

## Integrated Rural Development in Poverty Regions of Laos (NU-IRDP)

### Land Registration

#### 1. Content and Goal

Registration of landownership serves to ensure land rights and tenure security of the rural population, in particular the poor, and to promote their willingness to invest in their land. Therefore the Lao Government aims to establish land administration countrywide. The programme supports the surveying, registration and legal adjudication of individual, community and state land parcels in some rural mountainous areas.

#### 2. Approach, method, scale

In order to make cadastral survey faster and more reliable a new system of modern surveying equipment based on high precision satellite positioning was introduced by the programme. The programme trained teams of provincial and district government survey and adjudication technicians, who conduct land registration in selected villages. Complementary to the technical activities of surveying, existing land disputes are resolved, while ensuring that sufficient land is allocated to all families within a village, in particular to those of disadvantaged groups.

After registration the new “cadastre” is put on public display in the village for one month, allowing everyone in the village to raise concerns or voice disagreement. Following the public display, each household receives, for a fair and subsidized fee, one printed land title for each parcel owned.

Within the mostly training-oriented field-exercises at least 1300 parcels were registered and adjudicated in 13 villages. More joint registration activities are planned in approximately 30 villages before GIZ will hand over full responsibility for a continuing campaign to the Lao Government by the end of 2013.

#### 3. Impacts

Land Registration aims at creating impacts in the medium to long term. The main intended impact is to secure owners and cultivators land tenure, by granting them legally recognized land titles. Unlawful disappropriation through e.g. the granting of concessions on private properties to investors coming from outside, can be contested in court by owners with land titles. An awareness campaign in more than 180 villages has additionally improved understanding of land owners’ rights, enhanced confidence and clarified obligations. Given that the first land titles have been handed over only recently, significant impact remains to be seen in the longer term. Immediate impacts that could already be observed are:

- Land disputes, mostly between small holders, were resolved.
- Disadvantaged families who previously did not have any or only insufficient access to land benefitted from the initiative by receiving their fair share of village land, in principle granted to them by Lao law, which until then had not been implemented in the village .
- Some farmers claim to have utilized the title as collateral for receiving small loans to invest in expanding their income generation.