

BRIEFING NOTES

to improve our understanding and ability to ask the right questions and take effective action on land matters in West Africa

“Land Tenure & Development” Technical Committee

Land Use Plans (LUPs), Decentralised Rules for Territorial Land Use

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This paper explains what decentralised Land Use Plans (LUPs) are for, how to produce and implement them, and what needs to be done to make them into reference documents. It draws on an initiative supported by AFD in the River Senegal valley, where the methods and tools for successful decentralised land management were updated in the 1990s and have been widely used since the 2000s.

What Is a Land Use Plan?

A decentralised Land Use Plan (LUP) sets out the rules for land occupancy and use (housing, livestock rearing, farming, etc.) in a given area, plots the different land uses on maps, and defines all the measures that need to be taken to ensure that the rules are properly implemented.

Each LUP should include a set of rules and two types of map: one representing a baseline assessment of the resources, infrastructures and different types of land occupancy and use; the other showing the zones where the new, collectively agreed rules should be applied.

LUPs locate and protect resources and spaces that are crucial for the survival and development of each activity (water points, wetlands, livestock routes). This means that local governments can include *any rule that they think will help secure and sustain different rural activities* in their LUP: identifying the spaces and seasons where each activity takes priority; defining general management rules for the whole territory and specific ones for certain areas, etc. They may contain very detailed rules about land use: for exam-

ple, they can specify zones where extensive agriculture and wild harvesting are permitted in one season and pastoral livestock rearing is allowed in another; or identify certain water points that are reserved for household use, watering livestock or have been set aside as natural reserves in wetlands.

To see a concrete example of a Land Use Plan, follow the link given at the end of this sheet.

What Are Land Use Plans for?

LUPs allow local governments in developing countries to define and, if necessary, map all the local rules that allow different activities to co-exist in the same space. They are useful for clarifying each user’s rights and avoiding conflicts over land use (relating to water management, or between herders and farmers); and are particularly valuable when negotiating local rules to manage competing land and natu-

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ral resource uses (all activities involving water and forests, and competition between agriculture and livestock rearing or intensive and traditional farming).

The rules contained in an LUP will carry more weight if the relevant legal provisions are in place, because this means that they are officially recognised.

The process of producing a land use plan also helps those involved clarify the medium-term guidelines they want for their territory, in terms of which activities, spaces, resources and communities they wish to be targeted for prioritisation or protection.

Finally, if LUPs are produced through a participatory process, they enable local actors to agree on concrete, workable guidelines, rules and maps that can be tied into a local development programme or articulated with a regional or national land use master plan.

How Are LUPs Put in Place?

The process of putting an LUP in place should be seen as a *learning exercise* for everyone involved in decentralisation (including State support structures), so that they can familiarise themselves with their new attributions and feel legitimised in their new roles and competences. The technical services will be expected to support rather than implement the process, while the local government will be expected to assume responsibility for local land management and steer the overall process.

The procedure proposed in this paper (which proved successful in Senegal) can be used to transfer the capacities for *autonomous* decentralised territorial management to non-specialist local actors (elected local officials, local government staff and other local

source persons) in the space of a few months. These local actors can then apply and even update the guidelines, rules and maps themselves, ensuring that the competences they have acquired are sustainable.

It is extremely important that local governments are *allowed to take responsibility for the whole process from the outset*. Learning by doing is a quick and efficient way of mastering and exercising new skills and competences; therefore, local governments need to take responsibility for steering the whole process, designing the collective rules and mapping materials, and enforcing and monitoring implementation of the plans.

A support team will be needed to help the local government put its land use map in place. This can be done by a small team of just two people (such as a geographer and a sociologist).

● Stage One: Agree the Rules for Steering and Formulating the Land Use Plan

The team that is responsible for helping the local government produce and implement the LUP should spend time talking to elected local officials, the administrative authorities and technical services to ensure that they understand the importance of everyone's role in each stage of the process: the technical services share the technical information at their disposal, local governments use base maps to analyse it, discuss it with their constituents and then decide on the rules, while the administrative authorities are responsible for ex-post verification, validation and helping enforce these rules.

Each party's responsibilities, rights and obligations should be set out in an agreement that also provides practi-

cal details about how the tasks will be distributed between the different partners. This will entail setting up a *Technical committee to formulate the LUP* (steered by the local government) and appointing an elected official from the local government to *coordinate the LUP*.

● Stage Two: Allow the Local Government to Organise and Produce an Assessment Report

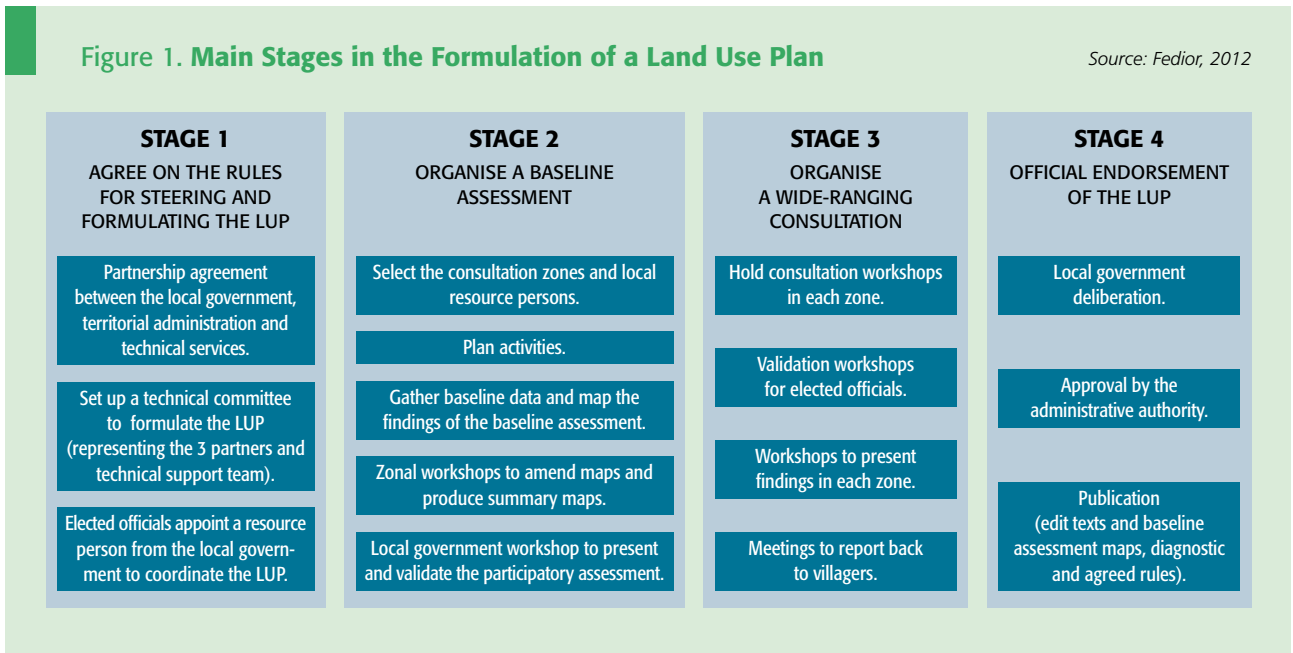
The second stage consists of allowing the local government (elected officials, government staff, local resource persons) to *learn on the job while producing their first LUP*. The support team should focus on providing technical information and leave the local government to steer the assessments, consultations, decisions and implementation from the outset, regardless of the quality of their initial actions.

The local government divides its territory into consultation zones, and selects a focal point to act as the local resource person in each of these zones. The support team should ensure that they are familiar with the procedural and mapping techniques needed to produce the LUP. Information is then gathered to produce the maps showing the *baseline situation* (basic cartographic information on natural resources, infrastructures, human settlements and current land occupancy and uses).

A one-day workshop should be held in each consultation zone to allow participants to amend these maps and make *their own* assessment of local land use and occupancy issues. The village delegates attending these workshops should then organise sessions to report back to their village on the process; while elected local govern-

Figure 1. Main Stages in the Formulation of a Land Use Plan

Source: Fedior, 2012



ment officials analyse the conclusions of these workshops, validate a synthesis of their findings and authorise the Committee to proceed with work on the LUP.

● **Stage Three: Organise Wider Consultations**

In the third stage, a collaborative process is used to formulate specific rules for land use and occupancy. A workshop should be held in each consultation zone for participants to discuss the assessment in detail and agree how resource use is to be regulated, the space organised and each area put to use... They also need to agree on how these new rules are to be put in place and collectively monitored. The village delegates then report back to their respective villages, and the local government should hold a workshop so that elected local officials can examine the proposals from the consultation zones in detail and make a final decision about what will go into the

land use plan. This will then be presented in each village.

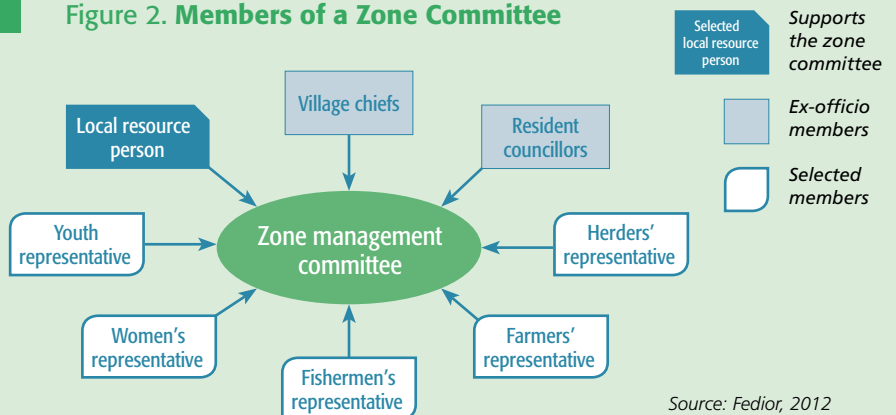
The quality of the decisions taken by the local government during this stage will not only depend on the quality of support for the learning process, but also the extent to which local actors can operate autonomously. It is therefore crucial that they understand and appropriate the specially designed and updated participatory method for producing LUPs

● **Stage Four: Official Endorsement of the LUP**

Lawyers check the rules developed by the local government to ensure that they comply with current legislation, and possibly to see how the texts could be improved to accommodate the new rules.

The LUP is then ready to be officially endorsed (after discussion by the local government and approval by the ad-

Figure 2. Members of a Zone Committee



Source: Fedior, 2012

ministrative authority) and published (after editing the texts and maps of the baseline situation, diagnostics and agreed rules).

Implementing an LUP

To facilitate implementation of the LUP, the local government divides its territory into LUP management zones, each of which has a zone committee composed of local elected officials and resource persons (village chiefs) that is responsible for implementing the LUP. These committees are supported by a *technical implementation committee* (TIC) made up of representative elected local officials and technical agents. The zone and technical committees hold quarterly meetings to monitor and evaluate implementation of the rules, and take the necessary actions to measure and improve their effectiveness. This structure is crucial for effective implementation of the rules, as it enables local people and their representatives on the zone committees to play an active role in applying and enforcing them (sensitising and informing local people about the rules and associated issues, monitoring compliance, changing their content where necessary, identifying the need for new rules, etc.).

Conditions for Success

- **The support team should have a good understanding of the participatory action-learning procedure**, that enables local governments to work autonomously and produce a Land Use Plan in the space of a few months. For application at the national level, it is useful to set up a national pool of trainers to share the specific procedure with regional support teams and properly monitor the results of the process (ensure that LUPs comply with public guidelines on territorial development, monitor the quality of the support procedures put in place by the support teams, provide assistance where necessary, etc.).
- **Local governments need to have the internal capacities** – and the requisite financial and human resources – to ensure that local people are sufficiently informed, aware and involved to apply the rules set out in the Land Use Plan.
- **Land Use Plans need to be incorporated into the current legislative and regulatory framework** to ensure that they are legally binding (on citizens, elected officials and the State) and that non-compliance can be sanctioned. ●

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

>> **For further information on a concrete example of a Land Use Plan, see:**
<http://www.endapronat.org/images/doc%20principal%20poas%20ballou.pdf>

>> **A briefing note on local agreements (of which Land Use Plans are one example) can be found at:** <http://www.foncier-developpement.fr/publication/les-conventions-locales-des-outils-efficaces-de-gestion-concertee-des-ressources-naturelles/>

>> **A briefing note on local governments and territories in rural areas of West Africa can be found at:** <http://www.foncier-developpement.fr/publication/collectivites-locales-et-territoires-locaux-en-afrique-de-louest-rurale/>

>> **To see how Land Use Plans have been used to reduce conflicts in Senegal, visit:** <http://pubs.iied.org/G03835.html>

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