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Land Management and Decentralised Planning 3 (LMDP 3)

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

Context

Laos plans to overcome the least-developed country status by 2026. The country's economic growth is based on the export of hydropower, mining, agriculture, and forestry. The expansion of economic activities, for example large-scale plantation farming, is often accompanied by high deforestation rates or taking place at the expense of rural subsistence households who lose their access to land and other natural resources.

The various ministries responsible for land use and land management along with the different levels of administration hold their individual mandates. However, these are often not clearly defined and may even overlap in their practical execution. This leads to an unclear distribution of responsibilities. More than that, empirical land use data is often lacking, but extremely important for solving land conflicts and for applying sustainable land management principles in practice. Although there have been improvements, government agencies require further support in capacity development to strategically implement existing land use planning instruments and methods.

From 2015 to 2019, a variety of tools to improve land use planning processes were developed as part of the previous project phases (LMDP 1 and 2). Among others, these include the digital cadastre for land registration LaoLandReg, the land information system LUIS, and the Area Physical Framework (APF) for land zonation. Since 2020 the current phase of the project (LMDP 3) focusses on the institutionalisation and further technical expansion of these tools.



Meeting with Provincial Department on Investments (DPI) in Sayaboury Province on Harmonisation of the Provincial Social Economic Development Plan (PSEDP) and the Participatory Land Allocation Plan (PLAP). Person presenting is Dr. Veopphet, deputy director of PONRE.
Photo: © GIZ/Bart Verweij

Project name	Land Management and Decentralised Planning 3 (LMDP 3)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Sayaboury/nationwide
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MoNRE), and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)
Duration	2019 - 2023

Objective

The responsible authorities in Laos are capable at all levels of using land use planning instruments to manage natural resources, as well as to, solve and prevent conflicts over land and resources.

Approach

LMDP has three core features:

1. Capacity building for government staff and local authorities at provincial and national level to strengthen their technical expertise, digital skills and to elaborate their understanding of procedural issues. The content of these training courses includes land allocation planning and the use of technical tools like GIS, remote sensing and UAV-drones. Through close cooperation with multipliers from ministerial training units and universities, capacities and human resources will be strengthened in the long-term.

This includes government staff getting trained as Master Trainers or Training Managers and the development of curricula materials on land management, together with the government training units.

2. Technical guidance to improve linkages between the digital cadastre for land registration and other relevant land related databases. In addition, existing technical tools will be further improved and adjusted to relevant needs.
3. Applying procedures and instruments in the pilot province Sayaboury, which feed into the development of guidelines and manuals. Moreover, results will be incorporated into the provincial socio-economic development planning.

Impact

During LMDP 1 and 2 the following results were achieved:

- Since 2015, there have been 27,317 land parcels registered and 22,923 land titles have been issued. 70% of private land parcels are registered in the name of women only or married couples.
- 94 Village Land Use and Agriculture Management Plans have been completed. 2,909 villagers have been trained on contract farming arrangements.
- 116 land investment projects have been advised on aligning with the national investment law and international guidelines.
- 6 district level spatial plans (called 'Area Physical Frameworks') have been drawn up, with input from more than 2,000 villagers from 40 villages.

During LMDP 3 the following achievements were reached so far:



*Drone flying used for land use planning activities.
Photo taken in Sayaboury Province.
Photo: © GIZ/Bart Verweij*

- The digital land cadastre system LaoLandReg was harmonised with the land use information system LUIS and is now used by different ministries at national level.
- Responsible institutions for land use planning have access to LUIS including more than 500 land use plans from across the country.
- The provincial socio-economic development plans are using spatial plans from the provinces Houaphan and Sayaboury as reference.
- More than 140 governmental staff have been trained on the use of spatial planning tools like GIS, UAV-drones and as trainers for land management tools.

Gender and land management

In rural areas, particularly women face structural disadvantages when it comes to access to land and land rights.

In the previous phases of LMDP, the project cooperated with government partners to produce several tools to improve land use and land governance in Laos. During the piloting and implementation in the target provinces, the project involved rural communities, including women and ethnic groups, in all planning activities and decision-making processes.

During its current phase the existing land management tools have been reviewed and improved regarding gender sensitivity. This is to ensure that women are appropriately represented in development planning activities and that their land rights are protected. By doing so, the project contributes to fostering benefits from national and local economic development reach all population groups, including women and disadvantaged groups.

About GIZ Laos

GIZ, as part of German Development Cooperation, has been active in Laos since 1993 and is currently supporting numerous projects in 2 priority areas: a) sustainable economic development and b) rural development in poor regions. Moreover, GIZ Laos engages in good governance and participates in regional programmes, e.g., with the Mekong River Commission and ASEAN.

Please visit www.giz.de/laos for further information on GIZ's work in Laos and worldwide.

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