

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Defending Rights,
Nature, and Life



FOCUS
ON
GLOBAL
SOUTH

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MESSAGE FROM FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

2017 marked the last year of our three-year workplan, *Peoples' Alternatives for Asia: Defending Rights, Nature, and Life*. The key objective of this workplan was to promote peoples' alternatives in Asia, in order to challenge the current paths of "development" and investment in the region that have created greater inequality, natural resource grabbing, destruction of ecosystems, and a culture of impunity that has allowed corporations to criminalize resistance of peoples and communities, while depriving them of their agency to defend and assert their rights.

We worked towards this objective in 2017 in a number of ways, at local, national, regional, and international levels, and through a great number of partnerships and alliances.

We hope to have contributed to the strengthening of Asian social movements in their effort to create and advance alternatives to the dominant economic paradigm, through research and analysis, political education, and campaigning with allies.

In 2017 we also had to respond to recent trends that threatened the rights and livelihoods of communities, as well as civil society space. There was increasing authoritarianism in Asia, whether in Duterte's Philippines, Hun Sen's Cambodia, or Modi's India. In our continuing effort to expand and deepen our analyses of complex issues, we produced knowledge products and initiated campaigns on economic tools and instruments being pushed by governments, corporations, and elites in the region, such as the development of Special Economic Zones in the Mekong region, and the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, a mega free-trade agreement.

We couldn't have performed our work and realized our objectives without our close partnerships with communities, local and national civil society organizations, and social movements. We are grateful to our allies for their continuing cooperation, to our international donors for supportive partnerships, and to people and communities for allowing us to be part of their struggles.

In solidarity,

The Focus on the Global South team





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CONTEXT

Guided by its overarching three-year workplan, Focus organized, conducted, and implemented its work in the context of two major challenges in Asia: **the deepening of neoliberalism and the intensification of fascist and authoritarian rule in Asian states.**

Protestors at an anti-extra judicial killings mobilization in the Philippines

Deepening neoliberalism is marked by growing landlessness in South and Southeast Asia, even in countries such as the Philippines, which has been implementing a land distribution program for the last 30 years.



We see land-based conflict and food insecurity arising from corporate-led land grabbing, which is supported by economic programs and investment policies of Asian governments, and is resulting in public land being opened up to foreign investment.

Meanwhile, the destruction of lands, forests, water resources by extractive industries continues, and public services and sectors—such as health, agriculture, and food production—have been opened up to foreign investment and trade.

To suppress dissent, especially resistance to neoliberal economic and development programs, Asian governments have resorted to policies aimed at punishing, killing, and censoring certain populations and sectors of society, particularly the poor and the socially-politically disenfranchised, human rights and environmental defenders, workers, farmers, women, and children.

In each of the countries we operate in, repression of civil society and suppression of the freedom of expression have created even greater challenges for movements and communities seeking to assert their rights.

Grassroots communities, social movements, and civil society groups are being sustained to resist and push for alternatives, and Focus continues to be active at local, national, regional, and international arenas to strengthen and amplify these voices.



Grassroots communities, social movements, and civil society groups continued to resist and push for alternatives, and Focus was active at local, national, regional, and international arenas to strengthen and amplify these voices



RISING REGIONAL REPRESSION



MYANMAR

Similar to India, in Myanmar religion and identity are exploited to consolidate support for the ruling regime. The mass exodus of Rohingya to Bangladesh following a violent military campaign has particularly generated worldwide attention and criticism of Myanmar, but ASEAN has remained silent and impotent on the issue.

INDIA

In India, the Modi-led government has been taking over key educational, research, and cultural institutions; and giving further power to security forces to impose its Hindu-nationalist agenda.

THAILAND

In Thailand, the junta has not fulfilled its promise to hold elections even as it continues to suppress of dissent and censor critical voices.



PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, the brutal war on drugs has led to over 20,000 deaths (some of which are carried out by 'unknown' killers and are uninvestigated) and the victims were mostly from poor communities. Meanwhile, President Rodrigo Duterte rejected human rights and persistently threatened its defenders. Martial law is still in effect in Mindanao and the government has threatened to expand its coverage to other parts of the country.

CAMBODIA

The political situation in Cambodia quickly deteriorated in 2017, following local commune elections in June that resulted in large gains for the opposition party. The government has silenced critical voices by shutting down independent media outlets, suspending NGOs, and dissolving the main opposition party.

KEY MOMENTS

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
		<p>MARCH Public event on the Situation of Forest and Land Rights, and Access to Justice in Thailand held in Bangkok</p>	<p>APRIL Public launch of the report, The Reality of the National Backbone, in Phnom Penh</p>	<p>MAY Regional meeting on the Rise of the Right and Authoritarianism in Asia held in Bangkok</p>	<p>JUNE Farmers march for land and social justice from Bataan to Quezon City in the Philippines</p>
		<p>MARCH International Women's Day events in Cambodia and the Philippines</p>	<p>APRIL 50th anniversary of the ADB. Civil society mobilizations held against the ADB in India, the Philippines and Japan.</p>	<p>MAY-JULY Actions against the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in the Philippines and India</p>	
			<p>APRIL Consultation on the draft declaration of peasants rights co-organized in Delhi</p>		

JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<p>JULY Display of the Food Systems in Asia exhibition displayed at the Thai Studies Conference in Chiang Mai , Thailand</p>	<p>AUGUST Seminars on Systemic Alternatives organized alongside the ATTAC Summer University in Toulouse, France</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER Publication of the Focus Policy Review: Unpacking Duterteism</p>	<p>OCTOBER Public launch of the publication, SEZs and Value Extraction in Yangon</p>	<p>NOVEMBER Civil society representatives converge in Manila for the ASEAN People's Forum</p>	
		<p>SEPTEMBER First Asia-wide workshop on human-rights based governance of tenure of land and natural resources held in Bangkok</p>	<p>OCTOBER Hundreds of activists gather in Geneva in favor of a Binding Treaty on corporations and human rights</p>	<p>NOVEMBER Launch of the End Impunity Now! video</p>	<p>DECEMBER First agroecology workshop held in Phnom Penh</p>
			<p>OCTOBER Roundtable discussion on climate justice organized in Delhi</p>	<p>NOVEMBER General Assembly of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples in Delhi</p>	<p>DECEMBER Actions against the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Buenos Aires</p>

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

INTENSIFIED SUPPORT FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS, FISHERFOLK, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Focus worked closely with communities and groups at the forefront of struggles against destructive development, and are at the heart of peoples' alternatives.

Focus reinforced its support for the rights of peasants, fishers, indigenous peoples, and other local communities to land, territories, livelihoods, and natural resources in the face of increased political and security threats.

This was done through strategy meetings, training workshops and seminars, street mobilizations/actions, and legal aid.

Afsar Jafri of Focus making a presentation on the impact of trade to a farmer community in Palakkad, India



Fishing communities working with authorities to remove illegal fishing equipment from conservation areas in Battambang, Cambodia



Focus supported Cambodian rural land activists and communities embroiled in conflicts over land, forests, and fisheries. Workshops were held over the course of the year to improve community knowledge on relevant laws, human rights instruments, and advocacy strategies to challenge wealthy and powerful land grabbers. Focus also supported community-led actions to remove illegal fishing equipment, and to submit complaints and petitions to authorities and courts at commune, district, provincial, and national level in order to pressure them to act on a number of land and natural resource rights violations.

In the Philippines, Focus continued to work with farmers and agrarian reform/land rights advocates under the Save Agrarian Reform Alliance (SARA), and produced videos in support of agrarian reform and land rights. Focus also supported indigenous peoples and promoted their alternatives by producing a video documentary on the Sulagad Food Sovereignty framework of the Timuay Justice and Governance, and on the indigenous political structure of the Teduray and Lambangian communities in Maguindanao.

Filipino farmers rally on the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) anniversary



Focus staff were invited to speak and facilitate at assemblies of peasants and fishers in Asia and internationally, including at the La Via Campesina's (LVC) 7th Conference in Spain and the General Assembly of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP) in India.

In Bangkok, Focus organized the first Asia-wide workshop on human rights-based governance of tenure of land and natural resources in September, bringing around 50 representatives from social movements and civil society organizations (CSOs) from across the region.

Focus also became very involved in the movement to build popular support for the UN draft declaration of the rights of peasants and people living in rural areas, which was under negotiation at the UN. Focus joined the International Congress on Global Peasants Rights from 7-10 March in Germany, which was held in view of the next round of negotiations in Geneva, and coordinated consultations and discussions alongside LVC in India and during the ASEAN Peoples Forum in Manila.



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Participants at the human rights-based land tenure workshop

STRENGTHENED WORK ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, AGROECOLOGY, AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Food and agriculture are cornerstone issues that connect to many areas of Focus' work. In 2017, Focus continued to promote alternatives to large agribusiness and climate smart agriculture, among them the paradigms of Food Sovereignty and agroecology, while championing local food systems.

To deepen understanding of the concept and practices of agroecology amongst rural communities and CSOs, Focus co-organized local and national workshops on agroecology in India and Cambodia, and an Asia regional meeting in partnership with LVC on agroecology and climate change in Sri Lanka.

In India, Focus added new booklets to its series on agroecology, bringing out editions on the impacts of free trade agreements on Indian agriculture; agroecology and gender equality; and Climate Smart Agriculture.



An agroecology workshop in Subir Dang, India

Focus also co-organized a roundtable discussion with social movements and CSOs in New Delhi to deepen collective understanding of climate justice, and to generate critical debates on real solutions to climate change in the form of agroecology, food sovereignty, and renewable energies.

To promote local food systems to a wider audience, Focus put together a photo exhibition on local food systems in Asia that was displayed at the Thai Studies conference in Chiang Mai, ASEAN Peoples Forum in Manila, and was also published online.

Focus staff were invited as speakers to national and international conferences on food systems, food sovereignty, and agroecology. As a tribute to the 7th International Conference of LVC, Focus edited and produced a special edition of the Nyeleni Newsletter: Advancing the Paradigm of Food Sovereignty.

Roundtable discussion in Delhi on Financialization and False Solutions to the Climate Crisis





DEEPENED ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMITTEE FOR WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Food Systems exhibition on show at the Thai Studies Conference

Focus continued its engagement with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to promote the rights and livelihoods of peasants, small-scale farmers, and fisherfolk in policy-making.

As part of Focus' continuing commitments under the FAO's Committee for World Food Security (CFS), Focus participated in negotiations with governments on the future of the CFS and recommendations arising from the CFS-commissioned report on sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition (FSN).

The civil society team fought for and won the inclusion of language on the importance of forests as eco-systems with crucial contributors to FSN and places of cultural and spiritual significance; the crucial role of forest peoples in protecting and regenerating forests; legal recognition and protection of rights of local communities, indigenous peoples, and women in land-forest tenure; and explicit recognition of the negative impacts of industrial plantations on forests, eco systems, land, and FSN.



Mobilization outside of ADB Headquarters in Manila

CHALLENGED THE IMMUNITY OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK WITH ALLIES

Another continuing campaign of communities and CSO in 2017 was to make ADB accountable for the years of development projects that have adversely affected local communities and the environment.

With 2017 marking the 50th Anniversary of the ADB, Focus was a key organizer and participant in civil society mobilizations against the ADB in India, the Philippines, and Japan. The thematic focus of these actions was to challenge the continuing lack of accountability and the immunity of the ADB in financing and supporting inequitable development, ecological damage, and social-economic insecurity. Focus also released a special edition of its Focus Newsletter highlighting Asian people's resistance to the ADB.



Mobilization against the ADB in Manila



An activist gathering organized alongside the WTO Ministerial in Buenos Aires

ENGAGED IN KEY CAMPAIGNS ON UNJUST TRADE AND CORPORATE POWER

Focus closely monitored and campaigned around trade negotiations that further enshrine the rights of corporations and investors over those of local communities.

Focus was a key organization of civil society and social movement actions against the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) negotiations in Manila and Hyderabad, India, and in the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires.

Activities included workshops/seminars, press conferences, demonstrations, and popular education materials to draw attention to provisions in the RCEP, WTO agreements, and other free trade agreements (FTAs) that undermine the rights of people but advance corporate interests.



ECT
IGNTY

~~FTAS~~
DON'T
TRADE AWAY
OUR LIVES!

PROTECT



Mobilization in Manila calling for the rejection of RCEP

As well as taking part in the campaign actions outside of the RCEP negotiations, Focus also took part in the official stakeholder negotiations, reflecting the civil society position to reject RCEP.

Focus is a member of The Treaty Alliance, a broad platform of civil society and social movement activists monitoring the progress of UN negotiations to establish an international legally binding treaty on businesses with respect to human rights.

In October, Focus staff joined hundreds of activists from around the world in Geneva for the *Week of Peoples Mobilizations*, which was organized in parallel with the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group negotiating the treaty.

Focus continued working to build support for the binding treaty in Asia as well, including co-organising discussions at the ASEAN Peoples' Forum in November.

EXPANDED WORK ON THE CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF INVESTMENT IN MEKONG

The Mekong region has been a recipient of billions of dollars of overseas investment, with numerous infrastructure, extractive, and other large-scale development projects underway or in planning stages.

In this context, Focus deepened its work on investment in the Mekong region in 2017, especially on Special Economic Zones (SEZs), enabling greater learning about investment trends at regional and national level, and on building of relationships between communities affected by SEZs.

Focus produced two key publications: *An Overview of Investment in the Mekong, and SEZs and Value Extraction from the Mekong*. The latter publication was launched publicly in Yangon, in October, with around 100 attendees, including representatives from government, embassies, and the private sector.



Speakers from the SEZ report launch in Yangon being interviewed by media



The launch was followed by two civil society forums, one in Myanmar, and one in Cambodia, to exchange information, lessons learned, analysis and concerns regarding SEZs and investment flows in the Mekong region.

Focus also collaborated with the Workers Information Centre and WaterAid in Cambodia on a worker-led study investigating the living conditions of garment workers. The report, the *Reality of the National Backbone*, was launched publicly in April with over 100 attendees including representatives from government, clothing corporations, unions, and partner organizations. Workers led the presentation of the study's findings to the audience, using creative methods that include drawing, songs, photo exhibitions, and video.



A diagram showing the research study process for the Reality of the National Economic Backbone report

INITIATED DISCUSSIONS ON THE RISE OF THE RIGHT AND AUTHORITARIANISM IN ASIA

In light of increasing political repression across Asia, Focus initiated a series of conversations to examine and understand the nature of contemporary authoritarian regimes and how these political trends coincide with deepening neoliberalism.



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Three regional events were organized in Thailand and Philippines, and a national level dialogue was held in Cambodia. Each gathering brought together diverse constituencies to analyse social, political and economic trends in the region, articulations of power and potentialities for progressive change.

To mark the first year of the Duterte regime in the Philippines, Focus published its Policy Review, *Unpacking Duterteism*, which contained a collection of articles on Duterte's economic policies, the violent war on drugs, and the government's approach to agriculture and agrarian reform, foreign policy, and the environment. These issues were also discussed at a forum with Philippine civil society organizations and networks. Following highly engaging discussions, participants requested similar forums in other regions of the country.



RISE OF POPULIST AUTHORITARIANISM

Walden Bello, Cristophe Aguiton, Robin Broad, & Shalmali Guttal

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM | 4 AUGUST 2017

Max's Restaurant, 21 Scout Tuazon Street, Quezon City

FOCUS POLICY REVIEW

A YEAR OF DUTERTISMO

ONE YEAR IN OFFICE
A FORUM ON THE
DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION

18 JULY 2017
1.00 TO 5.00 PM
VENUE TBA



One year since he took office,
what CHANGE has come?

International Human Rights' Day action
in the Philippines, December 2017



SUPPORTED NATIONAL MOVEMENTS AND NETWORKS IN THE PHILIPPINES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Duterte's leadership has been marked by a constant assault on human rights. New networks and movements have formed in this new context, including iDEFEND in 2016.

Focus is an active member of iDEFEND, and in 2017 spearheaded efforts to develop educational materials on land rights and women's rights, as well as the formulation of a framework for the campaign on social justice and human dignity.

In partnership with iDEFEND, Focus produced a video, *End Impunity Now!*, which aimed to draw attention to the growing numbers of people who have been disappeared, murdered, harassed, imprisoned, and tortured across Asia. The video was voted the best human rights video at the 7th Human Rights Pinduteros Choice Awards, based on public votes.

Focus also continued its support to Block Marcos, an anti-dictatorship movement, particularly through their National Conference Against Dictatorship.



Anti-Martial Law
Mobilization 2017



Alternative Peoples' Regionalism on ASEAN@50

PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN ORGANIZING THE ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE/ ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM

2017 marked the 50th year of ASEAN, with the Philippines taking its turn as chair of the regional bloc. The ACSC/APF was held in Manila parallel to the ASEAN Leaders' Summit and Related Meetings on 11-14 November.

As part of the Philippines National Organizing Committee and Executive Committee, Focus was heavily involved in preparatory meetings, activities, and mobilizations leading up to the ACSC/APF. Focus contributed to the overall development and implementation of the conference.

Focus was also nominated the head of the newly-established Cultural Committee, which aimed to highlight the importance of culture as a key component of the struggles and initiatives towards peoples' alternatives and alternative regional integration.

In collaboration with various cultural organizations and activists from the region, Focus spearheaded the conceptualization of the Cultural Theme, *Culture*

FOCUS
ON THE
**GLOBAL
SOUTH**



CULTURE OF SOLIDARITY AND RESISTANCE FOR PEOPLES' RIGHTS

**ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE / ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS | NOVEMBER 10-14, 2017**

FILM SHOWING | FOOD FESTIVAL | PHOTO EXHIBIT
FREEDOM WALL | PEOPLES' MUSIC CONCERT | SINING TAGPUAN
SOLIDARITY NIGHT | CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

of Solidarity and Resistance for Peoples' Rights. This brought together cultural activists, musicians, artists, and groups across the region; enriched the people-to-people conversations component of the forum; strengthened grassroots peoples' solidarities towards common strategies, campaigns, and advocacies; and highlighted the importance of culture as a rallying tool that binds people together and as a legitimate medium for expressing political, social, and economic realities.

Focus was also involved in the Convergence Space on Human Rights and Access to Justice and the Convergence Space on Corporate Greed and Power. The ACSC/APF culminated with a solidarity march, torch parade, and turnover ceremony led by the Cultural Committee at the historic People Power Monument.



Focus was also involved in the Convergence Space on Human Rights and Access to Justice and the Convergence Space on Corporate Greed and Power





  **NO!**  
CHANGE IS COMING
ONLY THE WAR
AND
THE PEOPLE DYING

WORKED GLOBALLY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES AND SPACES

Focus is part of the Systemic Alternatives project alongside Attac France and Fundacion Solon. In 2017, its main activities were the publication of the Systemic Alternatives book in various languages, revamp of its website, and creation and dissemination of infographics promoting information on systemic crises, alternatives, and systemic visions.

In August, three seminars on Systemic Alternatives were organized to coincide with the ATTAC Summer University in Toulouse, where Focus made

presentations on the overall situation in Asia; the contradictions of development, modernity and “well being”; and agroecology and the Commons as systemic alternatives in practice.

Focus is also on the steering group of the Fight Inequality Alliance, which is made up of international and national NGOs, movements, trade unions and other civil society organisations that have come together to highlight and challenge the growing crisis of inequality. Focus co-drafted the Asia Inequality Narrative, and attended Asia and global gatherings of the alliance in Manila and Copenhagen to help build the alliance at national, regional and global levels.



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KEY NUMBERS



Total publication downloads
24,416



Total op-eds and interviews
6



Total media mentions
24



Total visits to our website
109,942



Total unique website visitors
91,874

MEDIA AND OUTREACH

In an effort to grow our international impact and reach a broader audience in multiple countries, Focus targeted media by organizing press conferences, writing press releases, and contributing opinion pieces. Focus also expanded its use of its website and social media to grow its audience.

Various news sources and blogs quoted Focus staff members throughout 2017. Extensive work was undertaken by Focus in opposition to RCEP; this is reflected in the amount of news outlets that quoted and cited Focus in articles regarding FTAs and RCEP. Afsar Jafri's critiques of the RCEP, including the impact and implications of RCEP and other free trade agreements, were quoted in **The Hindu-Business Line**, **Scoop**, **The Hans India** and **Newslick**, as well as on the websites/blogs of several allies.

News outlets also highlighted Focus' work in land rights and governmental transparency. Mary Ann Manahan's report on the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program was cited in **The Business Mirror**'s article exposing the flaws of this program. **InterAksyon** and **Rappler** mentioned Focus and its involvement in the Right to Know. Right Now! coalition, a group of civil society organizations calling for heightened government transparency. The launch of the report on Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Yangon resulted in numerous media mentions. Focus was quoted in the popular English-language Thai newspaper, **The Nation**, and in several mainstream media outlets in Myanmar, including **Frontier Myanmar**, **Eleven Myanmar**, and the **Myanmar Times**.

In the lead up to, and during the ASEAN Peoples' Forum, Focus' views on the challenges facing ASEAN were featured in the media. Walden Bello, Shalmali Guttal, and Sophea Chrek were quoted in an **InterAksyon** piece, ***Southeast Asian civil society to ASEAN: 50 years of exclusion is enough.*** Joseph Purugganan was extensively quoted in a **Rappler** story on how civil society groups and social movements are coming together to decry human

rights abuses and inequitable policies in the region. Joseph also summarized and presented the **10-point recommendation of the ACSC/APF**, culled from the collective conference statement, which was also covered in the media.

In addition to quotes appearing in media articles, Focus also contributed opinion pieces and articles to other media outlets. Mary Ann Manahan from the Philippines office contributed an article, *Advancing Justice After Climate Disaster in the Philippines*, to the **Iliea** magazine, and co-authored two op-eds on agricultural land with Ed Tadem for **Rappler** and the **Inquirer**. The Philippines team had an op-ed on *Unpacking Duterteism* feature in the **Asia Sentinel**. Staff also gave radio interviews; Mary Ann Manahan gave an interview (in Spanish!) for **Pressenza**, on the situation in the Philippines with Duterte as President, while Shalmali Guttal was interviewed for **Radio Mundial Real** on the sidelines of the negotiations on forests and community rights in Rome. Joseph Purugganan, Galil Castillo, and Raphael Baladad from the Philippines office were guest speakers on **Radyo Veritas** and discussed the report, *Unpacking Duterteism*.

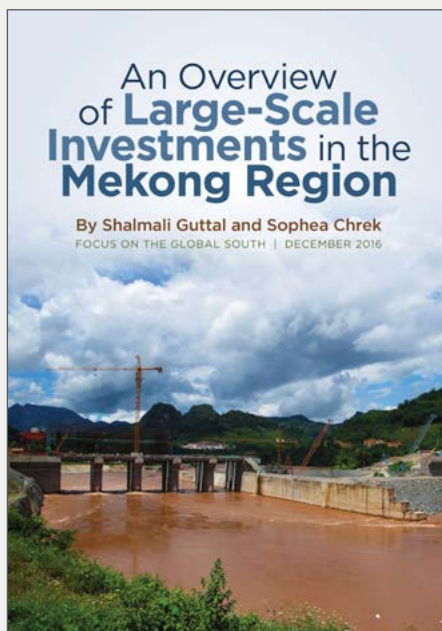
Meanwhile, Focus continued to use its website and social media to disseminate its research and analysis. Between April and December, the website registered over 24,000 individual publication downloads, with the most popular including the recent publications on investment in the Mekong, agroecology in India, and Focus Policy Reviews from the Philippines office.



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2017 PUBLICATIONS



This report provides an analysis of the current investment trends in the Mekong sub-region. The Mekong has been focused on rapid economic growth through large-scale private investments, and government policies which have prioritized trade, investment liberalization, and privatization. The report gives an overview of the regulations and laws that facilitate large-scale foreign and domestic investment, and their impacts on living and working conditions of laborers in Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

In observance of the International Day of Small Farmers, Focus gathered together in a special online publication articles that highlighted the struggles of small farmers and peasants, as well as the different forms of their resistance.



Outside of the regular issue, Focus released a special edition of its newsletter on the occasion of the 50th Annual Governor's Meeting of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is the second largest source of development finance in the Asia-Pacific region (after the World Bank Group). ADB financing has driven economic growth, but the financing has negatively affected many communities of small farmers and indigenous peoples. It has been an agent of inequitable development and mis-governance. This newsletter focuses on people's resistance against the ADB, and shares analysis on the ADB's immunity to legal liabilities and lack of accountability to national laws.

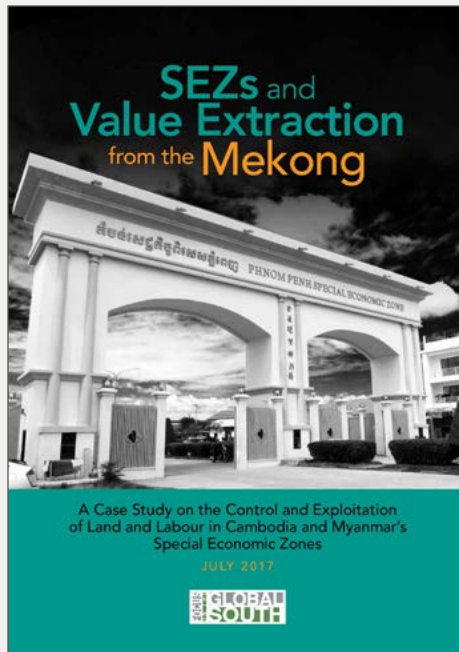


To support the campaign around RCEP, another special issue of the newsletter was released following the 18th round of RCEP talks in Manila, which saw the convergence of various social movements and civil society organizations in coordinating inside and outside actions to oppose the emerging mega free trade agreement. The newsletter features statements and analyses from allies in the Trade Justice-Pilipinas campaign platform and the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF 2017),

and all other actions and pronouncements issued throughout the NO RCEP week of action.

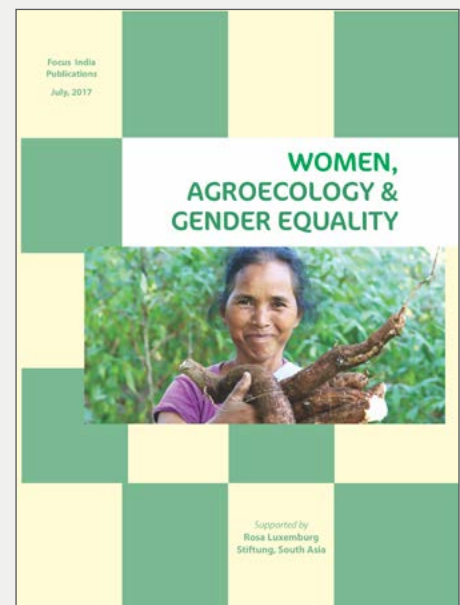
This issue of the *Policy Review* contains articles that unpack "Dutertism," the policies, governance, and agenda of Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte. This compilation of articles gives an overview of the first year of the president's governance and the impact he has had on the Philippines.

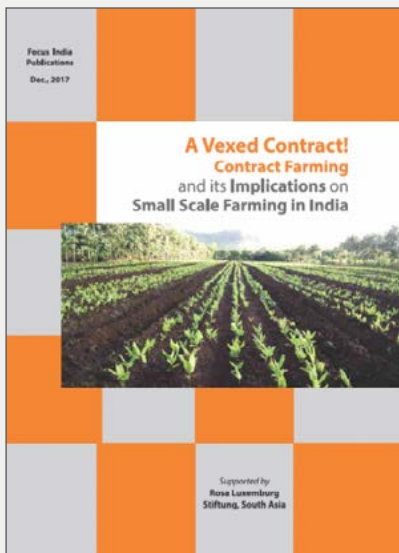




This report, authored by consultant researcher Charlie Thame, analyzes the development and impact of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the Mekong region. SEZs are praised for spurring foreign investment, creating jobs, building infrastructure, and diversifying the economy, but at what cost? Critics argue that they undermine workers' rights and cause too much environmental degradation. This case study focuses on two SEZs in Cambodia and Myanmar, the incentives for investors, and the protection of workers' and environmental rights.

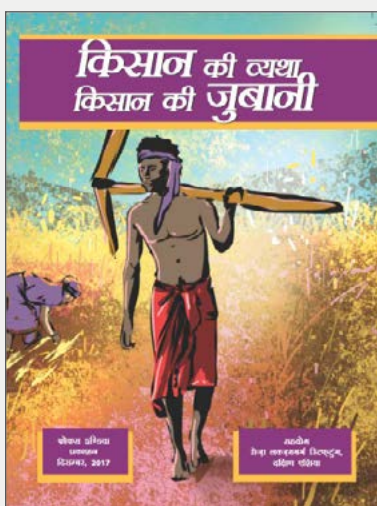
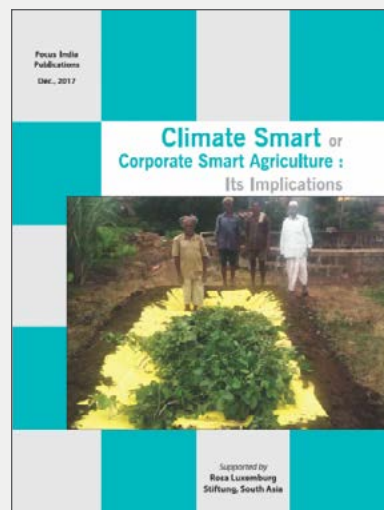
This booklet introduces basic concepts of gender, patriarchy, gender roles and their relation to agroecology, a fast-growing social movement that shows real potential to solving planetary crises like climate change, unemployment, hunger, and water scarcity. The booklet examines how agroecology is positively affecting gender inequalities and provides success stories from India. This background resource is intended for grassroots groups seeking to understand agroecology's potential to address gender inequality.





This booklet looks at the existing rules and laws of contract farming in India and its benefits impacts on small and marginal farmers. It deals with several issues which are raised in the context of contract farming, for example: Will contract farming solve the contemporary agrarian crisis in India? What would happen to the food security of farmers and agricultural workers under contract farming? What is a contract agreement and what features should the agreement contain? What are the long impacts of contract farming on the soil and the environment?

This booklet provides an overview and analysis of the so-called “climate smart agriculture” in India, it shows how such solutions have been implemented via an entire ecosystem of public and private institutions. It discusses whether these solutions are false or effective, whether they actually conserve the environment, curb climate change, or support the smallholder farmers, through whom such solutions are implemented.



This booklet in Hindi is aimed to give farmers an easy understanding of agrarian issues and the agrarian crisis, with the message that collective agriculture and agroecology can be the best solution to deal with the crisis.

SELECTED ARTICLES AND BLOG POSTS

Honoring my Grandfather & Small Farmers of the World, April

Civil Society Interventions on the RCEP, May

Amidst “Martial law-like rule.,” eviction, harassment, criminalization of their struggle, farmers demand agrarian reform & justice, June

Why the Commons Matter, June

Martial Law Then and Now; Collective Memory Making as Urgent Task, June

Power, Resistance and Political Organizing under the Duterte Regime, June

Nyeleni Editorial: Advancing the Paradigm of Food Sovereignty, July

Asia and the Mega Free Trade Agreements, July

**Economic Growth and the Rise of Dictatorial Regimes—
Roundtable Report, July**

**From Streets & Communities to Halls of Power, Women Mobilize
to Dismantle Corporate Power, November**

PHOTO ESSAYS AND VIDEOS



**International Workers' Day
in the Philippines 2017, May**



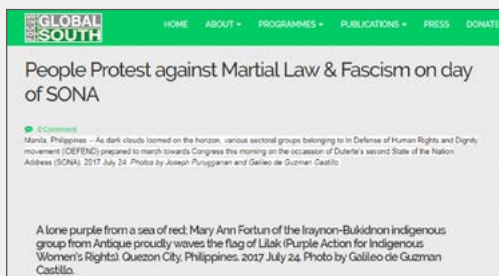
**Who Benefits from RCEP—the World's
Largest Free Trade Agreement?, July**



**In Photos: March for Land and
Social Justice, June**



**A Tribute to Local Food Systems,
October**



**People Protest against Martial Law
& Fascism on day of SONA, July**

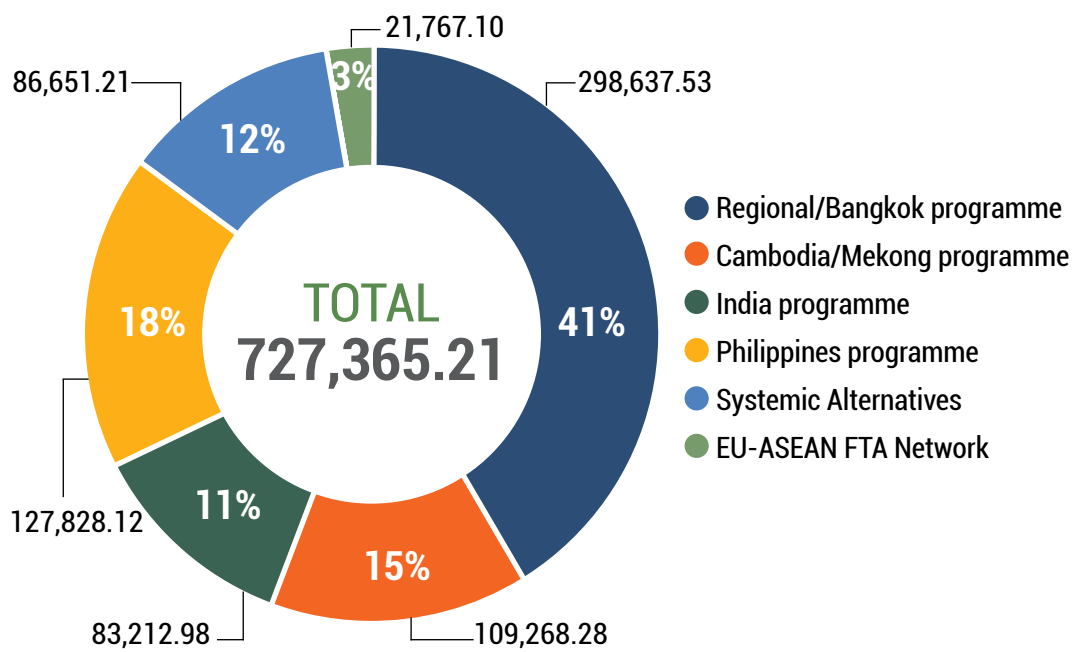


**End Impunity Now! Video,
November**

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

BALANCES (IN EUR)	GENERAL FUNDS	PROGRAMME FUNDS	COALITION FUNDS	PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT FUND	RESERVE FUND
Beginning balance 2017	157,435.72	19,678.79	24,244.34	5,392.94	67,299.74
Income in 2017	495,225.73	226,487.59	96,568.09	5,976.72	18,726.24
Expenditure in 2017	447,008.75	153,209.15	108,418.31	3,212.40	15,516.60
Ending balance 2017	205,652.70	92,957.23	12,394.12	8,157.26	70,509.38

EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME 2017 (IN EUR)



Remark: Exchange rate of BoT.or.th, 31/12/2017(Avg selling rate), 39.3938THB/EUR

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