PAKISAMA’s involvement in the advocacy and implementation of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines
Outline of Presentation

1. Context of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines
2. PAKISAMA and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
3. The TriPARRD Program
4. Current Engagement
5. Lessons and Challenges
6. Concluding Remarks
I. Context of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines

Brief Profile: Philippines

- Population = 100 million
- Land Area = 30 Million Hectares:
- Agricultural Land = 11 Million Hectares (37% to total land area)
- 48% of the population is dependent on Agriculture; but agriculture contributes only about 12% - 18% in GDP.
- Most of the poorest are in the agricultural sector.
• Encouraging economic performance in the past few years: Average Growth Rate is about 3% to 5% annually.

• However, this economic gain hardly benefitted the poor; development report indicate that poverty level is increasing.
• Economic and political structure in the country is controlled by elite families.
• High concentration of land ownership to few families

• Resulting to creation of a powerful landholding class
• Under it is a mass of tenants and farm workers who lived in perpetual poverty for many generations.
- Marcos used the situation to justify the declaration of Martial Law in 1972.

- Social unrest fueled by the rebellion initiated by the peasants from the countryside.

- The Marcos Dictatorship finally ended in 1986 through the famous EDSA People Power that brought Mrs Corazon C. Aquino to the Presidency.
Mrs Cory Aquino prioritized promised the passage of a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law.

It would not be easy. Congress was dominated by landed politicians.

Therefore, farmers needed to launch a strong and united lobby.

This was the time when PAKISAMA was established.
II. The Promulgation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law in 1988

- PhilDHRRA facilitated the formation PAKISAMA in 1986.

- Its objective was to engage the new government in drafting an acceptable piece of legislation on Agrarian Reform.

- Congress for a People’s Agrarian Reform (CPAR) - a broad coalition of national farmer’s federations.

- CPAR - voice of the farmers in the drafting and deliberation of the proposed Agrarian Reform Law.
Main issues in the debates during the drafting of the AR Law

1) Land valuation – The value of the land which would be the basis of payment to the landowner by the government;

2) Land Retention – The insistence of the landowner to retain a portion of the landholdings.

3) Exemption of some landholdings from AR coverage – Type of lands that landowners wanted to be exempted from AR coverage.
- PAKISAMA continued to lobby at least in defending the more progressive provisions if not to correct the watered-down provisions of the law.

- However, using the various windows of opportunities, PAKISAMA was willing to engage government in the implementation of the law.
III. The Tripartite Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

- PhilDHRRA implemented the Tripartite Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (TriPPARD) program.

- PAKISAMA was one of its active partners.

- TriPARRD was founded on the need of the farmers groups, with the assistance of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), to become pro-actively involved in the implementation of Agrarian Reform in partnership with the concerned government agencies.
Components of TriPARRD Program

1. Social Infrastructure Building and Strengthening
   - Organizing
   - Formation
   - Skills
2. Land Tenure Improvement

- Follow up the necessary land transfer documents with the concerned government agencies.
- Most helpful was the Paralegal Volunteers; Farmer leaders who underwent rigorous training on the legal aspect and procedures of agrarian reform.

Challenges
- Land Owners Resistance
- Farmer to Farmer Conflict
- Documentation problems
- Land Valuation
- Long Judicial Process
3. Productivity Systems Development

- to make the land productive and improve the income of the AR beneficiaries.

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- Sustainable agriculture - organic and diversified farming.

- In our experience, the more difficult part is the linkage of the farmers with the mainstream market.
IV. Current engagement of pakisama with the government

- Indigenous People’s Rights Act
• Training the Beneficiaries of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to improve their farm and increase their productivity.

• Bottom Up Budgeting
Lessons and Challenges:

• We again reaffirm the importance of people’s organizations.

• Our government is actually not monolithic; there are also good people that we can work with.

• Link with Market/ Development Business Enterprise
Lessons and Challenges:

• Some CSO leaders need to move into government;

• At some point, there is a need to collectively choose, decide, and campaign for the right candidate during election.

• Some CSO leaders might need to run for government position.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!