

Land Management and Decentralised Planning (LMDP)

Contributing to land use rights and participatory development for the rural population of Laos

Background

Laos has reported high economic growth for several years. The rural population has so far benefited relatively little. 70 per cent of the population depends on agriculture either directly or indirectly. The awarding of large-scale concessions to investors and the lack of adequate protection for land use rights are threatening the livelihoods of many subsistence producers, especially marginalised groups and women. People in rural areas do not participate to any large extent in planning and managing their own socio-economic situation, and public institutions have only limited capacities to design and implement strategies to tackle poverty.

Public stakeholders are not yet able to safeguard the legal rights of rural people to use and invest in land. Nor are they able to manage public and private investments in a way that will alleviate poverty and be sustainable.

What we aim for

The project provides policy advice on governance in the land sector. It is strengthening the systematic registration of individual and communal plots of land, and encouraging the allocation of land titles. While supporting improvements to the quality of investments in land and to decentralised development planning, it also supports individual and institutional capacity development for pro-poor development planning and management.

The project is assisting its partners in establishing a dialogue between donors, the government and non-governmental organisations, and on developing a land policy and land laws.

Transparent and participatory development planning that takes into account current ownership and usage rights of land not only ensures local people have legal security, it also provides them with a more general level of political protection. By ensuring transparency in planning and ownership it is possible to identify and resolve conflicts of interest between private investments (for example, in the form of land concessions) and traditional ancestral land use rights and subsistence needs at an early stage.

Project title	Land Management and Decentralised Planning (LMDP)
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project Partners	Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Project region	National level, Luang Namtha, Sayabouri, Houaphan and Khammouan provinces
Project volume	7,000,000 EUR
Duration	January 2015 – December 2017

The project promotes broad-based capacity development at all levels (district, provincial and national) so as to improve the performance of public stakeholders. With this multi-level approach, it encourages the three layers of administration to exchange information and experiences with one another and also with village residents.



L. to r.: Conducting Land Cadastral Survey;
Systematic Land Registration



L. to r.: Taking GPS data for investment monitoring to measure the real area of banana plantation in Long district; Exchange days between the investors and the local communities in Long district

Furthermore, many potential synergies are being opened up through cooperation with the regional GIZ project, 'Improving Land Management in the Mekong Region' (ILM-MR), which in turn has close ties to the 'Mekong Region Land Governance' (MRLG) programme of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

What we have achieved

This project builds on the results which were achieved by the two other GIZ projects 'Land Management and Rural Economic Development' (LM-RED) and the 'Northern Upland Integrated Rural Development Programme' (NU-IRDP).

The LMDP programme operates with five components in three areas of activity. In the first area of activity, governance in the land sector, suggestions for improving political guidelines, legal foundations and implementing regulations to secure land rights have been circulated among partner organisations. Suggestions are continuously discussed in the relevant forums and will be submitted to the government as proposals.

The focus in the second area of activities, ensuring land use rights, is on completing and applying the model for systematic land registration in rural areas. LMDP has compiled and verified Land Use Plans and data from the two previous programmes (NU-IRDP and LM-RED) and other sources to conduct systematic land registration. Furthermore, it contributed to the improvement of national concepts for village level land use planning, including better data sharing and utilization both horizontally and vertically. For this, a national team of trainers for Participatory Land Use Planning and Agriculture Land Management is already established and started training district Land Use Planning teams of the "District of Natural Resource and Environment Office" and the "District of Agriculture and Forestry Office". Regarding land registration, partner organizations of

LMDP already received training for supporting the systematic land registration activities with the help of core trainers at national and provincial levels for backstopping the field activities. For each of the 8 target districts, two individual systematic land registration teams are now operating in the field. Also the use of the technology package (survey devices, software, database application) has been trained and applied to facilitate the move to a digital cadaster.

In the third area of activity, decentralised development planning and quality investment promotion, the focus is on developing guidelines that allow participatory development planning to be adapted for use at provincial and district levels. Through LMDP involvement, a concept called Physical Framework Development Planning (PFDP) is planned to be integrated into the Lao planning system to address land management concerns, which is decided to be piloted in selected target districts. Furthermore, the impacts of public and private investments in the target areas are assessed and monitored jointly with governmental staff, which are already trained in quality investment monitoring. To additionally improve the impacts of private investments, LMDP conducted exchange days between the investors and the local communities (as can be seen in the pictures above).

About GIZ Laos

GIZ, as part of German Development Cooperation, has been active in Laos since 1993 and is currently implementing projects in two main priority areas: rural development and sustainable economic development. GIZ also participates in regional projects on behalf of the German Government, for example with the Mekong River Commission.

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