

The effect of Dispute resolution on intermediate social cohesion outcomes

Effect: positive (Mediation not only resolved conflicts but also increased the capacity of stakeholders to find solutions to conflicts in various contexts in Southeast Asia)

Confidence in study findings: Low (one study, low confidence)

Short summary

While mediation holds significant potential for addressing conflict and increasing the capacity of stakeholders to find solutions to conflicts in Southeast Asian countries, its effectiveness hinges on many factors. These include the perceived legitimacy and authority of the mediators, the willingness of all parties to engage in a participatory process, and the capacity of mediators and institutions to implement agreements and address systemic issues

Long summary

The intervention

The intervention refers to mediation as a structured approach to resolving plantation conflicts, implemented in three key phases: pre-mediation, mediation, and post-mediation. These phases included a range of activities such as conflict analysis, trust-building, and securing stakeholder commitment. Mediators established communication, addressed concerns about neutrality, and formalized party representation for legitimacy.

How is the intervention expected to work

The specific interventions employed will vary depending on the context of the conflict, the nature of the parties involved, and the skills and resources of the mediators. However, the overarching goal of this intervention is to go beyond just stopping the conflict. Rather, the mediation was pursued with the intent to achieve conflict transformation, including sustainable resource management. In the Chiang Mai (Thailand) case, for example, the mediation sought to enable the highland and lowland communities to manage the Mae Tia Mae Tae watershed together sustainably and equitably and share the benefits (p.137)

The evidence base

There is one qualitative study assessing the **effect of Dispute resolution on intermediate social cohesion outcomes in Southeast Asia- Cambodia, Indonesia, and Thailand**. The study is by A. Dhiaulhaq, T. De Bruyn, & D. Gritten (2015). *The use and effectiveness of mediation in forest and land conflict transformation in Southeast Asia: Case studies from Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand. Environmental Science & Policy, 45, 132-145*. All references are from that study.

The evidence

Mediation increased the capacity of stakeholders to find solutions to conflicts. This states that mediation can enhance intermediated social cohesion outcomes by providing a platform to get to know the parties, build trust, build relations, and understand the culture during the social preparation before mediation, training & several meetings to discuss the conflicts & way forward. However, the success of mediation depends on several factors, including the perceived legitimacy and authority of the mediators, the willingness of all parties to engage in a participatory process, and the capacity of mediators and institutions to implement agreements and address systemic issues

Confidence assessment

Overall confidence: Low Confidence Qualitative Study (It is unclear whether the study uses an established small n approach; theoretical framework is not presented; no triangulation done; sources of potential data bias is not addressed)