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Briefing Paper - Conflict Monitoring in the GIZ Land Program

Introduction

The GIZ Land Program in Laos includes the bilateral *Land Management and Decentralized Planning* (LMDP) project, and the *Enhanced Land Tenure Security* (ELTeS) project under the global project *on Responsible Land Policy* (GPRLP). One objective of our work is to improve land conflict monitoring and resolution mechanisms. Under ELTeS/GPRLP, a system for documentation and monitoring of identified land conflicts was developed.

As a 2016 Impact Study showed, villagers in intervention area consistently knew more about land rights than respondents in non-intervention areas. Women were found to be less knowledgeable about land use rights and the significance of titles. However, most respondents experienced no problems regarding their land transactions (e.g. buying land, inheriting land, etc.), even without land registration or land titling. The project had no significant influence on qualities of land transactions.

GIZ Land Program Conflict Monitoring and Resolution Approach

The GIZ Land Program promotes land conflict monitoring. It aims to strengthen the conflict resolution capacities of local authorities. 'Land conflict' is a broad term covering a multitude of issues in diverse contexts. In general, GIZ clustered four different areas and levels of conflicts :

1. Village internal conflicts
2. Investment related conflicts
3. Village-cluster conflicts
4. District & province conflicts

Program components include:

- Land Registration (LR)
- Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP)
- Quality Investment Promotion (QIP)
- Decentral Development Planning (DDP)

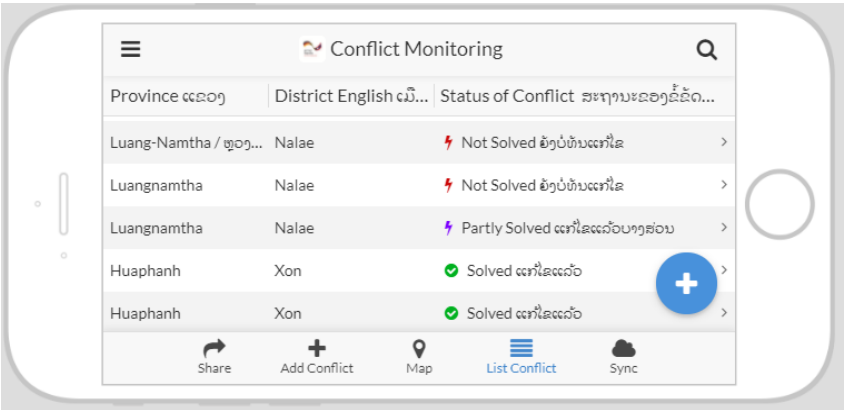
Especially the three components LR, PLUP, and QIP encounter land conflicts during their work, mostly village internal and investment conflicts. These conflicts will be documented in conflict monitoring forms. LMDP and ELTeS work in different districts in three provinces (Huaphanh, Sayaboury, Luang-Namtha).
All components of the GIZ Land Program (LMDP & ELTeS) will use the documentation system and contribute to an interactive database for land conflicts (figure 1).



GIZ Land Program components establishing Land Conflict Database

Conflict Monitoring System (CMS)

Most data of the LMDP & ELTeS project components are entered in spreadsheets, which are web-based, can be edited by multiple users at the same time and are saved online. We developed a smartphone/tablet application which is linked to our "Smartsheet" database. This app is named "Conflict Monitoring System" (CMS). Data about conflicts can be entered offline in the CMS and then be uploaded and synchronized with the database once the device is connected to the internet. The application is bilingual (English and Lao) and features the options to enter any new conflict, to show existing conflicts on a map, and to show all conflicts in a list (figure 2).



CMS Interface on Smartphone

Workflow and use of CMS

In order for the ELTeS program to contribute to the solution of land conflicts and to design follow-up measures, a documentation of existing conflicts on the different levels is required. District partner technical teams implement above mentioned components (LR, PLUP, QIP, and DDP). During their work, these teams come across conflicts related to land, involving individual village households, the whole village(s) and/or investment projects. Whenever the team encounters a conflict, it is directly entered into the CMS. Before starting an activity, the different teams can check on the CMS map if there are already conflicts encountered by other teams in their target region. Since technical teams work in the same villages but at different times, double registration of conflicts can be avoided by prior checking the database. Follow-up on previously identified conflicts, encouraging resolution measures, is made possible.

Current status of CMS implementation

The CMS application was piloted in two provinces with Land Registration (LR) and Participatory, Land Use Planning (PLUP), and Quality Investment Promotion (QIP) teams. Local governmental partnrs and GIZ Advisors were trained in the use of the Conflict Monitoring System (CMS) on tablet computers. Tablets were handed over to the teams for continuous data collection. After a successful piloting phase, the conflict monitoring app has been rolled out to document and monitor all land conflicts under the GIZ Land Program. However, to date roll-out has produced mixed results. The CMS is not yet integrated into partner and staff routines and the number of entered conflicts has been lower than initially expected.

Next Steps in conflict monitoring

- Dashboards showing data trends will be compiled, diaggregating the data by component and other key dimensions (November 2017). This is expected to make follow-ups on unsolved disputes more actionable.
- The IKM team is also piloting a paper-form that can be filled in when apps are not working in the field.
- The Land Programme is working on clarifying its overall objectives for conflict resolution as a whole and the CMS. Analysis on the types of conflicts captured can be prepared to inform senior management and stakeholders.

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