The 6th EITI Global Conference in Sydney, Australia

In May, 2013, Mr. Mam Sambath, Executive Director of DPA, attended the 6th EITI Global Conference in Sydney, Australia. The conference was designed to bring together representatives from around the world to discuss initiatives, laws and impact from the extractive industries.

The event, which was attended by 1,200 participants from 96 countries, included an overview of mandatory reporting laws, global reach and expected impact as well as a discussion of US and EU extractive disclosure rules. It also provided a forum for discussing new rules and practices, and created a network of regional and international organisations and coalitions.  

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The Importance of Communal Land Titling for Pnong Indigenous Community in Pu Treng village

One of the DPA’s projects, the Integrated Community Development Programme in Mondulkiri province (ICD-MDK), is focused on improving access to natural resources and providing land tenure security for indigenous ethnic groups. The project has been facilitating the process of communal land titling for three indigenous communities in this province.

Pu An Treng village is one of three target villages implementing communal land titling and is located in Dak Dam commune, O’Raing district, in Mondulkiri province. It consists of 133 households totaling 624 people, 320 of whom are female.

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The Importance of Communal Land Titling ...... (from page 1)

and most of whom are Bunong indigenous people. Most of them depend on natural resources, rice farming, planting crops and collecting non-timber forest products, such honey and resin.

Mr. Pherr Sa Mon, community leader of Pu An Treng village said, "Communal land titling is very important for my community because it can provide security for the land and we will no longer be afraid of losing it to land encroachment from outsiders, powerful men or companies. This way, we will be able to continue our traditional practice of rotation farming."

"Our indigenous community uses land for traditional practices such as protected forests and spirit forests and rotates farming from one place to another without clear recognition of land and boundary," said Mrs. Ki Savean, deputy Pu An Treng village chief and a member of communal land titling committee. "DPA has provided assistance in establishing the Pu An Treng community, as well as identifying village boundaries and forming community leader and village committees. As a result, we are no longer afraid of land encroachment from outsiders and are able to protect our traditional locations for our next generation."

According to Mr. Som Vanna, Dak Dam commune chief, "I have become aware of and participated in the process of communal land titling from the starting process. As one of the local authorities here, I don’t oppose this project, however it is really important for community in Pu An Treng village. This project really responds to the needs of the community here, because villagers will enjoy the use of their land without being afraid of losing it. Pu An Treng is the first village in Dak Dam commune to implement this project and there is another village which I support to integrate this project."

The Pu An Treng village completed the draft community bylaws through organising a community general assembly on 23 April 2013. On behalf of a facilitator, DPA’s ICD-MDK assists the community in Pu An Treng village with preparing documents and asking for communal land titling, which makes it easier for them to manage natural resources, food security and preserve their own customs and traditions.
Participation to Promote the Implementation of National Policy on the Development of Indigenous People

As a part of its contribution to promote indigenous people’s livelihoods, as well as to preserve their culture, tradition and beliefs, DPA has been focused on building their capacity and strengthening their rights to participate in development activities and work which are the key successes for sustainable development.

On 10th January 2013 in collaboration with the Department of Rural Development in Ratanakiri province, Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) organised a public forum, (Continued on page 4)

From farmer to Village Development Committee and Village chief

Mrs. Orn Noeun, aged 54, is a farmer living in Cheas Reusey village, Chamlong commune, Svay Chrum district, Svay Rieng province who has five children – three daughters and two sons. Noeun is a great example of a determined women who has risen to be a great leader and advocate of women’s rights in her village.

In 1994, she was an active member with a self-help group and rice bank provided by CIDSE ICD Svay Chrum district. In 2000, she was elected as Village Development Committee (VDC) member and has attended many training courses supported by CIDSE/DPA. She has performed tasks with other VDCs and coordinated development activities with the Project Committee in her village, coaching them in financial management and bookkeeping, assisting them with solving problems in the community and facilitating community meetings. In addition to the VDC, in 2005 she was a village assistant, responsible for women and children. Her performance and knowledge has been recognised by the village development actors and villagers. Furthermore, in 2012 she was selected as village chief of Cheas Reusey village.

As a village chief, she worked closely with the community to identify needs in the village development plan and coordinated with the commune council chief to solve problems such as accessing health services, advising on domestic violence cases and resolving land conflicts in the community. She always paid attention to the protection of women and children’s rights in her community, educates them on women’s empowerment and supports them to participate in social development. She has been involved in the activities of the Family Economic Development Association (FEDA) in her community, funded by DPA.

"I am very proud in changing my life to step forward from being an ordinary farmer to a VDC and then from being a VDC to being a village chief," Noeun said. "It is not difficult for me to hold the position of village chief, because I had knowledge and experiences in development work when I was a VDC member for more than 10 years. However, I also need further learning and self-development in order to manage and lead my community more effectively. I am happy with my job and wants to see more women hold leadership and decision making positions in their communities."
Participation to Promote ....... (from page 3)

entitled “Participation to Promote the Implementation of National Policy on the Development of Indigenous People”, supported financially by the European Community (EC) through Trocaire.

The public forum was held at Ratanak Lina restaurant in Ratanakiri province for 113 participants under the presidency of H.E. Nab Bunheng, deputy provincial governor of Ratanakiri province.

The aims of the forum included: (1) Promoting an understanding of community awareness for the government’s effort in promoting and caring for the indigenous community; (2) Strengthening good collaboration between local authorities and communities in working together on development work and providing opportunities for the community to take part in natural resource management and community development work and; (3) Identifying additional problems and seeking suitable solutions to reduce the concerns of the community.

According to Mr. Mam Sambath, DPA’s Executive Director, “DPA has been working in Ratanakiri in integrated community development work since 1994 and this work included food security, capacity building for the community, health education, natural resource management and promotion of indigenous people’s rights. All these activities were done to address the National Development Strategy 2009-2013 and the National Policy on the Development of Indigenous People as well as other national policies of the Royal Government of Cambodia.”

H.E. Nab Bunheng said “The Cambodian Government has continued to take care of and promote indigenous communities by giving them opportunities and rights to express their concerns so they would be able to actively participate in social development.”

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The predominant theme for the conference was "converting transparency to accountability" and was designed for governments, private sectors and CSO representatives to learn lessons and exchange knowledge and challenges in implementing the extractive industry transparency initiative. "It is good news for Cambodia that EU members agreed to adopt the EU Accounting and Transparency Directives last month,” said Mr. Sambath. "This is one more global mechanism that will affect our country since it will require oil, gas and mining companies registered in the EU and operating in Cambodia to disclose payments made to governments. We are happy to see the further promotion of transparency in the extractive industry sector."

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), established in 2002, aims to strengthen governance by improving transparency and accountability in the extractive sector. It represents a coalition of governments, companies, civil society groups, investors and international organisations.