The « Dai Prek Game » (Regional level): « How to implement guide »

The overall objective of the game is to discuss multiple development modalities and trajectories of the Prek Area in Kandal province and the trade-offs these may involve (both spatially and socially). The game also aims to test whether stakeholders depicts different development paths/trajectories in a situation with no interactions (round 1 of the game is meant to model sectoral thinking) and in a situation with interactions (round 2 of the game is meant at supporting more integrated and equitable thinking).

Presentation of the tool

On the basis of the tools used during the first workshop held in December 2018, the "basis" of the game is a poster representing 12 (more or less connected) Preks and several types of land cover: (1) High Chamkar in dark green; (2) intermediate Chamkar (in yellow); (3) Boeung area (in brown) and (4) natural vegetation (in light green) (see schematic below). The board is split in two communes with a limit located along the prek Number 6 (but not represented on the board). The importance of fisheries and the potential tradeoffs between agricultural development and fisheries resources has been reinforced compared to the working session of December 2018 whereby fisheries played hardly any role.[1]

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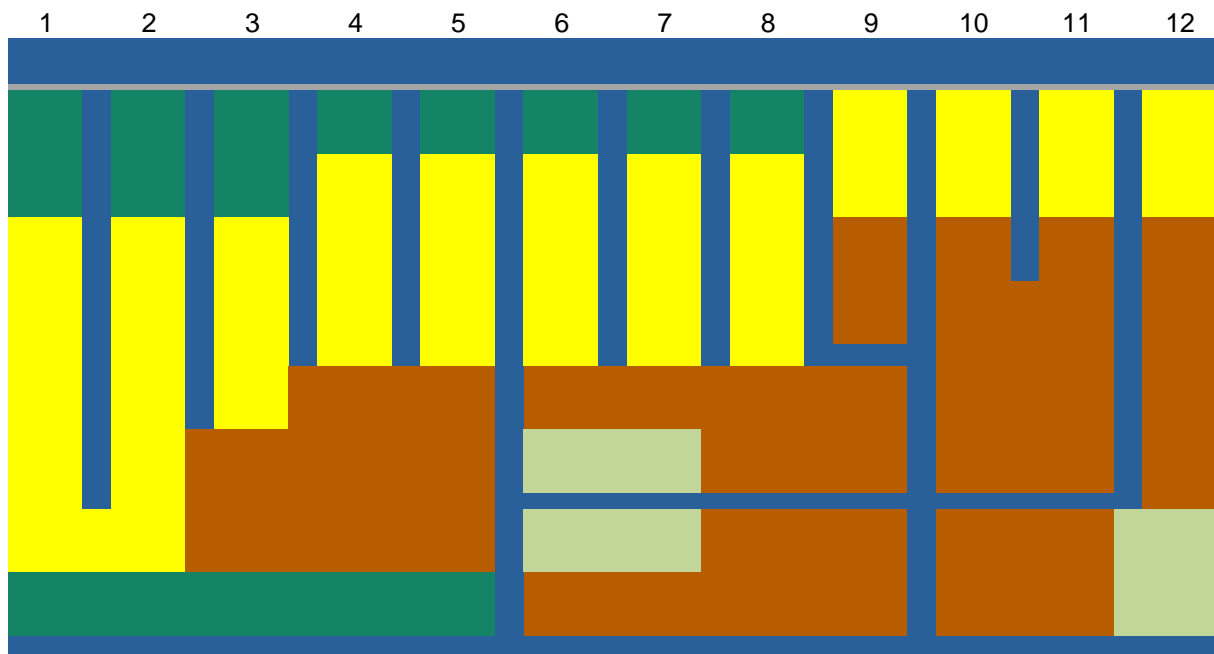
[1] Before the game session started, there was a discussion on which area exactly the board was meant to represent. The group agreed that it represented the area between the Mekong and the Bassac. Like for farmers, participants needed "to ground" the board in a reality they knew.

Roles and objectives of the players

Players are attributed roles and have different objectives:

1) The representative of PDoWRAM is meant to limit flooding while still allowing a certain proportion of boeung to be flooded (for flood mitigation and soil fertility improvement);
2) The representative of PDA aims at increasing agricultural production both in Chamkar and Boeung;
3) The representative of the FiA aims at producing a certain amount of fish while preserving the resource and the area with natural vegetation;[2]
4) 2 commune representatives aim at improving livelihood in their commune and
5) A district representative is responsible for ensuring that livelihood improvements are balanced across the board.

There are, hence, 6 players provided with specific "role card" (see ppt presentation). The representative from PDoWRAM, PDA, FiA and the district can "play" on the entire board. The commune representatives can only play on the part of the board that represents their commune. The objectives are to be reached at "regional and or commune level".

Roles can be attributed at random or to correspond to the "real position/job" of the actors, which was the option chosen during this working session to the extent it was possible.[3] Players are randomly attributed a number to determine the order in which they will play.

Playing the game (First round)

To reach their objective, players have several possibilities represented by "Action Cards": (1) installing pumping stations, (2) building sluice gates; (3) building a polder –each polder can cover the area located on each side of the prek, (4) facilitating the installation of an input seller, (5) promoting sustainable agricultural practices, (6) promoting individual fishing; (7) promoting collective fishing, (8) supporting commercial fishing and (9) clearing land (see ppt presentation for a illustration of the card).

Each activity has an impact on 4 key indicators: (1) agricultural production in the Chamkar; (2) agricultural production in the Boeung; (3) fish stock; (4) local satisfaction. The consequence of each of these actions on each indicator is adjusted in case of drought and flood (see the action cards in the ppt presentation).

At the beginning of the game, each player is given 4 cards from a collective deck of card (of 24 cards; see list of card in the appendix), and plays one card according to the number it has been assigned **(without showing his/her cards and without talking to the other players).** Once each player has played a card, the remaining three cards are passed on to the next player so that, at each round, every single player has a changing set of cards.

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[2] A potential improvement might be to create a role for the « environment », who would be responsible to maintain a certain area of natural vegetation and preserve/enhance biodiversity.

[3] No representative from PDoWRAM attended the workshop and there were 4 fishery experts.

A player can make two moves: (1) play the card on the board – and the facilitator gives him/her a small wooden object representing the action that s/he positions on the board and (2) trump a card s/he is not interested in and does not want to be played during the game.

The facilitator "simulates" the impact on each card on the board (adding or withdrawing (1) beans to show potential changes in agriculture production; (2) fish stickers to show impact on fish stock and (3) marbles to show impact on satisfaction/happiness of the population (there is two glasses full or marbles –one for each commune- on the side of the board.

Simulating floods or droughts

Once all cards have been played, the facilitator simulates the water regime (flood/droughts) through the means of a dice throw (results 1 to 3 represent a drought; results 10 to 12 a flood) and adds/withdraws tokens accordingly to what is indicated in the action cards.

The remaining tokens (beans and fish stickers) are "harvested" by the players and if they have met their objectives, "happiness" marbles are added to the glasses (for each objective fulfilled, three happiness marbles are provided).

Computing the results

An excel file is used to model how results of the game session would have been affected by a flood and/or a drought so as to initiate a discussion on the resilience of the development options chosen by the different groups. [4]

Playing the game (First round)

The second round of the game proceeds similarly to the first round apart from the fact that players are allowed to discuss with each others before playing any card. The simulation of the floods/droughts and the computation of results are done the same way than described above.

Comparing the results obtained in the two rounds allows initiating a discussion on the relative differential impacts of different development strategies/path and on the importance of cross-sectoral consultation.

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[4] Check excel file for more detailed information on whose player played which card and when. The excel file also provides detailed information on the quantitative results of the game session.