Closing Critical Data Gaps: Examples from the Lao PDR

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• Data and information often exists, but is heterogeneous, and dispersed.

→ Critical gaps in data & information, and/ or in knowledge?

• Need for
  – tools, processes, and practices for systematic sharing and integration of data and information;
  – capacities for making sense of data and information.
Example: Challenges for sustainable land governance in the Lao PDR

Turning Land into Capital

versus

land tenure & livelihood security of smallholder farmers
Example: Challenges for sustainable land governance in the Lao PDR

- Smallholder & tenure security in the Lao PDR still rather weak,
- private commercial investments in lands are booming.
Land-based investments in the Lao PDR
Land-based investments in the Lao PDR

Percentage of projects by types of investment

- Domestic (992): 56%
- Joint-venture (173): 32%
- Non-GMS: 10%
- No information (29): 2%

Percentage of area granted by types of investment

- Foreign (564): 59%
- China: 30%
- Thailand: 11%
- Vietnam: 10%
- Non-GMS: 2%
Key challenges:

• Opaque land concession granting process:

Concessions can be granted by several different sectors and at different administrative levels.

→ No institution in charge of information integration.

→ Lack of integrated information basis for monitoring and planning.
Key challenges:

• The national government has no basis to gauge costs and benefits of land concessions in social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

• Provincial and district authorities struggle to coordinate and implement national decisions.
Consequences for planning processes:

- Inconsistencies in plans across sectors and administrative levels (concessions in protected areas, etc).

- Loopholes for non-compliance, unsustainable developments (concession area inconsistencies, overlaps, concessions despite moratoria, etc...)
Prime Minister Order 13 (June 2012)

1. Moratorium on all new concessions for specific tree plantation and mining projects.

2. Order to review land investments with regard to compliance and impacts.
Innovative solutions:

- National inventory of land concessions across sectors and administrative levels

- Integrated central information system (eGovernment)

- Assessment and rating of aspects of quality of commercial investments in lands
Innovative solutions:

Who is doing what & where?

Inter-ministerial implementation of National Inventory of Land Concessions (LCI)

Supported by:
Innovative solutions:

**LCI Process**

1. Collation and documentation
2. Provincial consultation
3. District field mapping
4. Data compilation
5. Central-level finalization

**LCI Products**

1. Full inventory of land concessions and leases: All projects, dates, approval levels, status, sectors and investor data
Innovative solutions:

**Detailed data on nature and area of land concession projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number of Projects</th>
<th>Approved Area (ha)</th>
<th>Used Area (ha)</th>
<th>Proportion of Used to Approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lease</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>42,673</td>
<td>2,666</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concession</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>1,806,839</td>
<td>847,901</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1,866</td>
<td>1,849,567</td>
<td>877,567</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Moratoria**
  - 1st: 2007
  - 2nd: 2009
  - 3rd: 2012

- **TLC**
  - 2006

**Graph: # projects approved per year**

- Cumulative approve
- Active projects

**Map:**

- Agriculture
- Tree plantation
- Mining
- Hydropower dam
Innovative solutions:

**LCI Process**

1. Collation and documentation
2. Provincial consultation
3. District field mapping
4. Data compilation
5. Central-level finalization

**LCI Products**

1. Full inventory of land concessions and leases:
   All projects, dates, approval levels, status, sectors and investor data
2. Granted, allocated, and used area
Innovative solutions:

Multi-dimensional assessment of aspects of “quality” of investments:
Legal, economic, environmental and social performance

Revealing trade-offs
Information integration, dissemination & use

• Raw data accessible to institutions through government intra-network

• Spatial data available on internet-based platform (www.decide.la)
  → integrated with detailed spatial data from other sectors

• Analysis of patterns, contexts, dynamics, and trade-offs

• Pathways for sustainable land management
Information integration
Cross-sectoral setup within the structures of the Government of the Lao PDR
Information integration & dissemination

www.landuseplanning.la

www.decide.la

www.onemapmyanmar.info

www.landmatrix.org

www.landuseplanning.la
Information integration

Incentives for cross-sectoral data sharing:

• “Neutral grounds”
• Confidence in quality and contents of data
• Control and ownership
• Visibility (and non-visibility) of attractive products
• Mandate (or order) from high up
Thank you

For further information

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