

Present Status of Agriculture, Peasantry, Food Sovereignty and Peasant Right in Nepal

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Nepal in figures

- The population of Nepal is now expected around 29 million and Nepal's population is primarily rural
- Agriculture provides livelihood to 65.6% of the population and accounts for 28% of the country's GDP.
- Small and marginal farmers, agriculture labor, landless share the major portion of the farming population
- Agriculture is mostly subsistence and only about 10% is professional

Land statistics

- The land use map of Nepal reveals that cultivable land covers about **20%** of the total land, forest **44.76%**(including grassland, shrub lands), and other area as rocks, snow lands and settlements make up the rest.
- The land statistics shows that more than **10%** of the rural population are absolutely landless, **5% rich people holds 37% arable land**, over half (58%) of the rural population are functionally landless, with holdings too small even for subsistence requirements (<0.5 ha)
- 30% of rural households are unregistered tenants (estimated 1.5 million households), **48% of Dalit*** households are landless; **only 6% Chhetri/Thakuri/Brahman**** are landless

Poverty and hunger

- **43 of 77** districts were reported to be food deficit. **23 districts** in Nepal are now chronically food insecure. Almost **50% of** Nepal's population is undernourished and half of all children under five are chronically malnourished. **39% of children** below five years are underweight (more than Ethiopia), **49% are stunted** (higher than Sudan),
- Nepal is a now food deficit country. Each year, two out of every three Nepalese suffer from food insecurity.
- 55% of Nepalese live below the international poverty line of \$1.25/day (USAID, 2010).

Component of Agriculture

- **Cereals** Rice, maize, wheat, millet, Barley, Buckwheat,
- **Cash crop** oil, Sugarcane, Jute Tobacco, Tea, Coffee, Ginger, Cardamom etc
- **Horticulture**-Fruits and Vegetable
- **Livestock**- cattle, Buffalo, sheep, goat, pig
- **Poultry, Fishery and Bee-keeping**

Agriculture in Nepal

- TARAI - 64 percent cultivable land
- Known as Grainary- rice, wheat, maize, potatoes , mango lichhi, sugarcane
- SIWALIK-17 Percent cultivable land rice wheat maize potato, mango, Guava, junar, orange
- Middle mountain- 43 percent cultivable land
Maize, millet, rice, potato, buck wheat, pear, peach, orange

Share of AG. Budget in National Budget (In %age)

- **2005/06: 2.45 %**
- **2006/07: 2.47 %**
- **2007/08: 2.70 %**
- **2008/09: 2.76 %**
- **2009/10: 3.11 %**
- **2010/11: 6.2 %**

Problems of agriculture and land in Nepal

- Lack of access to productive resource
- Land fragmentation and barren land
- Lack of sustainability in land use
- Lack of knowledge/policies on land reform and policies
- Insufficient land to the producers
- Agent monopoly in selling (Black marketing)
- Food insecurity
- Feminization of agriculture but Lack of women ownership over land
- Climate change is impacting peasants
- Insufficient technical assistance and subsidies from state

Problems, contd.

- Feudalism
- Land grabbing
- Lack of compliance of international treaties and principles
- Some good policies but limited implementation
- Pro-poor tools are few
- Administration is weak
- Poor management of farm, forest land and other resources is damaging both environment and economy

Problems.....

- Lack of people's participation in decision making especially at local level
- Lack of women participation
- Gender, caste and class disparity
- Lack of proper policy to stop land transactions as a business
- Lack of transparency in the management
- Neo-liberalism: WTO, WB, MNCs and TNCs, IMF and other tentacles of capitalism

challenges

- Land and water grabs; destruction of ecosystems
- Control of seeds by TNCs
- Land conversions—connected to the grabbing
- Increasing vulnerability of rural communities to natural disasters—ramifications (economic and social)
- State is still neoliberal – no genuine AR (prioritizing corporate interests and investors)
- Productive resources are not in the hands of productive forces
- Climate change

Reclaiming food system- Why Food Sovereignty ?

FS system is necessary because

- It protects farmers' right to produce food and every person's right to decide what they want to consume and how and who produces it.
- It protects the right of all Communities, nationalities and countries to have their own agricultural and food policy.
- It is the protection of local agricultural production to feed the population and the access of women and men farmers' to land, water, seeds and food culture.
- It is the protection of right of farmers who play a key role in agricultural and in food issues.
- It is the participation of people in the definition of agrarian reform policies.



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Food Sovereignty, Contd.

- It oppose WTOs' intervention in Agriculture.
- It believes in Environment Friendly and Small Scale Domestic Production through Biodiversity based ecological Agriculture.
- It ensures rights of women over land and other productive resources and market space.
- It oppose Corporatisation of Agriculture.

Why Food sovereignty and GAR?

- a) End of feudal land ownership
- b) End of dual ownership :
- c) Land ceiling
- d) Land Improvement and use of fallow land
- e) New policy of land ownership
- f) Land to the landless
- g) Distribution to those who are directly linked to land
(producers/agro-labor):
- h) land on lease :
- i) land to the community

WHY FS and GAR

- j) Land integration**
- k) The scientific recording of land**
- l) the policy of land use**
- m) The specific policy for the landless, poor peasants and agriculture laborer**
- n) The scientific use of agriculture and pasture land :**

Elaboration

The Concept of Agrarian Reforms includes

- Land to the tiller
- Agro ecological farming
- reviving small farmers Agriculture
- Restoring the commons- water, seed, knowledge
- reclaim for food system- Food Sovereignty
- Analysis of events, policies, trends that affected agrarian reform
- Critique of neoliberal, capitalist, market dominated policies

Elaboration

- Agrarian Reforms is the program of genuine (revolutionary) Land Reform
- Agrarian Reforms for the professionalization and industrialization in Agriculture
- Agrarian Reforms and Food Sovereignty
- Agrarian Reforms for the integrated Rural Development
- Agrarian Reforms, Agro-education and Technology
- Agrarian Reforms for the Co-operative Movement

Elaboration

- Agrarian Reforms for the Peasant Workers
- Agrarian Reforms for the woman's Liberation
- Agrarian Reforms for the Liberation of Oppressed Caste
- Agrarian Reforms for the Use of Water Resource
- Agrarian Reforms for the Interest of Consumers
- Agrarian Reforms for the Access of Peasants on Natural Resources
- Agrarian Reforms for the Restructuring of State
- Agrarian Reforms for the Class Issue
- Agrarian Reforms against the Neo Liberalism and Globalization
- Agrarian Reforms for the Legal Protection of Agriculture

Peasants Rights

- United Nations has declarations and conventions to protect Human Rights (1948), Economic and Socio-cultural Rights (1966), Rights of Disabled Persons (1975), Indigenous People Rights (2007), Viena Declaration (1993), ILO 169, Refugee Rights (1951), Women Rights (CEDAW, 1979) and Children Rights (1989).
- Now is the time of Pesants Rights Declaration

Why Peasants Rights ?

- Tool for farmers and other food producers (fishermen, nomads, agricultural workers) to assert their specific rights (such as the right to seeds) and to participate in decision-making on agriculture, fisheries, agri-food policies and any issues affecting their communities.
- To stop human rights violations against these populations.
- To serve as a reference for the establishment of programmes and policies in relation to farmers, whether to incorporate their rights into national legislation or to negotiate international trade agreements.
- Tool for institutions, human rights defenders.
- Finally, for any entity concerned by the problem of peasants' rights.

Our intervention

- Successful in issuing Peasants rightsDeclaration as United Nations Declaration (global victory)

Declaration states

the right of Food sovereignty,

seed sovereignty

and also acknowledge the role of small peasants agriculture to ensure food security and poverty eradication

Victory

- Constitution of Nepal, 2015.
- Land reform and Peasants Rights are guarantee in the constitution
- No MNCs in primary production
- Towards Agro-ecological and Organic Nepal
- Towards Land Use policy and Land Reform



Struggles and Success

- Agriculture Development Strategy
- Food Sovereignty Enshrined in the constitution and FS law
- Towards Peasants Rights bill
- Policy Intervention by Peasants (GAFSP)
- GMO free
- Peasants Commission

Common Targets

- Lands must be in the hand of the tillers—revival and restoration of agriculture by small scale producers;
- Strengthening and building struggles
- Support for small scale farmers should reflect contributions of farmers to the economy
- Clear laws and regulations that favor and support interests of small scale farmers
- Critiques of neoliberal and market-driven laws, programs and policies

Common Targets

- Linking of agrarian reform issue with food sovereignty and consumers' issues
- Increase Consumer involvement in the food systems so that we can reclaim the food system
- Creation and promotion of alternative peoples' markets
- Content of national laws, regulations, (farmers, fishers and workers not friendly)
- Winning and increasing political space and voice
- Defining sustainable development: defined by farmers affected by investments
- Spaces of negotiation with governments and investors to secure farmers' rights

Challenges Ahead

- Implementing food sovereignty as Fundamental Right.
- Agrarian reforms towards access of producers to productive resources, tenure security, gender equity, the rights of minorities.
- Strengthening Peasant organizations and social movements for lobbying and pressure.
- supportive role of international community vitally important source of inspiration.

Role of international friends

- Farmers' voice cannot be organized without local as well as regional and global farmers' organizations.
- To increase awareness and pressurize about the importance and wellbeing of small farmers. It has dawned on policy makers to initiate steps to make small farming sustainable. There's a need for empowerment and involvement of small farmers. So policies should be bottom-up, and not top-down. A strong small farmers' organization can effectively network farmers to promote the development of accountable institutions and curtail exploitation and anti-farmer lobbying.
- Realizing the importance of agricultural production for economic development, the Government has to play an active role in all aspects of agricultural development. Plan priorities, policies, and resource allocations along with Food and price policy are decided by the government. So, peasants and their organization has a crucial role in this respect too.



Thanks

