and imprisonment of community activists
- Negative social and environmental impacts
Human Rights Issues Affected by Land Disputes

• The right to life
• The right to a fair trial
• The right to freedom from arbitrary arrest
• The right to adequate housing
• The right to freedom of assembly
• The right to freedom of expression
• The rights of indigenous people
Methods used in Land Grabs

- **Threats** used by land concession holders with the help of security agents
- **Violence** used by armed forces/security guards
- **Official authorization** delivered by local authorities, provincial courts of specialized bodies
- **Arbitrary detention** with or without official warrants, sometimes followed by torture
- **Imprisonment** following unfair trials on charge such as incitement, defamation or secessionism/separatism
- **Forced eviction** conducted by armed forces/security guards
Why?

- **Khmer Rouge** legacy
- Flawed land registering and titling process
- **Absence of proper implementation of the laws** by the authorities
- Culture of *impunity*
- Corruption
Project Overview – Project Objectives

**Overall:** Empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized communities in Cambodia whose land has been appropriated by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), and the achievement of land security and tenure for these victims, as well as all Cambodians.

**Specific:**
- To monitor and raise awareness of current and potential land violations and abuses suffered by communities in Cambodia.
- To empower communities affected by land violations and build capacity for activists and community members to advocate for their rights.
- To advocate and campaign for the promotion and protection of the land rights and/or other related rights of members of vulnerable and marginalized communities.
Monitor/Raise Awareness:

- Profile online and on CCHR’s radio program, communities and activists that have suffered land violations and abuses.
- Compile and map information regarding land violations and abuses for publication online.
- Conduct legal analyses of land rights cases and publish these analyses on CCHR’s website, SITHI, and other relevant forums.
Empowerment/Building Capacity:

• Train activists and community members of the Cambodian Land Law and related laws, and specific advocacy techniques

• Assist community activists and members with legal representation to enable the filing of complaints regarding land violations and abuses

• Provide legal representation to activists who are judicially harassed as part of their activism

• Support community activists and members during political and other non-political actions
Project Overview – Project’s Activities

Advocacy/Campaigns:

• Campaign online, offline and on air about violations of individuals’ and communities’ land rights and at-risk communities
• Submit amicus briefs and legal analysis in relevant cases regarding land rights, land security and tenure
Target Groups

- NGOs
- RGC
- Political Opposition
- Affected communities
- CSOs
- HRDs

Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)
Thank you for your attention!

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