What shall we do without our land? Land Grabs and Resistance in Rural Cambodia

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Political dynamics of the global land grab are exemplified in Cambodia, where at least 27 forced evictions took place in 2009, affecting 23,000 people. Evictions of the rural poor are legitimized by the assumption that non-private land is idle, marginal, or degraded and available for capitalist exploitation. This paper: (1) questions the assumption that land is idle; (2) explores whether land grabs can be regulated through a 'code of conduct'; and (3) examines peasant resistance to land grabs. Overall, the Cambodian case studies confirm that land grabs are not benefiting the rural poor, but they challenge the process of dispossession. Although 'everyday forms of peasant politics' are prevalent, more organized and structured forms of political contention by rural poor communities and their NGO allies are slowly emerging.

Keywords: Land grabs; Cambodia; resistance; power relations; rural development

Introduction

The current discourse on the global land grab, mainly coming from civil society (in this case, NGOs, environmental and agrarian social movements, human rights groups) and independent media has been monitoring the incidence, activities and extent of such land deals. They have brought forward the urgency of looking into the question of the global land grab and its implications for food security and the reported displacement and dispossession of the rural poor in places where such land deals are carried out. However, the dominant radical discourse tends to be weak in terms of explaining *how* exactly the rural poor[2] oppose – or not -- large-scale land investments. The power dynamics that influence how and why dislocation and dispossession occur are under-explored in the largely activist literature. Therefore, there is an imperative for a more rigorous theoretical and empirical study to clarify the possible in/effectiveness of mainstream land policies, and the nature and extent of peasant resistance to land grabs. This is the main area of inquiry of the current study. At the heart of this research is the question of power distribution within and between capital, state, and the rural poor. Political dynamics are key to understanding the character and dynamics of current land grabs. This paper's central research question is: do rural poor in Cambodia oppose current large-scale land deals? If so, how; if not, why?

[1] The author would like to thank the Land Deal Politics Initiative for providing a small grant to conduct the fieldwork for this paper. The author recently completed her graduate studies at the International Development Studies Program of Saint mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

[2] Peasants, rural poor, and villagers are used interchangeably to denote subsistence-based agriculturalists living in rural regions of Cambodia. I use the term 'villager' most often when discussing local authorities and national views on large-scale land investments or land grabs because this is the language that they used during our discussions. The term 'peasant' is used to indicate class, which is a critical component to understand the social hierarchies in Cambodia. To most Cambodians, this hierarchy is assumed and immoveable, constituting the basis of societal interactions.

Preliminary field reports show that the displacement and dispossession of the rural poor in many countries is one of the immediate outcomes of the global land grabs. This is exemplified in Cambodia where 70 percent of the population works in agriculture and practices subsistence consumption (Engvall and Kokko 2007: 7). In 2008, approximately 150,000 people were living under the threat of eviction (Amnesty International 2008: 2). The following year, Cambodia experienced at least 27 forced evictions, affecting 23,000 people (Amnesty International 2009: n.p.). Estimates suggest that 15 to 20 percent of the population is landless or 'near landless' and the percentage is rising (Guttal 2007; 10-11; 9; Üllenberg 2009: 6).[3] Meanwhile, The Royal Government of Cambodia provided 124,000 hectares of land to 19 companies in concessions in 2009 (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries 2010). The gap in the literature discussing rural land grabs in Cambodia and the major impacts that land deals are having on peasants throughout the countryside encourages an examination of empirical evidence in this paper.

Mainstream policy discourse assumes that 'land governance' – which is understood as the efficient technical and administrative management of policy questions linked to land – encourages financial transactions and greater investment in land, especially agricultural. Land governance measure also propose to: support the flow of credit to the rural economy; bring economic efficiency through land markets; facilitate effective land administration; and reduce land disputes. So-called 'idle' and 'marginal' lands, especially those that are non-private (i.e. state, public and community lands), are the main target of land titling programs and large-scale land investments. For (trans)national corporations and the governments that collaborate with them, purchasing or contracting non-private lands in the Global South, titled or not, is the perfect opportunity to make their investment. This paper questions the assumption that land is marginal and available for the extraction of capital.

Mainstream institutions are aware of the negative processes and adverse consequences of commercial and state land deals. In response, 'land governance' measures, first promoted by the World Bank (WB) and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), offers regulations to make such commercial land deals work concurrently for investors and the poor in target countries. The Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) focus on land titling to ensure that land exchanges between countries or private interests benefit all parties.

Increasing landlessness and the surge of large-scale land investments in rural Cambodia presents an opportunity for a case study that will analyze field data on the impacts of land grabs on rural communities. Adopting a political economy framework, this paper: (1) questions the assumption that land is idle, marginal, or degraded and available for capitalist exploitation; (2) investigates whether land grabs can be regulated under a code of conduct and; (3) considers the nature and extent of peasant resistance to land grabs.

The actual mechanism through which the Cambodian state has facilitated the grabbing of non-private lands disregards the reality of existing land use by local populations by making the latter appear to be underutilized on paper. Although official

[3] "Near landless" is defined as a household that possesses 0.5 hectares of land or less. In some Cambodian provinces, landlessness is a reality for more than a quarter of the population (for examples, see Sophal and Acharya, 2002).

land governance policies in Cambodia recognize the risks involved in land grabbing, the principles for regulating large-scale land investments do not consider the politics of land redistribution. As such, land governance policies value capitalist investment over the livelihoods of local rural populations. Because of this fundamental logic, land grab regulatory agendas, however well meaning, do not and will not benefit peasant communities. Finally, Cambodian peasants are not passive despite the absence of large-sale highly organized civil society groups; they are resisting the large-scale land acquisitions.

This paper first examines the theoretical framings on state simplification, proposed land governance measures and their links to resistance. The second section describes the prevailing conditions in rural Cambodia and the methods utilized in this study. The third section gives an overview of the mechanisms within Cambodia that have facilitated land grabs by identifying land as idle or marginal, examines land governance measures in Cambodia and the resistance to land grabs. The fifth section explores village-level peasant resistance to land grabs. The final section presents conclusions concerning the interactions between corporate land grabbers, the Cambodian state, local authorities, peasants and the resistance to land grabs in Cambodia.

Conceptual discussion

State, Private Property and Development

State simplification brings into "…sharp focus certain limited aspects of an otherwise far more complex and unwieldy reality…mak[ing] the phenomenon at the centre of the field of vision far more legible, and hence far more susceptible to careful measurement, calculation and manipulation" (Scott 1998a: 39). In this study, we see that the classification of land by the modernist state validates systems that prioritize state knowledge and needs over actual land use practices. The state's definition of land as marginal, idle or degraded has led to a "very rough, sometimes misleading, representation of actual existing rights to land" (Scott 1998a: 47). Thus, it is a false assumption that supposes land is available and suitable for exploitation. In reality, this land is often inhabited, densely forested or utilized as a communal resource. Consequently, state simplification that disregard actual land use practices result in the dispossession of the rural poor. By defining land as marginal, idle or degraded, the state can benefit by leasing or contracting land to capitalist interests for agricultural development and resource exploitation.

Non-private land is defined as marginal, idle or degraded by state actors promoting large-scale land investments. The primary motivation of the state simplification of land is to establish a tenure system to tax landholders. In our case, the primary motivation for the categorization of land as marginal is to encourage rural investment, often in the form of foreign direct investment (FDI). This "reserve agricultural land" is plotted through technical land mapping and the use of satellite imagery (Cotula et al. 2009: 59-60). This suggests that there are empty spaces that can be readily exploited to extract hidden capital and encourage economic development. This underproductive land requires technology and knowledge that is provided by the North.

Specialized knowledge backed by state authority changes the balance of power between the locality and the state (Scott 1998a: 46). The privatization of non-private lands, such as the commons, transfers the power over land to state officials,

administrators, and well-financed investors. Specific language and the need for institutional knowledge makes the land system inaccessible to local inhabitants and further devaluates local knowledge and autonomy (Scott 1998a: 46). The "observable structure of the agrarian system" is created to serve the best interests of the ruling elites (Herring 1983: 269). Non-rural populations create rural policy, so policies upholding this "data-built façade" are unlikely to meet the needs of rural inhabitants (*Ibid*). This is reality in Cambodia, where state land titling benefits (trans)national corporations and delegitimizes the land use rights of the poor.

The action that the elite captured state aims to legitimize in the case of Cambodia is land and resource grabbing. Land that is marginal, idle or degraded creates opportunities for rural investments in Cambodia's economic expansion. On paper, contracts for Economic Land Concessions (ELCs) in Cambodia do not violate the land and use rights of peasants. However, categorizing state land as underproductive does not reflect actual land use. Village households have rice paddies, fields, grazing land, water access routes and a dependency on forest resources that connects them to the land with or without state documentation. State land polices falsely assume that land is available for corporate investment.

Scott (1998) emphasizes that power, and the ability to maintain it, is secured through the losses of others. The political nature of land grabs threatens the land use rights of the rural poor. The state endorses false categories of land to allow land grabs to flourish. The next section discusses the ideological basis for the state's actions.

A Code of Conduct for Responsible Agricultural Investment

Over the past few decades, ideas have shifted on how civil society and the state ought to interact with corporate interests. This encourages frameworks of corporate social responsibility and the good governance model (O'Laughlin 2008: 945-6). The emerging agenda promotes independent corporate responsibility and less state regulation. For large-scale land deals, advocates for a code of conduct (COC) propose regulations that aim to benefit corporate, state and local stakeholders, including the rural poor. This section explores and critiques a code of conduct for land grabs.

The World Bank and the IFPRI were the first to advocate land grabs as an opportunity for capitalist investors and the rural economies in which they invest. However, these mainstream institutions recognize that land deal regulations need to mitigate investment risks, such as dislocation, increased corruption and environmental degradation in target countries. Promoters of land investments encourage a 'code of conduct' to promote land grabs as a win-win opportunity. The seven RAI principles (World Bank Group, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: 2010) create the foundation for such regulations.

Mainstream development and policy currents advocate the COC and RAI principles. Land deals are marketed as a potential opportunity for rural development if they can be harnessed to avoid negative social and environmental effects. A component of the governance model is the reordering of capital as an 'ethical order' of corporate social responsibility. Western and corporate interests are the institutions expected to release the capital that is locked in developing countries (de Soto 2000). Mainstream development institutions argue that developing countries are unable to manage state land

efficiently, resulting in land disputes and idle, marginalized, or unoccupied land that is not being developed to its fullest potential (Deininger 2003: xlii). According to IFPRI, the need for FDI in rural economies necessitates the unearthing of hidden assets (i.e. land): "Because of the urgent need for greater development in rural area and the fiscal inability of the developing-country governments to provide the necessary infusion of capital, large-scale land acquisitions can be seen as an opportunity for increased investment in agriculture" (von Braun and Meinzen-Dick 2009: 2). Within these non-private lands, WB et al. (2010) envision development potential for the South and land grabs can help less developed countries to access the pathway to economic growth by encouraging foreign direct investment in rural economies. The code of conduct and RAI principles continue to push a "win-win solution" to land grabs.

Table 1: Risks associated with Land Grabs

World Bank risks	IFPRI risks	Principles for RAI risks
• Neglect of land users • Short-term speculation • Corruption • Environmental harm • Polarization and instability • Undermining food security	• Loss of livelihoods • Failure to keep promises (local jobs, facilities, compensation) • Absence of consultation (with affected communities • Violent conflict over rights • Loss of subsistence and safety-net functions of existing land uses • Loss of biodiversity, carbon stocks • Long-term ecological sustainability problems	• Displacement of local populations • Undermining or negating of existing rights • Increased corruption • Reduced food security • Environmental damage in the project area and beyond • Loss of livelihoods or opportunity for land access by the vulnerable • Nutritional deprivation • Social polarization • Political instability

Source: Adapted from Borras and Franco 2010a: 513; Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform Land Research Action Network 2010.

Although the COC is a worthy idea in principle, this does not mean that it will work in practice. Polices attempting to benefit all parties must consider the rural poor's need for and access to land. They must also weigh whether the TNC global food and energy systems increases poverty for the rural poor. The goal of RAI should be "to protect and advance the land-access and property interests of working poor people" (Borras and Franco 2010a: 510). However, COC ideology sees land grabs as an investment problem, not a land problem. Mainstream institutions present land grabs as an opportunity with acceptable risks. The code of conduct and RAI encourages one path towards development and does not consider that other avenues of rural development are achievable or underway. The dependency of developing countries upon FDI and corporate structures for investment overrides local ideas of land use, development or food sovereignty.

The code of conduct and principles of RAI are likely to facilitate further land grabs and the associated risks because land grabs are framed as a viable option for rural

development. The politics of land redistribution and land use change are not considered by mainstream development policy. The motivations behind land grabs and peasant opposition must be considered in order to understand land grabs within this land governance framework. The next section examines the nature of resistance to land grabs which has become increasingly common to land deals in Cambodia and worldwide.

Resistance to Dispossession

Polanyi's "double movement" explains the expansion of a self-regulating market and the self-protection that emerges in order to preserve society (Polanyi 1957: 129). Society is forced to save itself from the pressures of the market that threaten to destroy natural resources and the means of production. Proposed capitalist expansion, in this case land grabs, is incompatible with the society it proposes to encompass. Peasants are active agents in the formation of state and society, and do not automatically submit to the pressures of power and exploitation. There is a rise of new peasant movements, some of which are countermovements. Cambodian peasants reflect this trend, as violent disputes over land are increasingly common (Springer 2009; Guttal 2008).

Resistance examines power, inequality and social change (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 535). Resistance is divided into three traditions in the study of rural politics: official, everyday, and advocacy politics (Kerkvliet 2009). Official politics examines authorities in organizations that construct, implement, alter, discuss and avoid policies regarding the allocation of resources. Everyday politics, on the other hand, concerns people accepting, abiding by and questioning the norms and regulations of authority over the production and distribution of resources in an indirect and unplanned manner. Finally, advocacy politics is a "direct and concerted effort" to encourage, censure and contest policies and authorities and even the system and manner in which resources are produced and distributed (Kerkvliet 2009: 231-2). This paper primarily focuses on the everyday and advocacy over official politics. In Cambodia, we find that everyday resistance to land grabs is most common, although advocacy politics is emerging.

Although studies on resistance prominently examine organized, large-scale movements that pose a threat to the state, Scott (1985) argues that peasant rebellions are more often everyday forms of resistance. Subordinate classes have few opportunities to undertake forms of organized and open resistance because they risk violent or otherwise debilitating reprisals from their oppressors. Therefore, peasants tend to express dissatisfaction via covert and unorganized measures that are the 'weapons of the weak'. "[P]eople need not be organized to be political" (Kerkvliet 2009: 229). Everyday resistance is a form of politics, but is not an organized movement in the traditional sense.

Correspondingly, Scott (1985) argues that resistance does not need to be recognized to be effective; its intent of is more important than its outcome. The individual resistor's mindset is not as critical as the collective understanding of the morals that propel the resistance. As Malseed (2008) explains,

> For such acts to be considered part of a 'movement' of resistance, villagers need not be conscious of each and every action as a step toward larger goals, but there should be an atmosphere of communal acceptance and support, a

> like-mindedness of action and consistency with commonly held ideas of social justice. (503)

The moral economy of peasants, which "places the subsistence ethic at the center of the analysis of peasant politics" (Scott 1976: 3), is at the heart of rural politics.

This moral economy can be expressed in various forms. There is a nonlinear connection between resistance and social change which explains the interest in visible social movements and revolutions, regardless of whether they successfully reform the power structures that impeded the movement. However, resisters may also support structures that they oppose in order to question their place within the state. As such, they are more interested in "working the system … to their minimum disadvantage" (Hobsbawm 1973: 16). Thus, resisters have varying objectives and acknowledging these complexities is crucial to understanding peasant resistance. Similarly, peasants may modify forms of resistance to best suit their circumstances.

According to Kerkvliet (2005), "everyday resistance can and frequently does contribute to advocacy politics" (25 fn 46). Advocacy politics attempt to influence authorities and create public discourse on issues of contention (Kerkvliet 2005: 23). In instances of extreme repression, advocacy politics must take a backseat to everyday forms of resistance, as criticizing policies and officials openly may endanger lives. Conversely, conditions that place too much pressure on peasants may encourage everyday politics to transform into riskier forms of confrontational resistance (Kerkvliet 2009: 34). If political situations turn to favour individuals or institutions that peasants are resisting, this can push peasants to "cross the threshold of fear and insecurity" (Adnan 2007: 214) and engage in overt forms of opposition. Advocacy politics take resistance from covert to more overt, direct and concerted forms of resistance. Actions expressed through everyday politics may be verbalized, written down, or expressed through open protests and organized petitioning. Open defiance by some peasants may encourage others to take action. Although advocacy can be public, movements that are more likely to be targeted by their oppressors are likely to conceal their leaders, members, and even their organizations (Kerkvliet 2009: 232).

The covert tendencies of peasants, as outlined primarily by Kerkvliet and Scott, are not absolute in the classification of resistance. Transformational resistance, from everyday to advocacy or covert to overt confrontational actions highlights the dialectical relationship between dominator and resistor that can escalate resistance. (For country-specific examples, see Adnan 2007 regarding Bangladesh; and Walker 2008 regarding China) Sequential shifts result in a "middle ground" between everyday and "exceptional" resistance (Turton 1986: 36). Adnan (2007) argues that Scott and Kerkvliet did not analyze overt acts of resistance. Walker (2008) contends that Scott's emphasis on everyday acts of resistance had a broad, negative effect that recast peasants as defensive, disempowered agents who are unable to transform conditions (463). The dialectical relationship between resistors and dominators, and overt and covert resistance balances the perspective on resistance.

Structure, or lack thereof, is an important characteristic of resistance. A movement that does not have identifiable leaders, members, and sympathizers has a greater chance of maintaining itself. Malseed (2008) found that Karen villagers' "…non-compliance strategies have flourished for so long largely because there are no leaders or structures for the state to kill, arrest or buy off" (498). "Fig-leaf" compliance is not

perceived as an affront to authority (Malseed 2008: 499). As Scott (1985) explains, "Open insubordination in almost any context will provoke a more rapid and ferocious response than an insubordination that may be as pervasive but never ventures to contest the formal definitions of hierarchy and power" (33). Lacking a hierarchal structure in a social movement may also increase its longevity because oppressors cannot target key resistors.

Additionally, unstructured social movements may be more appealing than structured ones since peasants may be suspicious of organizations. The state's association with civil society organizations may cause peasants to be wary. They may also fear retributive actions from the authorities if the group is a dissenting voice (Malseed 2008: 500). Nonetheless, if peasants feel that they have no other options, structured social movements that actively support their interests may be their chosen form of resistance.

The integration of social movements into transnational agrarian movements (TAMs) provides global networking and support that may be difficult to organize between local and widely dispersed groups. These movements globally link organizations or coalitions that support the goals of the rural poor. Adequate representation of all interests is not possible due to the ever-changing nature and complexity of social movements. Indeed, although the specific interests of local groups within TAMs may not be perfectly representative, the neoliberal ideology and globalization have historically united and strengthened TAMs: land seizures, forced evictions, dispossession, pauperization and peasants' land rights have thus intertwined as crucial global issues (Walker 2008: 478). Although the need is apparent, TAMs have not been able to effectively engage the rural poor in Cambodia. The often unorganized and local nature of Cambodian resistance makes this difficult. Although this does not mean that such structures could not be established in Cambodia, the atmosphere is hostile and the state and powerful actors are likely to oppress the emergence of stronger networks.

The literature on resistance examined thus far has demonstrated that covert, unorganized, unstructured forms are most commonly undertaken by the rural poor. However, the increasing tensions, especially in the battle between capital and the rural poor over land, may result in the emergence of advocacy politics. Thus, resistance may intensify and transform to a more organized and overt method to counteract the accumulation by dispossession, state simplification, and code of conduct. Attempted and successful global land face further peasant resistance. Despite RAI claims that land grabs can be a win-win situation, peasants, labourers, and small capitalists have railed against the (trans)national corporations (TNCs) with government ties. Land that is essential to life and livelihoods will not be relinquished without a fight.

Study setting and research methods

Although it is difficult to determine the number of people affected by land grabbing in Cambodia, at least a third of the population are experiencing systematic alienation from their land (Guttal 2007: 9). It is critical to understand the mechanisms that marginalize a significant number of Cambodia's poor. There is no 'typical' case study that can exemplify the land grab experience in Cambodia. As a result, the complexities of the social and political uniqueness of the conflicts over land grabs cannot be captured in these case studies alone. The studies, however, can present common

themes and generate insights into the mechanisms that allow and promote land grabs and the resistance against them in Cambodia.

In the post-Khmer Rouge era, Cambodia struggled to rebuild and become a sovereign state. Cambodia became a ward of the international community in 1992 under the supervision of the World Bank and the United Nations. Although the urgent priorities were security, feeding the population and rebuilding Cambodia's agricultural capacity, the long-term conditions for such rehabilitation were never established. The influence of international donor communities through aid, loans and technical assistance and Cambodia's dependence on donors has guaranteed that "sovereignty remained a malleable notion, easily reinvented to legitimise the use of national resources and capacities to serve market and elite interests rather than homegrown domestic priorities" (Guttal 2008: 2). Large-scale land investments have further entrenched the dependence on donors for the rural poor and a reliance on internationally-backed investments to encourage economic development (see Table 2). Public-private partnerships are a key element. According to the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries, the Cambodian government provided 124,000 hectares of land to 19 companies in 2009 (Sophal 2010: n.p.). Both foreign and domestic corporations are listed, but international investors have partnerships with the Khmer-led companies.

Table 2: Foreign direct investment in land in Cambodia (Dec. 2006)[4]

Company Name	Country	Plant	Size (ha)	Location
Cambodia Haining Co Ltd.	China	agro-industry as palm oil, sugarcane, acacia, and pig feeding	23000	Aural & Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
The Green Rich Co Ltd.	China	Oil palm, fruit tree & acacia	60200	Koh Kong district, Koh Kong province
Oryung Construction (CAM) Co Ltd.	Korea	Rubber plantations	6866	Andong Meas District, Rattanakiri Province
Tai Nam (K) Ltd.	Vietnam	Cassava, rubber & cashew	7560	Snuol District, Kratie Province
30/4 Gialani Company Ltd.	Vietnam	agro-industrial crops, animal husbandry	9380	Oyadao District, Ratanakiri Province
Tai Nam BPM Ltd.	Vietnam	Cassava, rubber & cashew	7600	Keo Seima district, Mondulkiri Province
Kimsville Corp.	China	Cassava, Cashew, apple, and fruit	3200	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
Henan (Cambodia) Economic and Trade Development Zone	China	Agricultural crops	4100	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province

[4] Omitted from this list of Economic Land Concessions (ELCs) are those that were illegally provided.

Cambo Victor Investing and Developing Co Ltd.	China	Corn, bean, soya bean, rice, cassava and peanut	28500	Aural & Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
China National Corporation for Overseas Economic Cooperation Laostar Development Co Ltd.	China	Agro-industrial crops such as maize, vegetable and rice	8000	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
Cambodia C.J. Corporation Ltd.	Korea	Cassava (for agro-fuel)	3000	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
Cambodia C.J. Corporation Ltd.	Korea	Cassava (for agro-fuel)	5000	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
Golden Land Development Co Ltd.	Taiwan	Agro-industrial crops	4900	Phnom Srouch district, Kompong Speu province
Chrystal Agro Co Ltd.	Thailand	Cassava and agro-industry plantation	8000	Samrong District, Uddor Meanchey Province
Koh Kong Sugar Industry Co Ltd.	Thailand	Sugar Cane	9700	Sre Ambil district, Koh Kong Province
Global Agricultural Development (Cambodia) Co Ltd.	USA	Indigenous Teak	9800	Sambo district, Kratie Province
Green Island Agricultural Development (Cambodia) Co Ltd	USA	Indigenous Teak	9583	Sambo district, Kratie Province
GG World Group (Cambodia) Development Ltd.	China	agro-industrial crop plantation as teak and cashew	5000	Stung Treng district, Stung Treng province
Grand Land Agriculture Development (Cambodia) Co Ltd.	China	Indigenous trees as teak and trincomalee wood	9854	Se San district, Stung Treng province
Asia World Agricultural Development (Cambodia) Co Ltd.	China	Indigenous teak	10000	Sambo district, Kratie Province
Great Asset Agricultural	China	Pistacia chinensis	8985	Sambo district, Kratie Province

Development (Cambodia) Limited		Bunge		
Great Wonder Agricultural Development (Cambodia) Ltd.	China	Pistacia chinensis Bunge	9231	Sambo district, Kratie Province
Wuzhishan LS Group Co Ltd.	China	Indigenous Pine (pinus mercusii)	10000	O'Reang district, Mondulkiri province
Plantation Agricultural Development	USA	Pistacia chinensis Bunge and other trees	9214	Sambo district, Kratie Province
Real Green Co Ltd.	Thailand	Cassava & agro-industry	8000	Samrong District, Uddor Meanchey Province
Pelin Group Agricultural Development (Cambodia) Co., Ltd	not known	Pistacia Chinasis Bunge and other trees plantation	8847	Konmom District, Rattanakiri Province
Phou Mady Investment Group	China	Acacia, teak, trincomalee wood, and other plantation crops	9854	Se San district, Stung Treng province

Source: Üllenberg 2009: 24-5.

The relatively recent expansion of land grabs in developing countries presents a dilemma to researchers: the data available on land grabs is limited and the range of cases is vast, as many regions are experiencing a redistribution of land that disenfranchises marginalized communities. Since non-speculative empirical data is limited, fieldwork to uncover real data is a necessity. A detailed analysis of the rural poor who are losing land to land grabbers is needed to understand whether they are benefiting from these forms of land redistribution.

Rural Cambodia is an important case study to understand the dynamics of land grabbing because: (1) landless and land poor populations are increasing; (2) the frequency and scale of state sanctioned land grabbing; (3) the World Bank Land Management and Administrative Programme's (LMAP) and subsequent donor land governance program's attempt to regulate land distribution, and; (4) the increasing incidence of peasant advocacy politics in response to land grabs. However, the Royal Government of Cambodia's (RGC) negative attitude towards work critical of the ruling Cambodia People's Party (CPP), as exemplified by the refusal of World Bank funds for LMAP and the reported threats against Global Witness and NGOs could make this avenue of research unwelcome. In spite of these risks, Cambodia is a viable case study for researchers to obtain data on large-scale land investments, land governance and resistance to land grabs.

This research project examines the impact of land grabs on peasants in rural Cambodia and the politics of peasant resistance. Data from other actors that interact and shape the peasants' experiences with land grabs are included to broaden the view of the case study and incorporate diverging perspectives. These include neighbouring peasants, local authorities (village, commune, and district representatives), provincial leaders, provincial land management offices, national ministry officials, local and international non-government organization representatives, activists and academics. To gain access to this data, media, government, NGO, and donor publications provide a preliminary overview of regional concerns. For more specific data, field studies were conducted via interviews, focus groups, house-to-house interviews and informant consultations from 28 May to 1 July 2010.

To strengthen the reliability of data, field studies were conducted in three rural areas affected by land grabs: Krakor District in Battambang province; the Pheapimex land concession in Pursat province; and the Phnom Penh Sugar Company and HLH Company in Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu province. The latter two cases were chosen because they are well-documented and experiencing ongoing conflicts companies, investors, and the local and national authorities that sanction land grabs in Cambodia. The case study in Battambang was undertaken to triangulate data and broaden the scope of the study to include less prominent land disputes with private (as opposed to state) interests predominating. The intent is to highlight variations between the three cases and evaluate the nature and extent of peasant politics in the resistance to land grabs.

The next section examines the state's role in Cambodia's land grabs on two fronts. Firstly, we discuss the origins of non-private land and the components of state land management in the 2001 Land Law. Secondly, we study the role of the international donors and critiques on the implementation of Cambodia's land registration.

Land grabs in Cambodia: state land management and land governance

Origins of Non-private Land: State Land Management

Land that is marginal, idle or degraded creates opportunities for investments in Cambodia's rural economic expansion. The 2001 Land Law stipulates that state private property can be reallocated to support social and economic development, i.e. economic or social land concessions. Economic Land Concessions, "allow the beneficiaries to clear the land for industrial agricultural exploitation of land" (Land Law 2001: Article 49). Specific requirements must be fulfilled before companies or individuals can utilize this land for economic development.[5] On paper, contracts for ELCs in Cambodia do not violate the land and use rights of peasants since ELC contracts are only granted on state land. However, the categorization of areas as state land does not reflect reality. Economic Land Concessions regularly encompass households' paddies, fields, grazing land, water

[5] Economic Land Concessions can only be granted on state private land for a term no longer than 99 years and cannot exceed 10,000 hectares (2001 Land Law, Article 17, 58; Article 61; Article 59). Operations on ELCs must commence within a year of the allocation. Five stipulations must be followed to ensure the legality of ELCs: the area of state private land must be registered and classified; a land use plan must be adopted for the area; Environmental and Social Impact Assessments have be conducted and approved; lawful landholders will not be displaced by the ELC; and consultations about the ELC must take place with the public

access routes and forest resources. With or without appropriate documentation, ELCs are granted by RGC on peasant lands that have not been formally registered. 'Soft' land titles granted by the local authority are not considered valid or are disregarded in the dispute process in order to support the state's claim for land and, thus, the legitimacy of the ELC on peasant land. The dispossession of Cambodians from their land indicates that state land polices falsely represents land and marginal and underproductive.

State public property is the only state land that is not available for transactions on the land market (see Table 3). It is illegal to possess land on state public property, but land does not belong to the state if legal possession can be proven (Land Law 2001, Article 12; Sub-decree on State Land Management, Article 5, as quoted by Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC) 2009: 67). Although state public and private property are differentiated in the 2001 Land Law, to date, the identification, mapping, and registration of state land has not occurred. The RGC rarely differentiates between state public and state private land when making claims that villagers are living illegally on state land; therefore, villagers can legally be evicted for ELCs or private investment interests. Since there is no public information on what is state public land, it is difficult for the occupier to question the state's claims that they are living on state property (CHRAC 2009: 67).

The 2005 Sub-decree on State Land Management states that state land must be mapped and this information must be entered into a central database that is accessible to the public. This is not being implemented systematically or transparently in Cambodia as large tracts of land are selected classified by the government as state private land so that they can be transferred or leased to private interests (Grimsditch and Henderson 2009: 6). In addition, if land lays fallow, it automatically falls into the state's possession. What constitutes 'unused' land is unclear as such land may be used for crop rotation, grazing cattle or for peasants to give the land to their children once they are married. This land is subsequently contracted for infrastructure development, ELCs for reforestation projects in the form of timber or rubber plantations, and agribusinesses. It is unknown what percentage of land in Cambodia belongs to the state, but it is believed to be large.

Table 3: State Public vs. Private Land

State Public	State Private
▪ Of natural origin, has heritage value or for public use ▪ Cannot be sold or held under long term leases ▪ Cannot be damaged ▪ Cannot change its overall function ▪ Can only be owned by the State	▪ "All the land that is neither state public land, nor legally privately or collectively owned or possessed under the Land Law of 2001" ▪ Can be sold, exchanged, distributed or transfer rights

Source: 2001 Land Law: Article 15, 17; Sub-decree on rules and procedures on reclassification of state public properties and public entities, art 16; Sub-decree No. 118 on State Land Management 2005, Article 5.

The state land registry is not transparency. Land tenure security for rural inhabitants is inadequate as land grabbers legitimize evictions by stating that they are illegally occupying state land. The information cannot be verified because registration of state land has not been implemented. This determination is made *ad hoc* and when investment

interests in an area are expressed (Grimsditch and Henderson 2009: 6). The lack of mapping and registering state land is also negatively impacting the ability for Ministry of Land Management Urban Planning and Construction to establish social land concessions (SLCs) for landless or land poor peasants since SLCs are only be granted on state private land.

The ambiguous nature of state land and the convenient transferability of state public land (such as forests, fallow, or non-private lands) to state private land facilitates land grabbing in rural Cambodia. The state determines who can have access to land registration, what titles are recognized, and how forest resources can be utilized. The rural poor are left out of the picture because of the power disparities in the system of land governance.

Land Governance for Land Grabs

This section questions the legitimacy of the land governance mechanisms advocated by the Cambodian 2001 Land Law and related sub-decrees. The Royal Government of Cambodia and international donors tout land titling, ELCs and SLCs as a poverty reduction strategy. They claim that land titling provides land security to the rural poor, ELCs bring employment, training, and infrastructure to remote rural areas, and SLCs provide land for the poorest and most marginalized communities. However, land governance policies fail to recognize political and social inequality in Cambodia and therefore do not mitigate risks which negatively affect the rural poor.

The World Bank and major donors support the proper implementation of the 2001 Land Law and its sub-decrees as a solution to land grabbing and landless in Cambodia. The Royal Government of Cambodia, however, extinguished the WB's role in land management in September 2009 (Minority Rights Group International 2010). Nonetheless, it is important to analyze the WB's Land Management and Administration Project (LMAP) strategy as donors continue to implement the land registry. The *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenaribeit* (German Technical Cooperation), the Government of Finland and the Canadian International Development Agency perform major roles in the present land management program. Land management successes include developing the legal frameworks for land administration, distributing training to technical staff and Ministers, and arbitrating over one million land titles (Grimsditch and Henderson 2009: 1; WB 2009). However, the Bank has concerns about land registration in Cambodia.

In the LMAP assessment, the World Bank questions the exclusion of disputed areas from the titling system in light of the increase in the number of disputes. They also cite the lack of state land mapping as problematic, since authorities can exclude any portion of land and title it as 'state land' (WB 2009: 6). The LMAP recognized that three situations could arise that negatively impact peasants:

> …(i) eviction from state land of individuals who occupied it prior to August 30, 2001…following titling of such land in the name of the state; (ii) eviction from state land titled in the name of the state of individuals who occupied it prior to August 30, 2001, because of the need to use such land for public works…, and (iii) extension by the state of Right of

> Way (RoW) claims which adversely affects possession rights." (WB 2009: 2-3)

This implies that the successful implementation of state land management and registration could result in further dispossession of peasants from their land. The state could grab even more land, ensuing "possibly the biggest land grab" in Cambodia (NGO Informant Interview 28 June 2010). Grimsditch and Henderson (2009) agree, stating, "there is considerable potential for comprehensive State land registration to lead to displacement of people and privatization of ecologically sensitive areas" (6). State land registration lacks transparency, but the mapping of state land could also impose negative impacts upon peasants living in economically valuable areas.

In addition to formalizing the inequality of land distribution by failing to engage with the political and social limitations to the land titling process, Bugalski and Pred (2010) find that the exclusion of problematic areas that are "likely to be disputed" impinge on the ability of the LMAP titling system and the subsequent continuation of land registration by the donors to improve land security in Cambodia (Bugalski and Pred 2010: 3).

Land disputes usually arise over the loss of access to agricultural land and customary resources. This is the result of divergences between customary and statutory land tenure systems (NGO Forum 2010: 1). Disputants claim land based on several documents, including official documents, ELC contracts, official titles and traditional rights claims (NGO Forum 2010: 6-7). Between 2008 and 2009, the NGO Forum found that the highest number of dispute cases took place in the provinces with the highest economic growth: Battambang, Preah Sihanouk, Bantey Meanchey and Kandal provinces, respectively (NGO Forum 2010: 4). Of the 236 dispute cases involving more than 5 households in 2009, 60% included primary agricultural land (NGO Forum 2010: 4). Analyses by NGO Forum shows that agricultural land was the second most likely to have the conflict resolved in 2009; conversely, agricultural land represents the largest number of dispute cases which were not resolved, with only 17% undertaking the resolution process. They conclude that this "may signify that community's livelihoods and food security are at high risk as agricultural land is the most likely type of land to be disputed" (NGO Forum 2010: 5). The case studies confirm this statement.

The remainder of this paper examines the political dynamics of peasant resistance to land grabs in rural Cambodia. The next section will open with the three case study profiles.

Case Study: Resistance in rural Cambodia

The efforts to compensate for some of the inequalities exacerbated by land grabs in Cambodia are failing because peasants have few options to successfully fight the system (O'Keefe 2009: 6). Since explicit and outward resistance is met with brutal force by the military and privately contracted police in Cambodia, speaking out against government officials or people that have powerful connections to the state can place individuals, their families, and entire villages in danger of bodily harm, eviction, and arrests (CHRAC 2009). Increasingly, overt forms of resistance challenge land grabs and the system that promotes land grabbing as rural economic development. However, the peasantry primarily makes a political impact through covert actions of deception and non-compliance.

Cambodian village profiles

This paper presents three rural cases of land grabbing in Cambodia: military land grabs in Koas Krala district in Battambang province; the Pheapimex Economic Land Concession (ELC) in Krakor district of Pursat province; and Omlaing commune in Kampong Speu province, respectively. All three case studies deal with land conflicts in which the state has been complicit or has directly instigated the dispossession of smallholders, thus increasing the vulnerability and landlessness of the local communities under the guise of rural economic development.

Koas Krala district in Battambang province is located in northeast Cambodia off of national highway 5, about a ninety-minute drive south from Battambang city. The local communities in this district are experiencing a high level of private land grabs undertaken by military leaders with connections to National Defence and the third parties that purchase land. About 2400 hectares have been pursued in 5 major cases.[6] One of the newly settled cases saw land divided among 131 peasant households, each receiving 2 hectares. Villagers have been dispossessed from their communal water source and forest.

Water access is an issue for people in Ra village, Koas Krala district, that have land access and no dispute issues. The military interests have cut off access to the pond and villagers must either travel further for water or buy it indirectly from the military person. The private exploitation of land for timber plantations and the military personnel connects to the military land grabs have also restricted a number of Koas Krala peasants' access to their water source by diverting and filling riverbeds. The original water source was 4 km from villagers. "This water now belongs to the company and we must travel 9-10 km or pay for water brought from our original source by water trucks" (HH Interview 12 June 2010). The concern for water in the area is increasing due to climatic and demographic pressures, and the further alienation from their source of water is causing greater concern for peasants.

These are private land grabs, and none of the land in dispute is on state land. However, many include the privatization of communal lands. The state's disregard of soft titles and possession rights has authenticated of military land grabs, and, as an extension, the development of land by agribusinesses. The clearing of land and timber plantation development has occurred completely independently of local communities. There are no opportunities for employment and infrastructure has not been developed. Peasants are protesting by signing petitions. Wealthy and powerful individuals intimidate peasants by brining false charges against them in the court. This forces peasants to submit to the settlements offered by land grabbers. The local peasants in Koa Krala district have little hope for future generations.

State sanctioned ELCs have a devastatingly large impact upon the numerous communities that they touch, including access to resources, social cohesion and culture. This is especially true for the concessions held by Pheapimex Cambodia Co. Ltd. Located in central Cambodia about a two-hour drive on national highway 5 from Phnom Penh, the Pheapimex ELC directly affects the land claims of five communes and over 1000 households in Pursat. This includes 500 households in Krakor district situated along the

[6] Mr. Tie Leng (630 ha), Mr. Hen Hoen (110 ha), H.E. Ms. Peung Norng (400 ha) and Mr. Long Sidare (1672 ha) make up four of the claimants with connections to the military or national defense.

Cardamom Mountains in Pursat province.[7] This massive land grab expands over 315,028 hectares in both Pursat and Kampong Chhnang provinces, spanning 130,000[8] and 175,000 hectares, respectively. It covers all forested land in the region, and boarders protected areas Aural Wildlife Sanctuary in the east and the Tonlé Sap River in the west. This concession clearly violates the stipulations of Article 59 in the Land Law: the area grossly exceeds the maximum ELC allowance of 10,000 hectares. A 2005 ELC sub-decree stipulated the procedures through which companies, like Pheapimex, that have violated the Land Law, would be renegotiated. According to Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (2009), Pheapimex has refused to comply (17).

Pheapimex has had several contracts with foreign companies, for example, with China Corp. of State Farms Group, to clear land and/or plant eucalyptus and acacia trees for timber plantations (CHRAC 2009: 27-8). These monoculture crops have reduced biodiversity of plants and animals. "We [local villagers] no longer see much wildlife and have to go deeper and deeper into the forest to find the plants we need" (HH Interview 15 June 2010). The company's developments also reduce the quality of soil and access to water. "The monocropping of acacia and eucalyptus trees has a bad effect on the soil. Their root systems reduce soil quality and badly effect fish and water because of heavy runoff and the erosion of riverbanks" (AEC FG 15 June 2010). The Pheapimex concession engages mostly in logging, as little agricultural development occurred in Krakor district until cassava production commenced in the spring of 2010. According to a local NGO member, "the company just wanted to sell the timber and make a profit" (AEC Members FG 15 June 2010).[9] The cassava plantation was not a part of the original reforestation plan of the concession and it appears that the company is presently looking to take advantage of the biofuel market.

In total, more than 170,000 hectares of the Pheapimex land concession has been deforested. This has resulted in peasants losing their access to 50% of their livelihood, which includes medicine, organic fruit and vegetables, timber collection, resin, and the production of 'wooden wire', as "we [peasants] traditionally do not produce much in the form of rice or from farming. This is just to ensure that we have enough to last until the next season…We could subsist solely from what the forest can give us" (AEC Members FG 15 June 2010). To date, AEC members and community leaders estimate that 80,000 hectares are now being used for agricultural production. The company has restricted peasants' access to forests, land, and has notably restricted the freedom and movement of local people by constructing canals and fences without local consultation.

> We cannot let our cattle near the canal or we will be fined. We cannot even access the water in the canal because we need a pump and payment of 40,000 riel per year…The company does not care about what we want or what we need to improve our lives…everything is for the company benefit. (HH Interview 15 June 2010)

[7] Pheapimex casts an even longer shadow, impacting about 50 communes in Pursat and Kampong Chhnang province.
[8] According to AEC members, it is 138,963 hectares.
[9] The 2001 Land Law states that development must occur within the first six months of the ELC acquisition.

After promising not to touch community land, 3000 hectares around the village of Prah was claimed by Pheapimex and community members were forced to leave or face fines or accept a settlement from the company.

In addition, construction on canals and roads to service the vast interests of the Pheapimex concession has limited the access of peasants to water and forest resources. In 1997, Pheapimex came to deforest 100,000 trees that were at least 15 metres tall to use in the construction of a canal near Tonlé Sap Lake (AEC Members FG 15 June 2010). The canal cannot be accessed by villagers, and restricts their water supply to animals and rice paddies. To construct the canal, the trees were harvested in the dense forest bordering Kampong Chhnang province. "They destroyed an entire village in 1997 to cut down about 100,000 trees and remove them from the area" (AEC Members FG 15 June 2010). This construction has cost the company very little in capital, and they will reap considerable profits in return. Peasants, on the other hand, have lost their forests and a village of 50 households, ending up with less than they started with: "…the land clearing has not finished, so we will undoubtedly lose more forest. We will be left with nothing" (AEC Members FG 15 June 2010). The negative impact of ELCs is also prominent our third case.

Omlaing commune is located about two hours west from Phnom Penh on national highway 4. Phnom Penh Sugar Company (PPSC) is grabbing rice fields and clearing land that belongs to 16 villages in Omlaing commune. [10] As a result, approximately 200 households' land has been confiscated by the company via the government sanctioned ELC (Titthara 2010: n.p.). Phnom Penh Sugar Company, owned by CPP senator and Cambodian business tycoon *Oknha* H.E. Ly Yong Phat, was awarded a 99-year government lease[11] for 9,052 hectare ELC in February 2010.[12]

Cambodia has attracted FDI to encourage trade. Such cash crops do not contribute to food security in Cambodia, or the training, jobs, infrastructure and taxes they purport will alleviate rural poverty. About 150 Omlaing peasants were relocated to Pis Mountain in April 2010. Their community lacks infrastructure and road access and they have not been able to plant rice in the rocky soil. As a result, they "face severe food shortages; their future is unclear" (Roth Thavy, ADHOC Omlaing Monitor, 21 June 2010).

The encroachment of PPSC on villagers' land, which the local authorities and company-hired civilian and military police have sanctioned and enforced on behalf of the company, have been identified as 'overlapping' areas with farm land. The company has restricted peasants' access to this land, despite the lack of surveys or any evidence that the company has a right to this land. "We cannot go to the land that the company has taken over…and we are afraid that bulldozers will come and take more land even though it is ours" (Tem Jorani 21 June 2010). Even with land certification, negotiators on the

[10] Not all villages have been officially registered in the commune, and, therefore, lack representation from the local authorities.

[11] This may have been reduced to a 70-year contract.

[12] In addition, Kampong Speu Sugar Company (KSSC) was granted a 10,000 hectare ELC located directly adjacent to the Phnom Penh Sugar Company ELC. This concession was registered in the name of Phat's wife, Kim Heang. The accumulated area of this 'Sweetheart deal' is well over the allowable limit of 10,000 ha as stipulated in Article 59 of the ELC Sub decree. As well, Phat holds two other concessions in Koh Kong and Oddar Meanchey provinces, both of which have resulted in massive and violent evictions. Phat was recently granted another concession in Koh Kong for his L.Y.P. Group Co., Ltd. that stretches 10,000 hectares, with 4,100 hectares located in Botum Sakor National Park (Sokha 2010: n.p.).

Cadastral Commission and national representatives have supported the company's claims to land through the ELC "national development" programme. The company clears the land first and negotiates later. Peasants explain, "we can no longer identify our land because Phat's company has transformed the land into one massive field" (HH Interview 21 June 2010).

Part of the Singapore HLH Group, HLH Agriculture in Omlaing commune is a corn plantation and production agribusiness. HLH was established in 2008 to produce and dry red corn for livestock consumption. The company, owned by Prime Minster Hun Sen's sister Hen Seng Ny and Singaporean Omg Bee Haut, was granted a 9,985 hectare concession near Oral Mountain in Kampong Speu province. The area that lies in Omlaing commune totals 456 hectares and affects 3 villages. It is the centre of private land disputes as military personnel sold the peasants' land to HLH without consultation. "One day we were told that they land was not ours, that had been sold to a company by a high-ranking military official. But how could they sell the land when we were using it?" (HH Interview 12 June 2010). They are determined to stand strong: "We can do nothing else" (HH Interview 21 June 2010). The next section discusses official, everyday and advocacy politics of land grabs in the three case studies.

Resistance at the Village Level

The peasants in the research's three case studies react in unique yet similar ways to land grabs in their communities. This section will discuss peasant resistance in three capacities: official, everyday and advocacy politics. My research first analyzes whether local authorities are supporting resistance to land grabs. Secondly, forms of everyday resistance are examined. Finally, this study examines the rise of advocacy politics in rural Cambodia. This paper argues that advocacy politics are increasingly common due to the severity of the land grabs, and the escalation of tensions by the domestic and international state-supported land grabbers.

Official resistance to land grabs is not common in the three case studies. Local authorities support land grabbers because they fear state reprisals if they publicly oppose land grabs. For example, Tanout villagers in Koas Krala district do not understand why the local authority does not recognize their legitimate claim to land. Although they do not have land titles, peasants claim, "…our land was mapped out clearly with the help of local authorities" (HH Interview 12 June 2010). "The Commune Council knows that we do not have title or documents", one villager claimed, "and this allows them to create false documents for the military personnel that make claim on the land" (*Ibid*). Commune Councillors blame the system, since "the land disputes involve the military the local system is not effective. They need to deal with it at the national level…in my opinion, the local authority sees that people need some land and we cannot leave them landless, but the dispute is at the national level" (Preah Posh Commune Council Deputy Chief Ray Salout, 11 June 2010). Even at the district level, the state determines the course of action: "the [Pheapimex] ELC was implemented through the national level, and that direction is followed" (Krakor District Governor 17 June 2010). In the opinion of First Deputy Commune Chief Kong Sipha from Omlaing commune: "The company is a giant and the Commune Council is the grass. We dare not say anything if we want benefits from the company." (22 June 2010). The authority of location representatives is overridden by the state's desire to attract foreign investors and keep them satisfied.

The Preah Posh Commune Councillors have been of little help, as they have changed the contact person for the villagers several times. “There is a big gap between villagers and local authorities. Since the land dispute, the local authority oppresses us. They are supposed to be like a parent, but now they only want money from the company” (CPN FG 12 June 2010). The Tanout villagers see this continuous deferment of responsibilities within the Commune Council as an avoidance tactic by the local authority representatives. As members of the Community Peace Network (CPN) explain,

> The Commune Council takes complains and sends them to the District, the District sends them back, and on and on in a never-ending circle to avoid their responsibility of solving the land disputes. They are afraid to listen to us. (HH Interview 12 June 2010).

Indeed, the CPN members are also frustrated; they feel as though they “have no way to reach powerful representatives at an NGO or political level” (HH Interview 12 June 2010). One middle peasant said “the national police inspector came to talk to villagers when they were protesting against the military person. Peasants will accept land settlements because they are intimidated” (HH Interview 12 June 2010). They see that “the elites and their powerful friends also intimidate the local authorities. They do not want to speak out about those at the National Defence level who align themselves with the military land grabbers” (*Ibid*). The national authorities relieve the commune and village representatives from their responsibilities to villagers, since “the negative effects of villagers’ livelihoods also means that the government can take advantage of the land concession and increase national income” (Romdeng village leader Bour Rey, 16 June 2010). Similarly, Doung Sarin, Kbal Trach Commune Chief, echoes nearly the same sentiments: “Even if there is a negative impact on livelihoods, they [villagers] will gain because of Cambodia’s economic growth” (15 June 2010). As maintained by local authorities, land grabs bring national development for the betterment of Cambodia.

Government representatives in all three locations identify the ‘national development plan’ as the rationale to encourage economic land concessions: “we need land deals to attract FDI, provide employment, technology and human capacity, and infrastructure development, and as a way to properly manage national resources for the benefit of all Cambodians” (Dok Sakngea 15 June 2010). Phou Savsenn, Cheu Tiel Kposh village leader, further explains: “If we do not provide ELCs the land is useless. The state provides the ELC and this gives benefits to people, like jobs. Collecting non-timber forestry products and logging do not provide a good livelihood, so Pheapimex jobs will increase incomes” (16 June 2010). According to local authorities, the state frames land grabs as a local versus national development issue, and the villagers cannot see the bigger picture and the benefits that large-scale land investments have to Cambodia as a whole.

According to Kbal Trach Commune Council Chief, many villagers misunderstand that the land allocated to the Pheapimex concession is state land and never belonged to the villagers. As a result of the misunderstanding, villagers make trouble by gathering to protest. “The company will not violate the people...it is their right to protest...but the forested land belongs to the government and that’s all Pheapimex wants...the villagers are just emotional” (CC FG 15 June 2010). However, the peasant actions of everyday

resistance show that, despite losing access to water, land and forest resources, can react in a measured and covert manner.

In all three case studies, peasants have been notified of land grabs by the arrival of bulldozers and excavators to clear the land. Their immediate reaction has been to go to the district or commune representatives to complain and discover what is happening to their land. Other infractions (such as killing cattle that peasants leave to graze) by company workers and police were reported to the Commune Council, but, as one peasant in Kbal Trach says, "they just ignore us" (Phann Phirun 15 June 2010). As a result, they no longer seek help from local authorities. Instead, peasants turn for support from local NGOs.

Some local authorities blame NGOs and other civil society groups for negatively influencing peasants, especially in Pursat. Kbal Trach district governor and the deputy governor of Pursat say that civil society groups "encourage villagers to fight" and the company will give back the land (Krakor District Governor Interview 17 June 2010). Local authorities also cited the peasants' lack of knowledge as problematic: "protests should be about the actual problem…[but] no one is trying to get their land" (CC Interview 17 June 2010). In Kampong Speu, the first deputy governor blamed the opposition party for encouraging conflict to gain a voice against the ruling party: "deeply, the villagers don't want to protest" (Interview 23 June 2010). However, the peasants hold the authorities and company responsible for the increased levels of resistance. Powerful interests reject land titles, control the judicial system in their favour and deny fair treatment to the pesants. In Omlaing, advocacy group members say company military representatives take advantage of a very tense atmosphere and try to provoke them by spreading rumours and encouraging violence (Advocacy FG 21 June 2010).

However, some authorities support the peasants in principle, if not in action. Omlaing Village Leaders support the protests of the villagers and attended the protests at the beginning of the conflict. Ngen Nget of Thnol Bombek village, explains:

> The company is encroaches upon villagers' land. The built a road from a pagoda and push the people and land boundaries back. People know that the company overtakes the villagers' rights. They are angry and burned the company shelter. They went to the province to protest. Regardless, the people lose and the company wins. (22 June 2010)

They show support for the movements of peasant advocacy in Omlaing, and stand went to protest with them when Bin Chantou and another community leader were jailed for six days. "All the village leaders went to protest. But it took too long and we had to come back to work. But we are not afraid" (Choy Hym, Snoul village leader, 22 June 2010). At the provincial level in Pursat, authorities speak out against the dispossession of the rural poor by ELCs. Chan Sath, Deputy Director of Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction, Pursat, explains that, "there is no confidence in the national level to distribute ELCs fairly…it is about money and the benefit to individuals…there is no 'green vision' and the individual benefits over the community" (17 June 2010).[13] The official politics in our three case studies are not completely absent.

[13] Interestingly, Deputy Director Chan Sath and the Omlaing village leaders have personal reasons that they may speak against the Pheapimex and Phnom Penh Sugar Company ELCs. Firstly, Chan Sath is retiring soon and plans to start is own NGO to advocate for environmental concerns in Pursat. Secondly, the village

However, the actors that speak out are few and they have limited influence. More effective strategies for communities facing land grabs are everyday and advocacy politics. The following section discusses the latter.

Everyday forms of resistance are covert and often unorganized. Despite this, the three case studies reveal some everyday actions that oppose land grabs. For example, Tanout villagers, who "have just enough paddies to get by" in Koas Krala District, are not a part of a formal community or peace network (Sol Vuthy 13 June 2010). Khoun Chot clarifies the peasants position, saying, "the peasants are afraid to put their thumbprint [sign] anything because it is not what they say it is; it is something else and they may be tricked or lied to" (13 June 2010). The peasants, however, explain that the millionaire and business tycoons that want their land intimidate them:

> We have company representatives and inspectors coming everyday to get us to accept a land settlement. They threaten us and say that they will take us to court if we do not settle. We cannot afford to go to court. We are afraid we will end up with nothing. (Sol Vuthy 13 June 2010)

Tanout peasants are distressed by the uncertainty of their future. In the face of such insecurity and oppression, they plant rice on the disputed area because they have no other options. They continue their rice production because: "this land was cleared by us by hand. We have tilled it for many years. We have no option but to plant our rice" (Sol Vuthy 13 June 2010). Under the power and intimidation of the national military and their elite partnerships, Tanout peasants resist with subtle actions to avoid further oppression.

In other cases, it can be unclear if actions are overt or covert forms of resistance since peasants and local authorities have different versions of the story. For example, in Prea Posh village, Koas Krala district, the Deputy District Governor claims that villagers were stealing rice from a field claimed by land grabbers because the leader, a woman with 20 hectares of land, was angry about losing some of her rice paddies and had pressured other villagers not to accept land settlements. The Preah Posh Deputy Commune Chief reveals that, "she got three or four other households to follow her and not accept the settlements. She stands strong because human rights officials and the media push her not to accept them" (Ray Salout 11 June 2010). He describes what happened during the incident:

> There were many intruders [in the field]. The police took pictures of about 100 people resting. She paid them to come and help her…she got the people to the paddy and she tried to destroy the paddy field and crops of grains and beans. (Ray Salout 11 June 2010)

The Koas Krala District Deputy Governor claims, "local people hit two observers on the head…they were junior district officials" (Sin Gna, Deputy District Governor, Koas Krala, 11 June 2010). The District office speculates that this was an attempt to incite more violence (District Interview 11 June 2010). "The prosecutor has kept her in jail…she is not yet charged" (Sin Gna, 11 June 2010). The local activist group, CPN, however, tells another story.

Local peasants in the CPN explain the conflict as less severe:

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leaders in Omlaing know and have worked below former Commune Councillor Bin Chantou. Therefore, they are likely more inclined to support him as a community leader against PPSC.

> She just wanted her rice back, as she had planted and put time and labour into the crop. However, the property no longer belonged to her. About 100 people joined her because they had a share in the crop. Someone requested that she talk about the dispute in another field, and that was where they claimed she was stealing rice. But that is not true because she was taking the rice that she planted, so it belonged to her. (CPN FG 12 June 2010)

The seventeen people who assisted her in harvesting the rice were summoned to court were still waiting to hear the outcome. The peasants admit, the woman…

> made many mistakes because she would not accept the concessions and she had many conflicts with investors. She also took advantage of peasants and did not compensate them for the labour they supplied. But she does not belong in jail. It has been many months. (CPN FG 12 June 2010)

The jailing of community leaders is an effective strategy to break apart resistance movements. The two interpretations of the event, by local authorities and peasants, highlight that the idea of property has a limited meaning for peasants. The peasants felt they had a right to the crop that they planted and, when confronted, defended their actions. Most actions of everyday protest go unreported, but, in this case, the peasants actions were more confrontational than they had intended. Covert forms of resistance also take place in Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu province.

In Omlaing commune, peasants sleep in their fields "since this is the only way that we can be sure no one tries to take [our land]" (HH Interview 21 June 2010). Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) representative Ms. Ouch explains, "children are given slingshots to shoot at soldiers. Elderly people block the road and openly intimidate officials, which, in one case, was the deputy chief of the provincial police" (21 June 2010). To protect their land, peasants "put spikes in the grass at night to keep unwanted people off of their land" (*Ibid*). Although peasants avoid any major confrontations with their oppressors, company and local officials view these as aggressive tactics. These actions escalate tensions and clashes with company representatives, local authorities, police and military soldiers. This has resulted in arrests, violence and further oppression. Peasants in all three cases turn to advocacy politics when they think they have nothing to lose. This is the topic of the following discussion.

The independent media has publicized the overt protests and petitions against the Pheapimex concession. Transitional forms of resistance, between covert and overt, that peasants have employed to protect their access to the forest and its resources in Pursat. Peasant alliances with select forest officers allows peasants to discover when and where the company is deforesting land so that they can take action, since, "the forestry office has a relationship with the community, and they confidentially tell us when the company is logging because they want to stop the deforestation. The majority of forestry officials feel regret, although some get money from corrupt practices with Pheapimex" (Khieng Chantrea, 15 June 2010). For example, "an important official at the provincial level would tell me what was happening with the company. One month before the company came in 2010, he warned the community that the company would come again" (Kong Sovann, 15 June 2010). Although protesting the deforestation stopped Pheapimex from clearing in one area, "the excavators and bulldozers just relocate to deforest another

location…there is no solution" (Roth Pheakdei, 15 June 2010). Peasants continue to monitor and protest deforestation. In addition, the AEC group in Pursat is actively sending petitions and letters to all levels government.

In 2008, AEC members sent a complaint to the Ministry of Forestry with the Kampong Chhnang villagers. In 2009, they intensified their petition-writing, and sent complaints to the national level, to Council Members in the Prime Minister's Cabinet, and to the Ministry of Agriculture to request that the government cancel the Pheapimex ELC due to the negative impacts on the peasants. On the same day, a coalition of nineteen different provinces lodged complaints about the ELC granted to Pheapimex. These petitions went, and continue to go, unnoticed by the state. The peasants affected by the Pheapimex concession carry on collecting thumbprints (as signatures) but officials at all levels ignore their concerns.

In 2009, the Community Forestry (CF) group sent another request to the village, commune, and district levels of government. They are seeking to preserve 5843.32 hectares of land as community forest inside the Pheapimex concession. "This would be a natural resource conservation project that would benefit all Cambodians. We do not want to lose our natural resources," explains one CF leader. "The company puts money into the pocket of the investor. They do not respect the contract and very few benefit" (Phal Nhean, 15 June 2010). Kong Sovann understands the 2001 Land Law, and he maintains, "This is public land. It does not belong to the state. The concession provision was wrong. Other companies come to invest in Pheapimex, but no one has studied the impact that the concession has on livelihoods" (15 June 2010). The community wants the state to do what is right, but the peasants are continuously opposed.

Police roadblocks prevent AEC members from reaching their community meetings. Police and local authorities, warning the villagers must stop protesting or they will be taken to court, intimidate the peasants. AEC representatives feel discriminated against and looked down upon by all levels of government: "We are not treated as equal partners and are not allowed to sit down at the same table and talk with politicians" (Yin Pich, 14 June 2010). They delegitimize the villagers and their complaints. Authorities ignore members' requests despite continuous petitioning and an increasing number of peasant protests. One leader said, "We will not give up. If Prime Minister Hun Sen will not meet with us, we will lay in the road. We don't care if we die. If we don't have our land, we are better-off dead" (Kong Sovann, 15 June 2010). The escalating frustration pushes the pesants to more overt and extreme forms of resistance.

Since 2000, Koas Krala villagers have faced elite prosecution for their protests and have been threatened with charges of cheating, stealing, destroying property and murder. The peasants accepted the unfair land settlements to avoid going to court. The peasants admit that, "there were violent clashes with military officers and excavators were burned during the conflict" (Phul Nhean 10 June 2010). The CPN members advocate dealing with land disputes and local authorities peacefully, but one man expresses conflict with this approach: "we lose our land and do not have enough food or income. After we lose our land, we cannot live peacefully because we do not have our land" (Sol Munny 10 June 2010). The frustration with the continuous encroachment and dispossession of becomes apparent when they erupt into overt forms of resistance.

Local authorities, the provincial courts and the Phnom Penh Sugar Company oppress Omlaing peasants. Two community leaders were detained on 24 March 2010 at

the provincial court for six days and five nights. One of the leaders, Bin Nhean, has been requested at court twice:

> The first time, I was there for six days and five trucks of people came (about 200) to protest my incarceration. The second time, peasants took tractors because the district told the truck drivers that they would be arrested if they took anyone to the provincial court. A company employee and three Commune Councillors stood as witnesses against me. I was not involved when people threw sticks and stones to deter excavators, and I was sick when people set fire to the PPSC offices. I do not advocate violence. (20 June 2010)

Bin Nhean and another community leader were accused of inciting people to protest after about 100 peasants converged in front of PPSC offices and burnt down their offices during an altercation. Bin Nhean is the main focus of oppression because he was a former member of the CPP and a commune councillor for several years and now leads a community advocacy group. Senator Phat, owner of PPSC, has twice asked the community leader for meetings but Nhean explains, "I will not meet with him alone. I do not want villagers to think that I was working with Phat or taking bribes. We must keep strong" (20 June 2010). Future prospects for peasants facing forced eviction are not bright.

Peasants in all three case studies are not optimistic that a favourable resolution to their land disputes can be found. In fact, the majority of peasants interviewed had very little hope for the future, saying, "we have nothing. We might as well die" (Kong Sovann 15 June 2010). The exception is the community leader in Omlaing commune and a handful of Omlaing advocacy group members. As the community leader explains,

> Protesting will help us to gain a resolution. We will continue to be vulnerable if we do not work to keep our land. The company thinks that the community does not understand and that only the community leader is motivating the peasants. But the entire community is motivated to stop the land grabbers. (Bin Nhean, 21 June 2010)

The Omlaing peasants support and work with their community leader: "We make our own decisions to protest. But we will support him as our leader because he is advocating for our rights" (Mou Botum 21 June 2010). Some who find that their land is threatened but they are afraid to take action trust their leader and want to continue to follow "his good example" (Phul Samoeun, 22 June 2010). However, the peasants take responsibility for the violence that erupted against the private and state-led land grabs. Without an income or land to work, they take action on their own: "what else should we do?" (Dok Chantrea, 20 June 2010). Although peasants do not have much hope for a favourable resolution, it appears that AEC, CPN and the Omlaing advocacy groups are not conceding to land grabbers, and the state authorities that support them, without a fight.

Conclusion

This research shows that the rural poor in Cambodia are opposing large-scale land deals. Official politics are limited and peasants do not have the support of local or state authorities. As a result, forms of everyday and advocacy politics are most prevalent in the

resistance of the rural poor in Cambodia. The oppression from the state-led land grabs, corporate and military powers effectively pushes peasants to more overt forms of resistance. The majority of peasants have little or no hope for the future. As frustrations mount, there will likely be an increase in the incidence of confrontational resistance.

Resistance, organized or not, is a common thread linking villagers together. The distrust of outsiders and politicians, speculation about the company's next move and gossip fuels advocacy politics, as does the everyday resistance that is covert and unorganized. Since advocacy and official politics present considerable risks to life and livelihoods of the community leaders and the advocacy groups, they attempt to operate in a clandestine manner to prevent direct repression from the oppressors.

Resistance is continuing to intensify, but land grabs are unfaltering. Does this mean that resistance is ineffective? In practical terms, except for a few rural peasants in the Omlaing case study, peasants do not have hope that there will be a favourable outcome in their fight against land grabbers. The local authorities, private investors, the military, the courts, and national authorities have ignored their plight. One Damnank Pring peasant asked, "What will we do without our land?" (Meas Navy, 15 June 2010). She and her neighbours lament that they have no other available avenues of action but they must defend their land. Although powerful actors disregard peasant agency, the increasing advocacy politics in Cambodia implies that communities are experiencing some success in the opposition to land grabs. The set backs, such as incarceration and violence, do not seem to severely derail protesting communities.

Land is the rural poor's most valuable asset. The degradation of the environment, the threat to food sovereignty and the significant impacts of dispossession, affecting indigenous people, women and children most dramatically, greatly outweigh any actions that claim to benefit the rural poor. The increasing landlessness, or the transformation of peasants into 'living ghosts', is a threat that many Cambodians face. Worse, the responsible parties, such as the commune, district, provincial and national authorities, are negating their 'paternal' role to accumulate capital at the expense of public need. However, the state does not work alone. Donors must also be held accountable for the bias and formalized inequalities that the land registration system is legitimizing. Domestic and international corporations do not have an interest in self-regulation that would impede capitalist accumulation. The resistance to capitalist exploitation within isolated communities has expanded to wider networks, but it is difficult to imagine that oppressors will tolerate such overt forms of resistance. Repression from domestic and international capitalist elites may reduce resistance and the agency of peasants. However, Cambodia is at a critical crossroads that could see the emergence of national peasant movements that could integrate into transagrarian movements. The future for the rural poor is uncertain. They will have to depend upon their own efforts to hold back land grabs in rural Cambodia.

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Appendix
Informant Interviews

Date	**Organization**	**Representative**
June 7, 2010	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)	Phann Sithan (Legal Officer)
June 7, 2010	Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC)	Suon Sareth (Executive Secretary)
June 8, 2010	People's Action for Change (PAC)	Collette O'Reagan
June 9, 2010	Oxfam GB Cambodia	Menh Navy (Gender Lead)
June 9, 2010	Focus on the Global South	Shalmali Guttal (Coordinator of the Defending and Reclaiming the Commons

		programme)
June 14, 2010	Action for Environment and Community (AEC)	1. Yin Pich 2. Loy Saren
June 18, 2010	The Centre for the People and Forests	Edwin Payuan (Chief Technical Advisor)
June 21, 2010	Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)	1. Ms. Ouch (former Omlaing monitor) 2. Roth Thavy (Omlaing monitor)
June 27, 2010	Village Focus	Meas Nee (Professor)
June 28, 2010	NGO Forum	1. Pen Raingsey (Land and Livelihoods Programme Manager) 2. Khan Chantharo (Research Officer)
June 28, 2010	Bridges Without Boarders Southeast Asia (BABSEA)	David Pred (Director)
June 29, 2010	Phnom Penh Post	May Titthara (Reporter)

Government Interviews/Focus Groups

Date	**Government Branch**	**Representative**
June 11, 2010	Koh Krala District Government, Battambang	Sin Gna (Deputy District Governor, Koh Krala)
	Preah Posh Commune Council and Village Leaders, Battambang	1. Kok Lear (Prash Posh village leader) 2. Nub Det (Sach Hub village leader) 3. Mom Thon (Ta Khou deputy village leader) 4. Luch Chhoy (Kab Prech village leader 5. Isvay Hren (Prash Posh second deputy of commune council) 6. Kim Ratana (Commune Councilor of women affairs) 7. Yir Som Ath (commune councilor) 8. Meas Choeun (Kuy Neng villager leader) 9. Ray Salout (deputy chief of Prash Posh commune)
	Battambang Provincial Government	Sieng Suthang (Deputy Provincial Governor, Battambang)
June 15, 2010	Kbal Trach Commune Council, Pursat	1. Doung Sarin (Commune Chief) 2. Phul Leng (Deputy Commune Chief) 3. Nhoun Sarun (Commune Secretary) 4. Dok Chhoeun (Commune Councilor) 5. Oub Samoeun (Commune Councilor)
June 16, 2010	Village Leaders, Kbal Trach Commune, Pursat	1. Thou Sameth (Kralagn village) 2. Bour Rey (Romdeng village) 3. Phou Savsenn (Cheu Tiel Kposh village) 4. Pom Sino (Srey Reusey village)
June 17, 2010	Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction, Pursat	Chan Sath (Deputy Director)
	Krakor District Government, Pursat	1. (Governor) 2. (Deputy Governor)
June 22, 2010	Omlaing Commune Council, Kampong Speu	Kong Sipha (First Deputy Chief)
	Village leaders, Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu	1. Ngen Nget (Thnol Bombek village) 2. Bo Ben (Ohan Kum village) 3. Uy Ren (Khrang Duong

		village) 4. Choy Hym (Snoul village)
June 23, 2010	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, Kampong Speu	Ouk Tith (Deputy Director)
	Kampong Speu Provincial Government	1. H.E. Phat Sombo (First Deputy Governor 2. Vhan Sokha (General Secretary) 3. Ouk Tith (Deputy Director of Land Management Department)
	Thpong District Government, Kampong Speu	1. Toun Song (Governor) 2. Liang Kom (Chief of Committee and former District Governor) 3. Heng Hatha (Deputy District Governor) 4. Rith Sareth (Chief of Agriculture) 5. Kchiev Yinkia (former Chief of the Environment and Deputy Governor) 6. Nov Soeung (Deputy Chief office of the Environment)
June 30, 2010	Cambodian Ministry of Land Management	H.E. Sar Sovann (General Director)
	Cambodian Ministry of Interior	H.E. Sak Setha (Secretary of State)

Focus Groups

Date	**Local Organization**	**Participants***
June 12, 2010	Community Peace Network (CPN) in Koas Krala District, Battambang	1. Meas Botum (Hob village community chief) 2. Ly Vibol (Ra village member) 3. Khoun Veasna (Choeung Tinh village community chief) 4. Sok Bourey (Radiboth village community chief) 5. Nhem Chanthou (Kab Preach village community chief) 6. Kuy Nee (Ta Khoul Damnak Tbal village deputy chief of community) 7. Kuy Veata (Tothlok village member) 8. Ok Maly (Domnak Tbal village community chief) 9. Phul Nhean (Koy Veng village community chief) 10. San Pich (A Ry village community deputy chief) 11. Suon Phirun (A Ry village community chief) 12. Hab Kolab (Kosh Kralor village community chief) 13. Sol Munny (Koy Veng village community chief) 14. Menh Channary (Toul Matesh village community chief)
	Koy Veng village in Koas Krala district, Battambang	1. Phul Nhean (M) 2. Sol Munny (M)

		3. Phul Botum (F) 4. Dok Kanha (F) 5. Meas Sarin (F) 6. Som Kolab (F) 7. Som Chantou (F) 8. Dok Pich (M) 9. Kong Nhean (M) 10. Yin Rithisak (M)
June 15, 2010	Action for Environment and Community (AEC) in Krakor district, Pursat	1. Khun Jorani (Chher Kom village member) 2. Khun Chenda (Chher Kom village member) 3. Kong Sovann (Chher Kom village member) 4. Kong Mealea (Chher Kom village member) 5. Phal Nhean (Chher Kom village member) 6. Khieng Chantrea (Kbal Trach village community chief) 7. Luch Champei (Ansa Chambok village community chief) 8. Som Pheakkley (Chher Tom village community member) 9. Dok Sakngea (Kbal Trach village community member) 10. Svay Rithisak (Anlong Thnout village community member) 11. Roth Pheakdei (Kbal Trach village community chief) 12. Pen Run (Svay Sor village community chief) 13. Suon Vibol (Anlong Thnout village community member) 14. Ray Samnang (Anlong Thnout village community member) 15. Phann Phirun (Kbal Trach village community chief) 16. Kuy Saren (Staff, Kampong Chhnang province) 17. Yin Pech (member, Pech Changra village)
June 21, 2010	Advocacy group executive (unnamed) in Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu	1. Bin Veasna (Krang Chambok village community chief) 2. Bin Nhean (Omlaing village community chief) 3. Kuy Nee (Omlaing village community chief) 4. Kin Maly (Piek village community chief) 5. Bin Chantou (Omlaing village community chief) 6. Reab Munny (Kouk village community chief) 7. Roth Phhoung (Oh Ang Kum village

		deputy community chief) 8. Roth Boupha (Kok village community chief and land dispute coordinator) 9. Phal Vibol (Snoul village community chief) 10. Khun Phirun (Snoul village community leader) 11. Meas Bourey (Dombol Pram village community leader) 12. Mom Samnang (Kouk village community leader) 13. Kok Sovann (Komameas village community leader) 14. Dam Sarum (Krang Dong village community leader)
June 21, 2010	Advocacy group members in Kouk village, Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu	1. Phann Chenda (F - all) 2. Kong Jorani 3. Dok Kolab 4. Kuy Kunthea 5. Reab Maly 6. Phal Mealea 7. Soy Pheakkley 8. Heng Phhoung

* Names listed are pseudonyms

House-to-House Interviews

Date	**Location**	**Name***
June 12, 2010	Ta Khou village, Prash Phus Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	You Botum (8 person household)
	Ta Khou village, Prash Phus Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Dok Champey (single woman with mother)
	Ta Khou village, Prash Phus Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Bun Thou (elderly couple)
	Koy Veng village, Prash Phus Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Bun Seng (daughter of Bun Thou; 11 person household)
June 13, 2010	Ra village, Preah Phos Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Doung Kheang (two grown daughters)
	Ra village, Preah Phos Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Som Seuy (elderly man and wife; 3 sons, 1 daughter)
	Tanout village, Preah Phos Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Sol Vuthy (peasants with 2-5 ha of land)
	Tanout village, Preah Phos Commune, Koas Krala District, Battambang	Khoun Chot (home in Ra but purchased land in Tanout)
June 15, 2010	Kbal Trach village, Krakor district, Pursat	Dok Sam (landless, 2 ha paddy)
	Kbal Trach village, Krakor district, Pursat	Kim Sophea (elderly woman)

	Kbal Trach village, Krakor district, Pursat	Svay Pich (5 children)
	Damnank Pring village, Krakor district, Pursat	Meas Navy (overlapping forested land)
	Damnank Pring village, Krakor district, Pursat	Til Chhoeun (overlapping forested land)
June 16, 2010	Sye Ruessy village, Krakor district, Pursat	Reab Bourey (4 person hh)
	Sye Ruessy village, Krakor district, Pursat	Kim Maly (Muslim 4 person hh)
	Sye Ruessy village, Krakor district, Pursat	Luch Munny (7 person hh)
	Sye Ruessy village, Krakor district, Pursat	Prak Kunthea (4 person hh)
June 20, 2010	On Kum village, Omlaing Commune, Kampong Speu	Bin Nhean (Omlaing village community chief)
	On Kum village, Omlaing Commune, Kampong Speu	1. Koeut Kieng (F) 2. Nhem Eng (F) 3. Tem Saren (F) 4. Yin Run (M)
	On Kum village, Omlaing Commune, Kampong Speu	Dok Chantrea (7 person hh)
June 21, 2010	Kouk village, Omlaing Commune, Kampong Speu	1. Mou Botum (F) 2. Mou Sovann (M) 3. Tem Jorani (F) 4. Tem Phirun (M)
June 22, 2010	Preak village (unregistered), Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu	1. Phul Samoeun (F) 2. Phul Sarun (M) [protestors]
	Prey Chrov village, Omlaing commune, Kampong Speu	Kim Sakngea (M) (6 person hh)

* Names listed are pseudonyms