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Outside the Lines: Households excluded from the 12.44Ha Boeung Kak concession

Sahmakum Teang Tnaut • a Cambodian Urban NGO
**Outside the Lines: Households Excluded from the 12.44Ha Boeung Kak concession (STT 2012)**

**Introduction**

On Aug. 11 2011, Prime Minister Hun Sen signed Sub-Decree No. 183, awarding 12.44Ha of the Boeung Kak lake area to the community. This marked a major victory for remaining households in the community, who had been fighting for their land since 2007, when 133Ha of the natural lake were leased for 99-years to Shukaku Inc., owned by CPP senator Lao Meng Khin, under dubious circumstances.

Yet the victory was bittersweet. Some 85% of the community, representing over 3,500 households, had already been forcibly displaced from the area. In addition, not all homes of those remaining in the area were included in the 12.44Ha concession, while rumours abounded that plots within the concession had been awarded to Lao Meng Khin.

At the request of the Boeung Kak community, STT in early 2012 undertook to map the boundaries of the 12.44Ha concession together with any empty plots within that area, as well as the location of households seemingly excluded from the concession.

**Methodology**

In 2007-08, STT produced a dataset of house footprints around Boeung Kak. This project involved a field survey, using a handheld GPS (10m circular error) to obtain the locations of all houses in the area, after which footprints were digitised around each point using a Geoeye satellite image (0.6m resolution). Between March – May 2012, another field survey identified which of these footprints were now either vacant plots or empty buildings. The project also involved using a GPS to locate a number of new footprints because the 2007-08 dataset was incomplete. These were then digitised using a 2011 Geoeye image (0.5m resolution).

In order to obtain the locations of the households excluded from the 12.44Ha area, STT conducted field visits guided by community members and used a handheld GPS to confirm locations. It should be noted, however, that because STT relied on community cooperation in identifying excluded households, excluded households in the area who do not work with community representatives may have been omitted in this survey.

The boundaries of the 12.44ha concession were obtained from Sub-Decree no. 183.

**Definition of a vacant plot**

For the purposes of this survey, the majority of house footprints can be interpreted as plots of land, as this is a densely settled area where most houses make up the majority of a plot of land. Due to this, we refer to footprints where houses have been torn down as vacant plots. Where a house is surrounded by a significantly larger (generally walled) plot of land, we have drawn this on the map to indicate that this space is not available for others to live on.

**Accuracy**

Given the GPS error, the positions of building footprints on the map are likely to be ±10m. Due to the image resolutions, the dimensions of them are ±0.5m at best. In practice, however, they are approximately ±2m due to digitising by hand rather than obtaining measurements with high accuracy surveying equipment, and due to georeferencing errors.
As indicated on the map, there was a small area in the upper half of the northern section which could not be reached and an area in the lower half of the southern section where boundaries of larger plots of land were unclear. Hence there may be extra vacant plots not detected by this survey.

Regarding the excluded households, a number are now covered by sand, such that locations indicated by villagers may have been approximate. Overall, information on the map is meant to be indicative, showing, for example, the presence of a vacant plot, rather than its precise dimensions or location. In particular, the map is not meant to show definite exclusion of households from the 12.44Ha concession.

Results

This land use survey reveals that most of the 12.44Ha concession is occupied by houses, with locations where houses have been demolished (defined as vacant plots) taking up the next largest proportion of the concession (see Table 1). In total, 5.11Ha, or around 41%, of the land in the concession area is visibly occupied. An additional 17% of the land, equivalent to 401 plots, in the concession was previously occupied, but has become vacant as a result of the previous owners accepting compensation, demolishing their homes, and leaving the area. The remaining land in the concession area is taken up by abandoned buildings (1.5%), unoccupied plots with unclear ownership claims (1%), as well as roads, footpaths and other spaces unaccounted for in this survey due to limitations to access and/or uncertain boundaries (39%).
Table 1. Type of plot by area and amount within 12.44ha concession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of plot</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage of total number of plots</th>
<th>Area covered (ha)</th>
<th>Percentage of 12.44Ha concession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupied house</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>58.54%</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walled plot of land containing occupied house</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>10.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant plot</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>37.62%</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>17.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned building</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unoccupied plot of land (unclear ownership claims)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.28%</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1066</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>60.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. a. Numbers in this document are rounded to two decimal places, but all calculations are based on non-rounded numbers. b. Area of occupied houses that are contained by plots of land has been subtracted from the area of the plot of land.

The area of the vacant plots identified within the 12.44Ha concession amounts to 2.12Ha. The northern section of the concession has a greater proportion of vacant plots, these being concentrated in the centre. Most vacant plots in the southern section are in the lower half. Occupied houses are concentrated around the outside of the northern section and in the upper part of the southern section. No empty buildings in the southern section were identified, these being gathered in the lower half of the northern section.

A total of 70 households were identified as excluded from the concession. Of these, 52 homes continue to be occupied, while 18 (most of which are in Village 1) are covered by sand.

Conclusion

These results indicate that households excluded from the 12.44Ha concession could be given a vacant plot within it, from the perspective of land availability. For example, providing each of the 70 excluded households a small 4x16m plot within the concession would require a total area of 0.45Ha. This represents 21% of the area (2.12Ha) identified as vacated by previous occupants, or 3.6% of the 12.44Ha concession. Adding this 0.45Ha to the area of land already classified as visibly occupied houses and plots of land (5.11Ha) would mean that the occupied proportion of the 12.44Ha concession would increase to 45%.

To illustrate how the excluded households could be included in the concession, an arbitrary group of 70 of the currently vacant plots are shaded in on the map. Note however that the selected plots are equal to or smaller than 4x16m and that this does not represent a claim to a particular area of land.

An alternative way of solving the issue for some of the households excluded from the 12.44Ha concession, is to change the boundary of the concession. Households located on the Western edge of the concession in Villages 6, 22, and 24 could easily be incorporated into the concession area by increasing its size by 0.90Ha, for a total concession area of 13.34Ha. The proposed change in the concession boundary is illustrated on the map.
ការសិទ្ធិប្រការីសាធារណៈ

នៅថ្ងៃទី ២៣ ខែមករា ឆ្នាំ២០២៣

តាមអំណាចទីមួយ ប្រការីសាធារណៈ

- ប្រការីសាធារណៈថ្ងៃទី ២៣ ខែវិច្ឆិកា ឆ្នាំ១៩៧៩ តាមអំណាចទីអ្នកចុះតំបន់ ដើម្បីបញ្ហា និងការធ្វើការប្រការីសាធារណៈ
- ប្រការីសាធារណៈថ្ងៃទី ២៣ ខែមករា ឆ្នាំ២០២៣ និងថ្ងៃទី ២៤ ខែមករា ឆ្នាំ២០២៣ ដើម្បីបញ្ហា និងការធ្វើការប្រការីសាធារណៈ
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ឈ្នះ ២០២៣
3. វិចារ ១៩៩៦.៤៩ ប្រការ កុម្មាសនៈ ដែលកុម្មស័យ បានប្រការទៅសម្រាប់ អន្តរការ និងអន្តរវិធី សង្គមរបស់ស្រុក ប់ោមដោយក្រុមហ៊ុនសាលា មហាវិថីនាន់ និងការបង្កើតព្រឹត្តិការណ៍ ប្រការពីការស្វែងរក អវិជ្ជមានព័ត៌មាន។

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5. បញ្ជាក់បញ្ជាក់ថាការប្រការគឺប្រការជាច្រើន មិនមានបញ្ហាស្ថិតនៅព័ត៌មាន។

6. បែបអំពីទិន្នន័យសិទ្ធិចិត្តប្រការសិទ្ធិចិត្ត ប្រការពីការស្វែងរក អវិជ្ជមាននៅក្នុងរដ្ឋបូជាប់ មានសមត្ថភាពប្រការមិនប្រការទៀត។

ប្រការអនដែលបានប្រការទៅ ១៩.... ខែ សុដ្ឋ...ឆ្នាំ ២០០៩

អំពីការសិទ្ធិចិត្តប្រការសិទ្ធិចិត្ត និងការស្វែងរក អវិជ្ជមាន។

ការសិទ្ធិចិត្តប្រការសិទ្ធិចិត្ត
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