

## Customary law-based forestland conflict resolution

Case study: *Nhakhluang - Longngau areas of Densavang and Phonsavat villages, Luang Prabang district, Luang Prabang province, Lao PDR*

CHESH LAO

### Introduction

Land conflicts take place in many places due to land loss faced by people, especially farmers with various forms of pressures. Such programs as modernization, industrialization and urbanization tend to transfer fertile agricultural land attaching high profitability and commercial possibility to other purposes. The needs for more land for modern, large-scale food production are encouraged by technocrats as the way to meet growing consumer demand. Under pressure of attracting resources for industrialization from political power and monetary power, many farmers in developing countries are forced to move from their ancestor land and lose the land to the hands of investors and transnational companies. Shortage of land to live, lack of transparency, and overlapping of ownership of land, forests and natural resources or land use rights are among the hottest constrains causing conflicts over land.

In Laos, great changes in forestland use and management together with the alternative trade-off between conservation or changes has been taking place during the last 40 years. Before the independence day (2<sup>nd</sup> December 1975) highland ethnic communities used to practice traditional farming and lifestyle, they were free to select suitable sites for settling villages, housing and farming. Since the independence until the 1980s the new Lao State set a top priority to strengthen state power, stabilize people's lives and ensure food security. There was experiment of new types of production and new production relations, the establishment of cooperatives, state-owned companies following the ideology and a legal system which emphasizes public ownership and centralized management. However traditional customs, relationships and behaviors profoundly exist and have a great significance in reality. For example, one may officially says that: you should remove the cumbersome superstitions and backward customs, but in fact that person could not ignore the traditional practices such as ceremonies for land selection for housing, farming or such spiritual rituals as worship of nature, ancestors, etc. In other words, the officially announced objectives, policies and laws have a significant gap with real traditional thoughts and behavior of the majority of government officials and citizens.



**Figure 1: Liengphiho worshipping place, Densavang village, October 2009**

The gap between practice and policies continued, even became greater in the later development programs, such as resettlement programs and opium poppy elimination (starting 1995), or program of resettlement, merging large development villages (since 2004), and most recently, investment encouragement and land marketization. State objectives often put economic growth first, with the appreciation of the monetary value of land and its tools such as land price, tax, and land management in conjunction with legal land certificates. In reality, practice of forest land values relating to community spirits, humanity and spiritual values are still indispensable needs and habits of many communities and each members. When the Lao Loum attend a religious ceremony of *Buottonmay* (tree ordination), the Kho Mu have *Liengphiho* (village forest spirits) ceremony, the H'mong carry out *Tongsenh* (Big tree or rock worshipping) ceremony, ritual *Suca*, *Thuti*, then surely they do not simply think of the monetary value of the forest land, but more importantly they



**Figure 2: Nhakhaluang area, where live H'mong villagers from Nasamphan village, October 2011**

entrench the implication of the faith in natural spirits and the harmony between human and nature.

Conflict over land is inevitably resulted from differences in the perception of values, the approach and behaviour towards land and forests, the mode of management and use of land. Such programs as opium poppy elimination, resettlement, village merger, or projects (eg. EU support to grant white or golden land certificates to turn the land into goods) did not sufficiently take into account the values of land in terms of community culture and livelihoods security. These programs could achieve specific goals for increasing revenues, changes of production to ensure political security in a certain period.

But they could not soundly assure the objectives, the needs of communities and individual citizens relating to their survival space, and space to practice religious values and cultural identity. For instance, despite of resettling tens of kilometers far away from their ancestor land, but a group of H'mong people always want to come back to take care of and conduct ceremonies for ancestral graves and the sacred *Tongsenh* forest. Besides, new resettled place has not enough land for cultivation, so people reasonably return to the old village for livestock farming and practice of traditional rituals. On the other hand, people of the new merged village based on administrative boundaries to identify their land-use rights. The overlap between the traditional and the official land boundaries is a typical cause of the conflicts. The conflict becomes more intense as population density increases, a shortage of land is intensified, and especially the monetary value of the land is promoted along with the ability of land certificates for mortgage and guarantee.

Sharing awareness and experience in dealing with land conflicts has a great practical significance for not only Laos but also other developing countries with similar social existence. The case of forestland conflict resolution at Nhakhaluang – Longngau areas between villages of Densavang, Phonsavat and some Nasamphan villagers, Luang Prabang district/ province in Laos is not just an extraordinary case, it should be represented for other numerous similar cases.

With the advice of CHESH Lao, the active involvement of district and provincial authorities, the Advisory board for forestland conflict resolution, the Luang Prabang H'mong association, the village elders, and key farmers, the long-lasting forestland conflict has been resolved in 2010. This is an essential condition for the involved communities to continue their plans and orientations for future development in a confident and stable manner.

This article summarizes the process of forest land conflict resolution in Nhakhaluang-Longngau areas of Densavang and Phonsavat villages, Luang Prabang district/ province, Laos. The article is a document for the workshop "Customary law-based Forestland conflict resolution" held by CHESH Lao at the venue of Luang Prabang Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) from 4<sup>th</sup> April to 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012. The shared experiences of conflict resolution from this specific case would not only be an opportunity for policy makers, scientists, the media understand the practices and share their own vision, but also would help local officials, development workers, and community representatives to obtain experiences to apply into their own practice.

### **Causes and consequences of the forestland conflict**

Considering systematically in the wide range, some issues mentioned in the Introduction part are also the underlying causes of the forest land conflict in Densavang and Phonsavat villages. Specifically in this case, the problem stemmed from the resettlement and village merging program since 1995. The H'mong in the former Longngau village were required to

merge into Phonsavat village while people in the former Nakhhaluang village merge into Densavang village. In both Densavang and Phonsavat villages there had been Kho Mu people living a stable life since 1975. Resettlement and merger of villages experienced top-down approach, lack of participation, discussion, consensus, and decision of the resettled communities. The demand for arable land and access to forest resources was not calculated thoroughly for people to live a stable life in the new villages for both short and long terms. On the other hand the village merger program did not incorporate solutions for satisfying the reasonable needs of worship for the spirits of the forest, land, and the ancestors as well as the traditional festivals of the resettled community.



**Figure 3: Longngau area, where some H'mong from Nasamphan live, January 2010**

Because the H'mong of the former villages of Nakhhaluang and Longngau did not like merging as required by the resettlement program, so they moved to live in Nasamphan (a village nearby northern bus station of Luang Prabang town, around 20 km far from their former villages). They had to sell out cattles and change their occupations, the men involved in transportation services, and the women did weaving and selling handicraft products. Because many people migrated into the town in the same period, there was no more work, and the new jobs could not guarantee well their life.



**Figure 4: Meeting between district leaders and the Advisory board, December 2009**

Despite the migration to live in Nasamphan, some H'mong people maintained strong memory of their former ancestor land and forest. So they kept coming back to worship ancestors in the forest and Tongsenh forest spirits in Nakhhaluang and Longngau areas. In 2004 some H'mong households of Nasamphan village obtained the district authority decision to allocated an area of 200 hectares of pasture land of Huoinok watershed (within the administrative boundaries of Phonsavat) and 100 ha in Nakhhaluang area (administratively belongs to Densavang). Nevertheless they did not know to where exactly the boundaries were, and they claimed that the district authority had offered and allocated all the land of the former villages of Nakhhaluang and Longngau to some Nasamphan households. Because the Nasamphan villagers used land as the way they thought, Phonsavat and Densavang villagers face shortage of land for cultivation, animal husbandry, and watershed protection forests. Conflicts occurred when Nasamphan people claimed that they had the right to hold the entire ancestor forest and land of the former villages. The H'mong of Nasamphan prevented the Kho Mu people of Densavang and Phonsavat villages from clearing forests for farm land on which their ancestors had lived and preserved. They made fences to cover grazing areas beyond Huoinok watershed, a major source of clean water for Phonsavat villagers. Simultaneously the villagers of Phonsavat and Densavang based on the administrative decisions of village merger to confirm their village boundaries, and requested the H'mong of Nasamphan to return administrative land to the local village. The conflict even culminated when the H'mong of Nasamphan have clashed with villagers of Phonsavat and Densavang.

From 2003 until 2009 district officers have many times solved the forest land dispute between some Nasamphan households and Densavang, Phonsavat villages but failed because the parties fail could not obtain a solution. Conflict between villages, between H'mong with Kho Mu and conflict among H'mong people continued. So all the involved people did not have peace of mind for stable life and production because they could not

clarify the boundaries of productive land, forest land of their village and their own households. Forest owners were not well defined, so forests clearance for cultivation continuously existed. Huoinok watershed was not protected well, leading to reduction of water source, then Phonsavat villagers suffered from water shortage, especially in dry season. So if this dispute was not adequately solved the concerned people would not stabilize their life and production, their forest and environment would be continuously degraded, ethnic conflicts would be under threat to burst out.

### Approach to conflict resolution



**Figure 5: Field trip to observe the dispute forest land, January 27th 2010**

SPERI/ CHESH Lao conducted a Needs assessment study (NAS) at the two villages of Densavang, Phonsavat, those among the poorest in Luang Prabang district in October 2009. Study of cultural identities of Kho Mu and H'mong communities was also conducted during this trip. Thereby CHESH Lao understood that although the H'mong as well as Kho Mu community had been facing many difficulties, they had preserved their traditional beliefs, customary laws and cultural practices. The Kho Mu have *Liengphiho* rituals, such sacred forests as Phuphakhao, Phuphano, and such abstinence days as *Muhoong, Muhoai*. The H'mong has rituals associated with the *Tongsenh* forest spirits and their ancestry spirits.

Their cultural and spiritual values should be respected and preserved in order to promote community solidarity, so as people are confident in integration and development. Besides the difficulties related to lack of water, sanitation problems, the challenging undermining of traditional cultural values, the landless and land disputes between the two villages and some Nasamphan households were identified the hottest issue, which need to be prioritized as a key to open the way for the future community development plan.

CHESH Lao held discussions with representatives of the conflicting parties and Luang Prabang district leaders, and established an advisory board for forestland conflict resolution. The board included elder Lypao Lau (former chairperson of H'mong association), Mr. Saysualy Ho (who is now chairperson of H'mong association), elder Somlit (Siengda village), elder Saykhu Zang (Longlan village), and representatives of district authorities. CHESH Lao, Advisory board, H'mong leaders hold meeting with officials of the district Agriculture and Forestry office to discuss and decide that they should firstly identify to understand the causes and process of the conflict, then find out suitable solution for the dispute. So the Advisory board organized field trips to search necessary information at relevant villages. The H'mong association leaders found out how the conflict involves think, want, and suggest. H'mong leaders met to talk with people to encourage solidarity and reconcile the stressful conflict.

In December 2009, the H'mong association collaborated with CHESH Lao to work with Densavang and Phonsavat villages to listen to the opinions of the villagers and leaders, and found conflicting forest land is the most difficult and notably issues. Mr. Saysualy Ho was both a H'mong association leader, and the head of Nasamphan village identified forest land conflicts between some Nasamphan households and Densavang, Phonsavat villages should be put top priority to address and resolve.

When the problem was identified, then a meeting was held for different parties to come together to survey forest land in reality. During the survey trip the Advisory board



**Figure 6: Meeting at Densavang village after field survey, January 28th, 2010**



members found that both conflicting parties did not like to talk to each other, Nasamphan people kept knives, while Densavang security guards carried guns. An unsuitable question was raised at the inherent stressful dispute boundary before, making both sides feel more intense. Then elder Somlit (a member of the advisory board) sang a song and tried a humorous roleplay to help cool down the stress. H'mong leaders reminded the parties to remain calm, not cause any more stress. Advisory board decided not to ask the involved parties any more sensitive questions about the boundaries and the disputes, and stop the survey.

Advisory board proposed and involved in a study tour on community management and forest land management to villages of Long Lan, Siengda and Namkha for the conflicting parties. After the field survey at the conflicting area and the study tour in Laos, the Advisory Board worked with the district department of Agriculture and Forestry to propose five points to guide the conflict resolution:



**Figure 6: Study tour to Lao Cai province, Vietnam, May 22nd , 2010**

1. Suggest to respect and allocate *Tongsenh* forest areas for H'mong people from Nasamphan, to create favourable conditions to maintain their identity and simultaneously protect watershed according to their customary law.

2. Allow Nasamphan people together with Phonsavat, Densavang villagers to promote livestock under the authorized planning and licensing.

3. Propose to facilitate Phonsavat and Densavang villagers to manage and protect land and forest areas according to the provisions of the state and the identified official boundaries.

4. Facilitate the three relevant villages to work together to set up regulations on management and development of Nhakhaluang and Longngau areas, to set up planning of these area as forests for protection of water sources, and to prohibit cutting trees, cultivating, or grazing in the watershed forests.

5. Create opportunities and favourable conditions for people of the three villages to strengthen solidarity with each other, and keep unity during and after the conflict resolution process.

After the study tour to Long Lan, Namkha, and Siengda villages the conflicting parties did not agree with the solutions suggested by the Advisory Board. On the other hand, if only learning experiences in forest management, the participants could not yet see the difficulties and solutions for the shortage of forest resources. So the Advisory board recommended to organize a study tour to Vietnam for the representatives of the three villages to see burning issues of soil erosion, deforestation, and solutions for that. The goal of the tour was not just to to share and learn other issues in Vietnam, but also to ensure solidarity and reduce constraints. The H'mong leaders and advisory board facilitated the participants during the study tour, and helped them to understand the needs to work together for resource management, as well as to stop prolong the conflict. Going and sharing together also helped participants to reduce stress and strengthen solidarity.

On the basis of understanding practical aspects of the conflict, the Advisory board and the H'mong association leaders gave advice and encouragement to leaders and people of Densavang, Phonsavat villages and the related Nasamphan households to keep solidarity and



**Figure 7: On-field survey to clarify boundaries and locations of land and forest zoning**



**Figure 8: Nasamphan representative signed commitment on the agreement of conflict**

dialogue with each other. After the formal and informal discussions with related parties to find common ground, the Advisory board held a meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to review and specify the following solutions: 1) Suggest to allocate 300 ha of land to the group of Nasamphan households (100 ha in Nhakhaluang area and 200 ha in Longngau area) as decided by the old decision of Luang Prabang district authority dated February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The Nasamphan households only raise animal, not cultivate, not cut trees, not build

up permanent houses in this area. 2) Recommend to allocate about 250 ha of *Tongsenh* sacred forests to Nasamphan villagers. 3) The remaining 400 hectares of forest land belonging to Phuphakhoi, Huoinok

watershed become watershed protection forests managed by the district authority. Villagers are not allow to cultivate or cut down trees there.

Technical advice of the district officials was combined with experience in traditions-based conflict resolution of H'mong Association. The district officials have jointly organized training on land law, law on forest protection for villagers to help them better understanding of their responsibilities and rights in management, protection and use of forest land. With the members' experience, Advisory Board, the H'mong Association leaders cooperated with CHESH Lao to facilitate village meeting discussions and field trips to find out how to share and clarify the boundaries at the field. The the district agriculture and forestry department conducted field survey to clarify the boundaries of each villages, to classify forest areas, breeding areas, farming areas to put into the maps of forest land planning.

H'mong Association leaders and the Advisory Board held meeting to inform and discuss solutions with the Nasamphan representatives and leaders, representatives of the villages of Densavang and Phonsavat. Densavang and Phonsavat representatives agreed with solutions of the Advisory Board. Only Nasamphan representatives suggested to be given a breeding area of Phaso mountain from Long Lan village, and then elder Saykhu Zang and the representatives of Long Lan village agreed with the conditions that: the Nasamphan households must abide by the regulations of grazing of Long Lan village. Thus the conflict parties have gradually reduced differences and conflicts, and come to the agreement. Then the representatives the involved villages wrote down and certified on the agreement, commitment for the conflict resolution.

On the basis of minutes of meetings and commitment documents of each village, the Advisory Board revised the proposed solutions and collective commitment of the parties to request the district chairman to certify and enact the final decision on the conflict, which had been solved in practice. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Luang Prabang district chairman issued Decision No. 556 with the main contents as follows: 1) Agree to allow the Nasamphan animal raising group to raise animals at Nhakhaluang – Longngau areas in accordance with the agricultural regulations; 2) Agree the Nasamphan animal raising group to manage and protect forests at Nhakhaluang - Longngau areas according to their customary practices, and the provisions of the district agriculture and forestry department (do not cut down trees, not cultivate, not build houses, not set fire); 3) The district Agriculture and forestry department cooperate with villagers of Densavang, Phonsavat, and Nasamphan, with the expert advice of CHESH Lao to conduct land planning for the land areas beyond the animal raising areas in accordance with the provisions of Lao forestry Law;



**Figure 9: Handling topographic map in Densavang village, March 2012**



**Figure 10: Vice district chairman handling certified community regulations to villagers, March 2012**

and 4) Agree with the land planning, in which Phakhoi - Nhakhaluang, Thamuot - Longngau become watershed protection forests. Thus the government authority's decision comes from the consensus of the conflict parties, then all of them should respect to implement.

After the on-field survey to determine land boundaries by the Advisory board and representatives of the two villages of Densavang, Phonsavat, CHESH Lao and the Advisory Board informed all surrounding villages to discuss and identify the boundaries together. In determining the boundaries between Densavang, Phonsavat and the surrounding villages, the Advisory board found no conflicts or disputes. There was only a question arised between the parties: where should the outsiders who bought and were using land of Densavang and Phonsavat village pay tax to? It is reasonable that the land users should pay taxes to the head of the village containing the used land, not to the head of the residential village. The Advisory board explained land use obligations, including tax payment to all participants, and they accepted that ideas.

After settling the disputes with the Nasamphan households and outsiders who purchased and used Densavang and Phonsavat land, the Advisory Board facilitated the two villages to set up community regulations on natural resource management. Firstly, elders and village leaders set up the draft regulations, then held village meeting to get consultation and contribution from all villagers during February 2011. Then, the draft regulations were sent to district leaders and other professional departments for their review and comments to revise the draft from March to October 2011. Finally Luang Prabang district chairman have certified regulations on community management and use of natural resources for the two villages of Phonsavat and Densavang on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Simultaneously with the building up of the regulations, the zoning maps of land, together with a summary of the regulations on forest and natural resource use and management have been completed and placed in each villages, so as to help villagers easily identify and implement. Regulations are made multiple copies, and disseminated to all Densavang and Phonsavat households, the related land users and surrounding villages for their acknowledgement and implementation of the regulations.

### **Outcomes and impacts**

By 2012 the total natural area of 1,327 ha of Densavang village and 1,367 ha of Phonsavat village were planned with clear identification of protection forests, preservation forests, production forests, cultivation land, grazing land, and construction land. Regulations for management of each types of land and forests have been built and certified by the district authorities, in wich the location, the areas, the legitimate activities, prohibitions, the forms of treatment against violations was clarified for each type of forest land. Traditional customary law was recognized and reflected in these Regulations, as the basis for villagers of the two village to use soundly and manage their resources effectively, while contributing to protect forests and ecological environment in the upstream region of Luang Prabang.



**Figure 11: Maps with boudaries and summarized regulations in Phonsavat village, February 2012**

With a significant role and active contribution to the conflict resolution process as well as the promotion of mutual helps inside and outside the Association while preserving cultural identity and solidarity among peoples, the Luang Prabang district H'mong Association have



been recognized and encouraged by the provincial and district government authorities. Moreover, the provincial leaders suggested Luang Prabang district H'mong association to disseminate their experiences to other H'mong groups in other districts to apply and replicate.

On the recognition of the experience and capabilities of CHESH Lao, in January 2012 Luang Prabang district leaders proposed CHESH Lao to provide advice and support to solve problems related to forest land between the resettlement villages in the watershed of Kuangsi waterfall, a famous tourist attractive resort in the province.



Figure 12: Workshop preparing for Need Assessment Study, October 2009

### Lessons learnt

To understand causes of the conflict, from which to find the correct solution, a certain development agency should start with a study **to learn community to understand cultural values**, to explore their real feelings and aspirations and substantial needs. Understanding the cultural values also help outsiders learn to respect beliefs, customs, and enable to integrate and improve their work with the community.

**Combining between administration and community organizations:** in this forest land conflict resolution case, the Advisory board for forest land conflict resolution was established as an interim mechanism, involving representatives of district authorities, the H'mong Association, the relevant village leaders and elders having experiences in working with CHESH Lao community development activities. During the conflict resolution process, it was essential to establish and strengthen close linkage between government officials, technical staff with village elders and reputable key persons in the community. Government officials supported legal procedures, necessary decisions to help the parties understand and apply the law into practice. Professional staff assisted to survey and recognize location, boundaries to calculate for setting up the map of land use planning. The village elders helped find out actual thinking, aspirations of the conflicting parties, set forth the proposed compromising solutions between the parties, while ensuring combination between legality (state law) with reasonableness (customs and aspirations of the involved sides). With their prestige and practical experience, village elders can detect actively reconcile for reducing the burning constraint of the parties. The village heads coordinated activities at their villages and worked as a bridge between the Advisory board, CHESH Lao and the localities.



Figure 13: Working with villagers during Need Assessment Study, October 2009

**Combining state laws with customary law:** If an administrative decision is enacted on the basis of law when the conflict parties have not attained consensus, it is likely to transfer from this type of dispute or conflict to other forms, that means the conflicts are not solved radically. Meanwhile ordinary people understand well and consciously abide by their community customs. So we need to learn, understand and promote good customs, available customary law provisions in the community, to find out common ground and mutual support between customary law and state law. Whenever the boundaries, the type of forest land use planning was identified, then the setting up of regulations should also start from the draft by village

elders and the community, on the basis of the inherent traditions relating to sacred forests and traditional land. We could see clearly the similarities and mutual support between the



customary practices on sacred forest with the state requirements on preservation forests and protection forests. And that is the foundation for the possibility to integrate customary law with state law. The collection of comments and approval with signatures and seals of the district authorities is necessary to ensure customary laws or community regulations to be enforced effectively not only within community, but also with outsiders.

***Being persistent, flexible with many alternative solutions for the community to choose:*** The conflict resolution process has witnessed a standstill at a certain period of time, which was seemingly insurmountable, especially after the introduction of the five recommendations by the Advisory board, but that was not approved by the Nasamphan households. However the Advisory board and CHESH Laos have persisted to find various ways and different multi-dimensional interventions. That was the organization of the study tour to Vietnam with a goal of strengthening mutual understanding and solidarity between different ethnic groups or the disputing parties. Other positive activities should be noted, i.e. the training on state law to explain the harmful effects of conflict and the necessity of compromise to reach consensus, and then the provision of concrete solutions to help the disputing parties themselves look back themselves and choose the better solution.

### **Recommendations**

To limit forest land disputes, the development programs, the resettlement program should minimize the relocation, therefore maintain peaceful life of the community.

In the case of unavoidable resettlement, it is essential to ensure sufficient arable land, forest land for the resettlement community. It is necessary to study thoroughly and respect feelings, aspirations, lifestyle and encourage traditional farming experience and appropriate community management and use of resources. On the other hand an adequate space for cultural activities, spiritual ritual practice, and traditional belief of the impacted communities should be ensured.

## Annexes

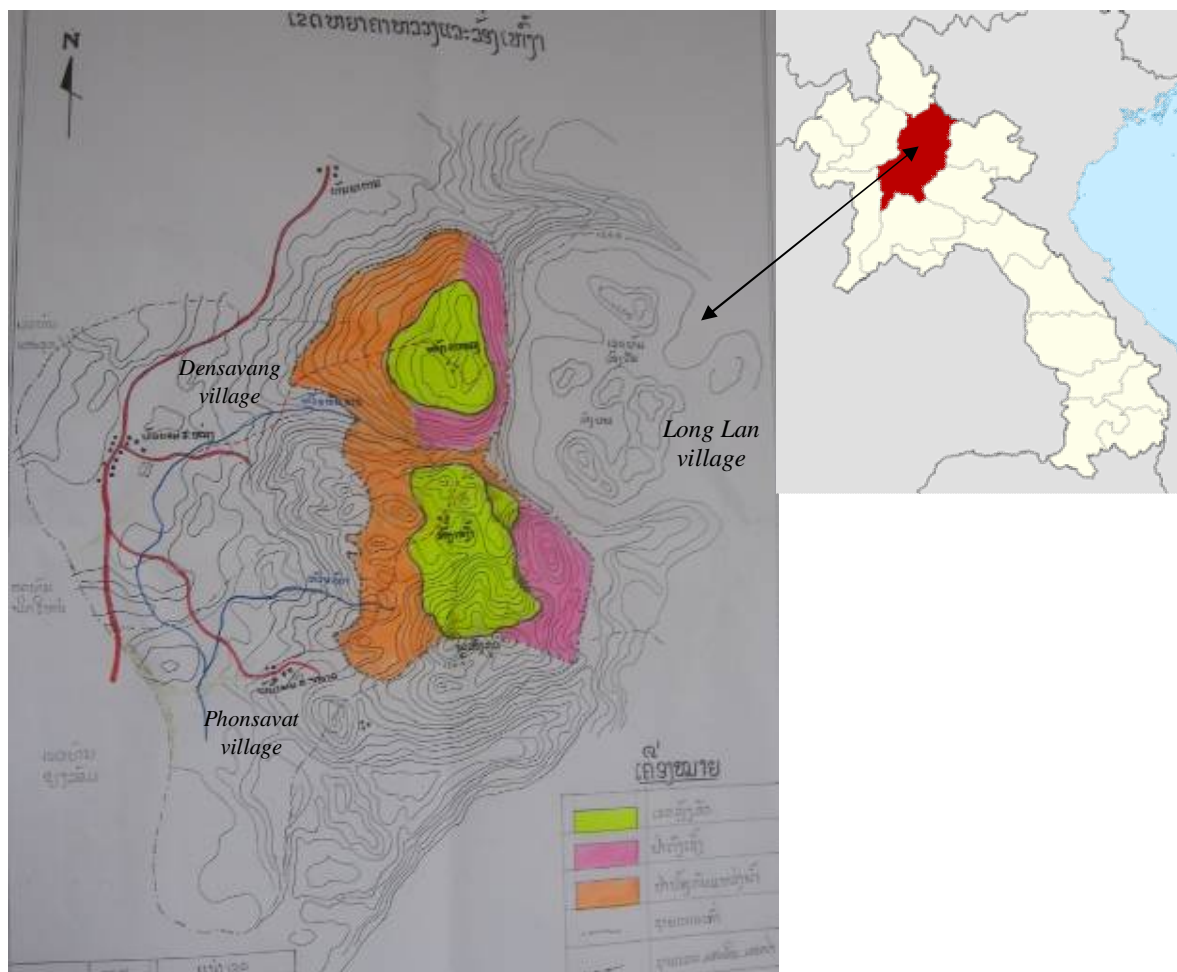
### **Annex 1: Timeline and events**

<b>#</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Events</b>
1.	1995	The H'mong from former villages of Nhakhaluang, Longngau merged into Densavang, Phonsavat villages according to resettlement order. Most of them migrated to Nasamphan village.
2.	2003 to 2004	Some H'mong households from Nasamphan village return to raise animals in Nhakhaluang and Longngau areas with the district authority land allocation decision dated February 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2004.
3.	2003 to 2009	Forest land conflict between some households from Nasamphan and villages of Densavang, Phonsavat. District authorities have solved the conflict many times, but have not succeeded.
4.	October 2009	Workshop on 'Community based watershed management' and Need Assessment Study (NAS) in Densavang and Phonsavat villages; cultural study and identification of land conflict as the first urgent issue.
5.	November 2009	The Advisory board was established with 15 members and operation regulation. Elder Xaykhu Zang was selected as the head of the board.
6.	Jan 7 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board held a study tour for conflict-involved villagers of Densavang, Phonsavat, Nasamphan to visit villages of Long Lan, Xiengda and Namkha. Participants understand more about CHESH Lao approach and improve mutual understanding and solidarity.
7.	Jan 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board held meetings with villagers of Densavang, Phonsavat, Nasamphan, to set up their own plan for conflict resolution.
8.	Jan 14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board research related profile to clarify causes and process of the forest land conflict.
9.	Jan 26 <sup>th</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	43 participants involved in field trip to survey the dispute areas of Nhakhaluang and Longngau.
10.	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board reviewed activities and suggested five points for conflict resolution to submit to district authority.
11.	Feb 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board held meeting at different villages to inform and discuss on the suggestions of conflict resolution.
12.	February 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	Meeting between the Advisory board and district leaders.
13.	February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	Meeting and sharing between the Advisory board and representatives of Densavang and Phonsavat villages.
14.	February 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	Meeting and sharing between the Advisory board and representatives of Nasamphan village. Nasamphan representative did not agree with the Advisory board and introduced their own suggestions.
15.	February 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	The Advisory board reviewed activities and found new solutions for the deadlock.
16.	April and May 2010	Held a study tour on natural resource management for 29 villagers and community leaders to Vietnam.

17.	July 2010	Completed and suggested new specific suggestions of Nhakhaluang – Longngau conflict resolution to Luang Prabang district chairman.
18.	September 2010	Provided training on land law, law on forest protection, law on agriculture, and policies of Luang Prabang province for villagers of Densavang, Phonsavat and Nasamphan.
19.	October 2010	Survey and improve the drinking water systems of Densavang and Phonsavat villages.
20.	December 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	Luang Prabang district chairman enacted Decision No. 556, base on the suggestions of the Advisory board to settle the conflict.
21.	December 2010	Advisory board held meeting with the three involved villages. On-field land allocation to villages of Densavang, Phonsavat, and Nasamphan.
22.	January 2011	On-field clarification of boundaries of Densavang, Phonsavat and the surrounding villages.
23.	February 2011	Held land use planning on field and on the maps in Densavang, Phonsavat villages. Elders based on their traditional customs to write draft regulations on management and use of each types land land, then held village meeting to discuss and approve the draft regulations.
24.	March to Oct 2011	The draft regulations were sent to district Agriculture and forestry department, district chairman and surrounding villages for consideration and contribution.
25.	October 2011	Held meeting with outsiders having land in Densavang, Phonsavat villages to discuss on the draft regulations.
26.	November 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	Luang Prabang district chairman signed and recognized the community regulations of Densavang and Phonsavat villages.
27.	January 2012	Set up boards of land planning and summarized regulations in Densavang and Phonsavat villages. Complete topographic maps of the two villages.
28.	March 2012	Organized ceremony to declare the certified regulations on natural resource management in Densavang and Phonsavat villages. Informed to surrounding villages and the people, who use land on the two villages.



**Annex 2: Map of conflict areas of Nhakhaluang – Longngau, Luang Prabang district/ province, Lao PDR**



**Annex 3. Land use statistics of Densavang & Phonsavat villages, 2011**

#	Items	Densavang village		Phonsavat village	
		No. of plots	Area (ha)	No. of plots	Area (ha)
	<b>Total natural area (ha)</b>		<b>1.327</b>		<b>1.367</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>Agricultural land</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>335,01</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>338.81</b>
1	Stable rotational field (having land certificates)	29	88,34	14	128,78
2	Rice field	29	18,64	14	7,39
3	Fruit trees			11	3,06
4	Gardening	46	29,78	40	33,87
5	Grazing land	3	130,62	4	155
6	Industrial trees		67,63		10.71
<b>II</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>978,8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1.017</b>
1	Protection forests	4	162,8	8	354
2	Preservation forests	1	656	2	603
3	Production forests	4	160	3	60
<b>III</b>	<b>Construction land</b>		<b>4,0</b>		<b>3,08</b>
<b>IV</b>	<b>Other types of land</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9,19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7,39</b>