Achieving SDGs through land consolidation in rural regions of Uttar Pradesh state in India

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INTRODUCTION

- Land reform initiatives in India are framed around the socialist agenda. (Chattopadhyay, 1973).
- These include Zamindari abolition acts, tenancy reforms, impose land ceilings, promote land distribution to landless and consolidation of holdings. (Besley & Burgess, 2000).
- Among them, consolidation of holdings (Land Consolidation – LC) is the most neglected land reform in the country (Rao 1992).
- With 17 states and one union territory having LC acts, Uttar Pradesh is the only state in the country that is implementing it for more than 65 years.
- It is unarguably the largest entity in the world that is undertaking LC – with 4,497 active projects at present.
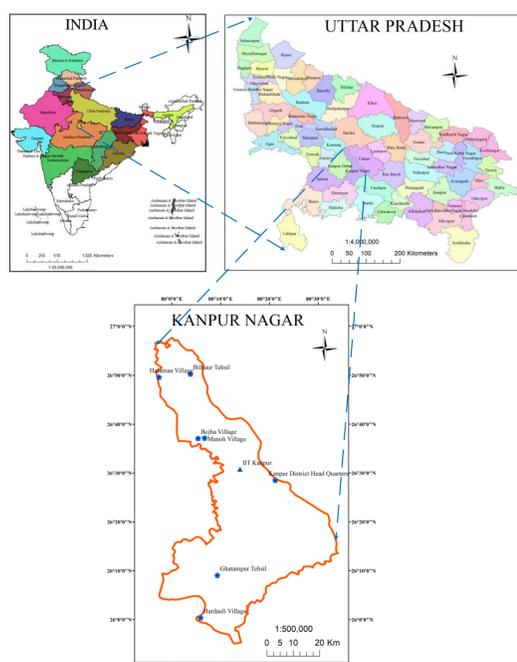
MATERIALS | METHODS

Fig. 1:Locations of places where study is taken up

(Shape file source: www.datameet.org)

- **Objective/Aim**: What SDG targets are achieved through LC in U.P. state?
- Grounded theory (GT) – inductive approach – simultaneous data collection and analysis. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).
- **Data**: Theoretical sampling – interviews, personal observations in villages where LC is underway and in villages where LC is completed.
- **Interviews** – 14 LC officials; 15 villagers.
- **Method** – GT approach suggested by Charmaz, (2006).
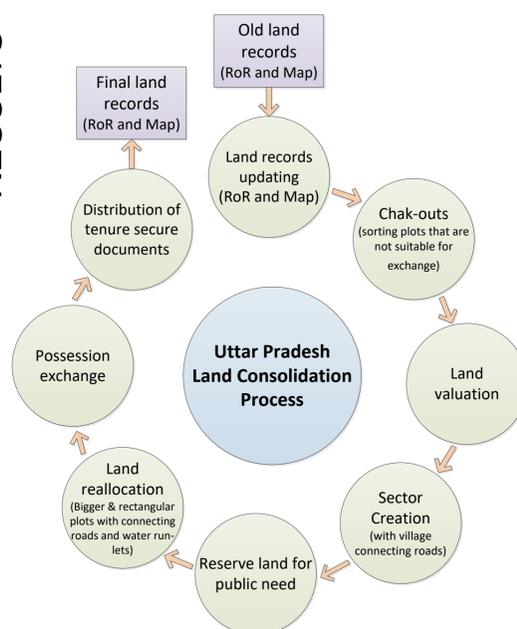
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RESULTS

Fig. 2: Different activities during LC in U.P. state

- LC in U.P. is perceived as a tool to update land records and subsequently consolidate fragmented land holdings.
- The state is not mindful of how LC is contributing to accomplishing SDGs, and are not attained to their fullest.
- For example, there are provisions in LC to allocate land for public purposes like hospitals, schools, roads. However, The next step towards the development of these public services/utilities is unknown or not defined.

Table 1: LC actives and their contribution to SDGs in U.P., India

SDGs	Target	LC activities that are contributing
Goal 1	Target 1.4	Land records updating, possession exchange, distribution of tenure documents at the end of land consolidation.
Goal 2	Target 2.3	Land records updating, possession exchange, land reallocation, distribution of tenure documents at the end of land consolidation. Reserving land for pasturing.
	Target 2.4	Land reallocation – consolidated land holdings.
Goal 3	Target 3.1 Target 3.2 Target 3.3 Target 3.4 Target 3.6 Target 3.7 Target 3.8 Target 3.C	Reserving land for hospitals, primary health care centre, Anganwadi centre (rural child care centre).
Goal 4	Target 4.1	Reserving land for primary and secondary schools
	Target 4.2	Reserving land for Anganwadi centre (rural child care centre).
Goal 5	Target 5.5	One women representative is mandatory to be part of LC committee formed before the activity starts and her opinion shall we considered.
	Target 5.A Target 5.C	Land records updating, possession exchange, distribution of tenure documents at the end of land consolidation. In LC, women are given equal importance when it comes to inheritance. Revenue legislations regarding tenure security for women are implemented during LC.
Goal 6	Target 6.6	Delineating the natural resources during land records updating. Chak-out process
Goal 9	Target 9.1	Roads during sector creating and land reallocation.
Goal 11	Target 11.1	Reserving land for socially backward groups.
	Target 11.2	Roads during sector creation and land reallocation.
Goal 15	Target 15.1	Delineating forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands. Chak-out process.
	Target 15.3	Consolidating land fragments restore degraded land and soil.
	Target 15.5	Delineating natural habitats.
Goal 16	Target 16.B	Promoting LC since 1954 in the state which is non-discriminative.

CONCLUSIONS

- There should be provisions in the LC policy of U.P. for carrying out the development of public utilities and infrastructure.
- The state should also have provisions in the policy to monitor SDG indicators in villages where LC is implemented.
- Other states in India which have consolidation acts/provisions shall realise the importance of land consolidation in attaining SDGs and take necessary steps in implementing the process.
- Along with the state governments, the Government of India shall also recognise LC as a tool by which SDGs can be achieved and take necessary measures to support the states in implementing it.

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