

The Role of the Adat Institution on Land Conflict Resolution in Tanimbar

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Land demand in the Tanimbar Islands Regency has increased in recent years. The causes are President Joko Widodo's decision to move the oil and gas exploration of the Masela block from offshore to onshore, and the Indonesian Government's policy to develop the periphery. There are five villages affected by these two policies, namely Bomaki Village, Latdalam Village, Lermatang Village, Adaut Village, and Kandar Village. Land in these five villages attracts many investors and most have been sold. However, in the negotiation process, the sale of the land caused many conflicts among the local people. Based on the in-depth interviews we conducted with the respondents, who consisted of traditional leaders, village officials, and residents, we found that the high and low intensity of the conflict was determined by the role of the Adat Institutions in each village. Adat institutions have a significant role because of the inherent legitimacy and the practice of the custom 'Duan Lolat', that has been practised so far. The custom's role in conflict resolution is supported by its function as a communicator and mediator that connects village communities, village officials, and investors.

Keywords: *Adat institution, Communicator, Duan lolat, Land conflict, Mediator.*

Introduction

The Tanimbar Islands Regency is a form of regional expansion of the Southeast Maluku Regency. This regency was formed based on Law no. 46 of 1999. It is directly adjacent to Australia and is a frontier region. Previously, this district was named the West Southeast Maluku Regency. The name change to the Tanimbar Islands Regency was ratified on 28 January 2019, according to PP no 2 of 2019. According to the Tanimbar Islands Regent,

Petrus Fatiolon, this name change was to further emphasise his identity as a traditional Tanimbar child who had customs, culture, and a history of origin (Koesna, 2019). One of the local values that is still held in high regard in this region is *Duan Lolat*. *Duan Lolat* is the highest customary law. *Duan Lolat* regulates the rights and responsibilities of reciprocity between the donor family and the recipient family in various aspects of the multidimensional life of the Tanimbar community. The multidimensional refers to all aspects of community life, including births, closing new homes, marriages, and to the death of a community member. Duan is the owner of lolat. Duan gave women in a marriage. This kinship makes it difficult for the Tanimbar community to have conflict. If a conflict occurs, it is immediately resolved through kinship of *Duan Lolat*.

Duan Lolat's customary practice found momentum when, in the Tanimbar area, there was a lot of land selling to investors outside of Tanimbar. There are two reasons that affect the increasing demand for land in Tanimbar. First, the Tanimbar area is included in the Masela Block onshore exploration area. The exploration investment for the Masela block is US \$20 billion with a 50:50 ratio profit sharing system between the government and Inpex, an exploration company from Japan. Exploration contracts are planned until 2055. Exploration was initially carried out offshore, but on 22 March 2016, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) decided that exploration would be carried out onshore. The decision changed the original plan of exploration to be carried out offshore. The revised Plan of Development was finally approved on 17 July 2019. This policy change from offshore to onshore, caused the exploration plan to be delayed and led to many speculations among investors because it was not yet clear which coordinates would be used for the construction of facilities and production sites.

The second factor that increases land demand is the Jokowi Government program to develop from the periphery. The Jokowi Government is focussed on development in border areas which have been largely abandoned and underdeveloped. The impact of these two events has changed land ownership in Tanimbar. Many lands have been sold for the needs of expanding the construction of an integrated Army Base and the Centre for Logistics Supporting the Masela Block Oil and Gas Exploration activities, especially on Selaru Island, which is the foremost island bordering Australia. The development of border areas for defence and security is contained in Presidential Regulation No. 33 of 2015, which considers the state border as a strategic area of national defence and security. Selaru Island has a function as a logistics base for defence, integrated maritime industry support, sea transportation, and oil and gas support operations (Malik, 2018). This integrated logistics base is increasingly strategic with the discovery of several oil and gas fields in the Arafura Sea and Indonesia's border areas. The oil and gas fields include: (1) the West Arus I and II blocks by British Petroleum; (2) South East Aru trough by CNOOC and Petronas; (3) the Babar-Selaru block by Inpex Corp and Pertamina; (4) Tatihu block, which is still in the tender process; (5) the

Arafua Sea II block by Conoco-Phillips; (6) the Masel block by Inpex Corp and Shell; (7) South Moa Island block by Shell; (8) Ophyr block; (9) West Yamdena by Saka Energy; and (10) East Yamdena by Saka Energy (Malik, 2018). The Integrated Logistics Base is expected to serve supply base services and facilities support for oil and gas, maritime industry, long and short term open laydown storage, undercover storage, fully serviced office space, crew change points, equipment hire, handling of hazardous dangerous and specialist cargos, waste management, wash down facilities, dedicated casing yards, offshore container hire, cranes, aviation support, fresh water supply, and fuel depot. Land is also much sought out by investors in Yamdena Island, which is the largest island in the Tanimbar Islands Regency. The plan is for onshore exploration of the Masela Block to focus on Yamdena Island. Plans for settlements, offices, shopping centres, transit hotels, sports centres, airports, ports for heavy lifts, and warehousing, require new lands (Malik, 2018).

In recent years, land conflicts have begun to emerge. Land in the Tanimbar Islands Regency is customary land of Soa-based ownership. These lands used to have no economic value. Its use is for plantations, and ownership is also released. The area of land owned by a family depends on what the family is able to manage and for the needs of small-scale plantations. When the economic value of land rises due to the influx of investment, many land boundary conflicts arise. Conflict management in the Tanimbar Islands Regency is interesting. The Village Government involves the customary institution in resolving the conflict.

The research question raised is, how does the role of Adat institutions reduce conflict in the community? We argue that Adat institutions have a significant role because they practise '*Duan Lolat*', which is commonly used for the reduction and resolution of conflicts in indigenous peoples. This practice is increasingly legitimised because the Adat Institution is recognised as being in the village structure and involving all the Soas in the village. *Duan Lolat's* role in conflict resolution is supported by its function as a communicator and mediator that connects villagers, village officials, and investors.

Method

This study examines the practice of managing land conflicts in the South Tanimbar Sub-District and Selaru Sub-District. We examined five villages in the two sub-districts. The five villages are Bomaki Village, Latdalam Village, and Lermatang Village in the South Tanimbar Sub-District, and Adaut Village, and Kandar Village in the Selaru Sub-District. Bomaki Village, Latdalam Village, and Lermatang Village are on Yamdena Island, while Adaut Village, and Kandar Village are on Selaru Island. We have chosen these five villages because they are situated in areas affected by onshore investment in the Masela block exploration and are a development of national defence. We collected primary data using a focussed discussion method and in-depth interviews with ten Adat leaders, ten village officials, two sub-district

secretaries, and one Bupati expert staff member. The respondents were selected by purposive sampling to obtain information related to writing. We also used secondary data taken from books and journals.

Result and Discussion

Legitimacy of Duan Lolat in the Tanimbar Community

The term, *Duan Lolat*, comes from the Yamdena language, one of the five language families spread among the Tanimbar people. It is literally interpreted as the relationship between the master or duan with a servant or lolat (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014; Andrian, 2018). A duan is the owner or custodian of an item whose role is to give goods to a lolat, as a recipient (Reressy et al., 2019). In the beginning, *Duan Lolat* was used to describe the interaction between the two main parties, namely God as Duan Agung, and humans as Lolat. However, along with its development, *Duan Lolat* regenerated into a customary law which regulates the interaction between the Tanimbar people. Referring to PERDA No. 39/SK/DPRD-MTB/2002, *Duan Lolat* is the highest customary law, which is based on the rights and responsibilities between the donor family and the recipient family of the virgin in various aspects of life, in the actual community of West Southeast Maluku.

According to Usmany (2005), there are three meanings in the relationship between the two. First, the dole roll means social solidarity. This can be seen from the religious side, that is, in the form of customary solidarity with love and service, sacrifice, and the value of living in love and grief. Further, the meaning can be seen when problems in *Duan Lolat* can be resolved with the acknowledgment of the parties concerned. The second meaning relates to the dimensions of communion in the family. As both parties in the marriage of men and women unite the two families, the two parties are in a family bond. The third meaning relates to the value of giving life. In that sense, there is reciprocal relationship between both parties. Duan has an obligation to protect and give life to the dead. Meanwhile, the tongue is obliged to maintain the life that is born and given by the duan.

Duan Lolat plays a role in regulating kinship in the Tanimbar community. This is because *Duan Lolat* contains values and norms that regulate the blood relationship of a husband and wife that continues on an ongoing basis (Andrian, 2018). The kinship is likened to a gift from the *duan* and *lolat* parties, which are carried out in various life events in the Tanimbar community, such as births, marriages, house construction, and even death (Reressy et al., 2019). In addition, *Duan Lolat* is also used as a means of solving problems among the Tanimbar people. Some of these problems include problems in married life, land ownership disputes, the distribution of inheritance, and crime. Therefore, *Duan Lolat* can be considered as a customary law based on kinship relations that regulates social relations and serves as a

reference for behaviour and solving problems in various aspects of the Tanimbar's community life.

As a customary law governing the interaction between two parties, *Duan Lolat* also regulates the obligations that must be carried out by both parties in an effort to resolve the problem at hand (Reressy et al., 2019). The *duan* is obliged to provide clothes and equipment, including food in the form of rice and tubers, to the *lolat* party. Meanwhile, the *lolat* party is obliged to provide side dishes, such as meat and *sopi* (a local alcoholic beverage) to the *duan* party. The goods given by the *duan* or *lolat* parties can be in the form of traditional items, such as woven cloth, jewellery, and elephant ivory, and can be adapted to the life events encountered. Over time, the form of gift giving experiences a variety of variations. Until now, it is not uncommon for these gifts to be converted into cash.

An overview of the role of Duan Lolat in resolving social conflicts in the Tanimbar community is contained in the writings of Usmany (2005), and Rangkoratat (2018). Usmany stated that the pattern of solving crimes using the *Duan Lolat* culture through mediation was more effective because the process was short and kinship relations could be increasingly tightened. In the mediation, the traditional leaders and the *duan* play the role of mediators. Usmany saw that the effectiveness was also supported by the strength of Adat in people's lives. The Tanimbar people support and respect the existence of Adat because they view Adat as a social control that regulates shared life. Meanwhile, Rangkoratat's research (2018) specifically focusses on solving the problem of sexual intercourse in children through *Duan Lolat* customary law in the Latdalam Village, in West Southeast Maluku Regency. The settlement with *Duan Lolat* is done by paying money, providing *sopi* or woven cloth, according to the request of the victim and as agreed by the perpetrator. If the problem has been solved traditionally, then the criminal process in national law is no longer carried out because the customary law in the Tanimbar community has a more dominant position than the criminal law.

Along with the presence of investment in the five villages studied, there was a shift in social conflict within the community and the role of *Duan Lolat* in it. Soekanto (1989 in Astri, 2011) categorises forms and types of social conflicts into personal conflicts, racial conflicts, conflicts between social classes, inter-group political conflicts in a society, and international conflicts. *Duan Lolat's* mechanism initially resolved many conflicts related to personal conflicts, and conflicts between classes, and planting boundaries then shifted to conflicts related to land boundaries and the buying and selling process therein.

It is different from village officials who resolve conflicts based on administrative and juridical reasons; Adat institutions function to resolve conflicts with a cultural approach. Customary institutions exist in the village structure. The existence of Adat institutions in the

village structure can further increase the bargaining power of the local Tanimbar community. The presence in the village structure, and the involvement of all *Soas* in the Adat institution, demonstrates the strong legitimacy of the Adat institution itself. Barnett and Finnemore (2006) state that the involvement of all members shows the high legitimacy of the Institute and increases compliance with the decisions taken. This legitimacy shows institutional social power (Hurd, 2002).

The legitimacy of this Adat institution is strong because it has a legal and cultural basis. The juridical basis of this customary institution is regulated in District Regulations number 13 of 2013 and is appointed based on the decree of the Head of Village. The cultural basis occurs because in the structure of the traditional institution, it is represented by all the *Soa* in the village. For example, in Kandar Village, which has five *Soa*, each head of *Soa* is in the customary institution. The five *Soas* in Kandar Village are Afyanak, Masopa, Mafoak, Anausu, and Efyoar. This traditional institution also has its own structure. For example, like the one in the Adaut Village. The structure of the Adat institution in the Adaut Village consists of the chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, treasurer, and members of each *Soa*. The structure of the customary institution and its personal appointment are in writing and contained in the decree of the Village Head. The function of this traditional institution is to help the village government, as well as partners, in preserving and maintaining the customs in the village.

The legitimacy of traditional institutions helps increase the bargaining power of the community to investors. To clarify this argument, we conducted a comparative study comparing phenomena in five villages. The factors or variables being compared are the structure of Adat institutions, and the position of Adat institutions within village institutions, as well as the bargaining power in each village. An overview of the comparison of each village can be seen in the following table.

Table 1: Adat Institution and the Bargaining Position of Village

	Village				
	Lirmatang	Bomaki	Latdalam	Adaut	Kandar
Adat institutional structure	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Adat institution position among village institution	Under village institution	Under village institution	Under village institution	Under village institution	Under village institution
The role of Adat institution	Managing customary affairs and performing functions regardless of village institution	Take care of traditional affairs and coordinate with the village government	Take care of traditional affairs and coordinate with the village government	Take care of traditional affairs and coordinate with the village government	Take care of traditional affairs
Land price per square meters	5,000–10,000 rupiahs	15,000–25,000 rupiahs (The village government offers selling and leasing options)	N/A (The village government offers leasing option)	6,000	N/A
Bargaining position	Low	Intermediate	High	High	N/A

The table is a summary of the results of the interviews that we conducted with local communities in each village. It can be seen that there are variations in the role of Adat institutions and the selling price of land in each village, which is then considered an indicator of bargaining power. The process of buying and selling land in these villages is still carried out using a release letter. There are also differences in the five villages, in the process of arranging a letter of release from the village government, which will be explained in more detail in this section.

In the Lirmatang Village, residents carried out a transaction of buying and selling land without being known by the *Soa* and the village government. Economic factors in the form of needs and offers from investors have become the main impetus for local communities to sell land. Regarding the process of arranging the release letter, the local community in Lirmatang put pressure on the village government to issue the letter. In fact, the pressure applied can lead to violence if the request is not fulfilled. This still happens, despite the fact that the

Village Head is an Adat holder and has a position above the Adat institution. In addition, Adat institutions and village institutions have separate functions. Customary institutions are led by the Head of Customary Affairs and are tasked with taking care of customary matters, such as prayer and marriage matters. Meanwhile, the Village Head, as the leader of the village institution, only focusses on administrative matters. It can be seen that Adat institutions and village institutions in Lirmatang do not interfere with one another's matters. This becomes an issue when the Village Head is faced with pressure to issue a release letter from the local community who wants to sell the land. The problem is further complicated because the selling price of land in Lirmatang Village is still relatively cheap, which is around five to ten thousand rupiah per square metre.

The phenomenon in Lirmatang Village is different to what occurred in Bomaki Village. The selling price of land per square meter in the village of Bomaki ranges from Rp. 15,000 to 25,000. In certain cases, the price can go up to Rp. 50,000. Based on the data from the interviews with the Secretary of the Bomaki Village, there are two land release scenarios offered by the village government, namely selling and leasing, especially in the face of Inpex investment. This scenario depends on the land function that will be used by Inpex. The rental scenario applies to land that will be used as a residential area. Meanwhile, the selling scenario applies to land to be built as public facilities, such as schools and hospitals. The enactment of these two different scenarios is influenced by the role of Adat institutions in Bomaki Village, which not only regulate customary affairs, but also regulate the affairs of buying and selling land. The same thing was also found in the Adaut Village. Although the bargaining price of the Adaut Village is higher than the Bomaki Village. The involvement of this Adat institution is great because in every land sale and purchase transaction, the village institution gets a ten per cent share of the selling price. This section is then distributed to all the questions in the Adaut Village, except those that sell land.

In Latdalam Village, there is a phenomenon similar to that in Bomaki Village. The small difference lies in the decision of the Desa Latdalam to enforce the rental system only. Different from Lirmatang Village, which has sold hundreds of hectares of land, Latdalam Village has not recorded land sales to investors. In a meeting between the village government and traditional institutions, a decision was made to implement a rental system because it considered the sustainability of future generations. The involvement of traditional institutions in the village government decision-making process shows the high level of interaction between Adat institutions and village institutions. As a result, it can be seen that Latdalam Village has a high bargaining power, relatively the highest compared to other villages because it only applies a rental system.

The differences in the results in each village are influenced by the level of legitimacy of the Adat institutions in the eyes of village officials. This level of legitimacy is increased because

the use of Adat institutions as symbols of Adat representation. Institutions work through symbols (Hurd, 2002). The customary institution uses symbols through the involvement of all the questions in the village and the binding of customary decisions in the practice of *Duan Lolat*.

Adat Institution as Communicator and Mediator

We believe that the Adat institution has two roles, namely as a communicator and mediator. On the role of communicator, we base this argument on the basic framework of communication according to Lasswell (1948). According to Lasswell (1948), communication is a process of interaction between two parties. Through communication, there is a process of exchanging messages by two parties, namely the communicator or the party delivering the message, and the communicant or the party receiving the message. The process of delivering messages can be done directly or indirectly. Through the message delivered, the communicator's expected impact will emerge, as a sign that the process of delivering the message has been successful. Referring to Fiske (2002), the concept of Lasswell's communication basically emphasises the expected impact of communication, rather than the meaning of that communication.

Fiske (2002) states that the Lasswell communication model is a verbal form of Shannon's and Weaver's (1949) original model. Simply put, the model produces a theory that allows them to approach the problem of how to send the maximum amount of information through a channel, and how to measure the capacity of a channel to carry information. The model can explain human communication in general, although initially only focussed on mathematics and engineering. Then, Lasswell (1948) describes five elements in communication according to the communicator, communicant, media, message, and impact. The first element, the communicator, is the party that conveys the message. The second element is the communicant, the party being the target of the communicator or the party receiving the message from the communicator. Next is the message, which is the information that the communicator wants to convey to the communicant. The fourth element is the media, which is a means or channel in the delivery of the message. The fifth element is impact, namely the reaction of the communication, which is the result of the delivery of the message to the communicant.

Referring to Lasswell (1948), there are three functions of the communication process in society. The first function is surveillance of the environment, which is to reveal threats and opportunities that have an impact on the value of the position of the community and the components that are part of it. The second function is the correlation of components of society in creating a response to the environment. The third function is the transmission of social inheritance. Lasswell also believes that the communication process exhibits special

characteristics when the ruling layer is confronted with fear of the internal and external environment. While measuring the efficiency of communication in a particular context, it is necessary to pay attention to the value at stake and the identity of the group whose position is being investigated.

Broadly speaking, as a process of the interaction and exchange of messages between two parties, communication involves communicators and communicants (Lasswell, 1948). In addition, there are media, messages, and the impact of the communication process (Lasswell, 1948). In this case, the traditional institution in Tanimbar acts as a communicator because it tries to convey a message to the communicant, namely the local Tanimbar community. The message to be conveyed by traditional institutions is formal legal rules regarding criminal actions. Meanwhile, the media that acts as a channel in delivering the message is the traditional order or local wisdom, namely *Duan Lolat*. Finally, communicators, such as Adat institutions, expect impacts in the form of the local community's understanding of the rule of law, and a reduction in crime rates.

The role of traditional institutions as communicators is also supported by the writings of Usmany (2005), and Rangkorat (2018). Usmany (2005) states that the existence of *Duan Lolat* is supported and respected by the community because for them, Adat is a control that regulates shared life. Rangkorat (2018) also mentions that customary rules in Tanimbar are still more dominant than priority in positive law, so that problems that have been resolved through Adat are no longer processed through national law. The two writings show that through the *Duan Lolat* and Adat order, Adat institutions have conveyed messages about formal legal rules to local Tanimbar communities. Furthermore, Adat institutions succeed in becoming communicators because they are respected and supported by local communities.

In the second role, Adat institutions as mediators, the authors base this argument on the basic framework of mediation according to Moore (1995), and Kovach (1994 in Nurbiati, 2008), and the role of mediators according to Lovenheim and Guerin (2004), as well as looking at findings in the field related to the practice of *Duan Lolat* and other roles played by traditional institutions in Tanimbar.

Etymologically, mediation comes from the Latin word, *mediare*, which means solving problems with an intermediary or mediator. The third party in mediation only acts as an intermediary and does not have the power to produce binding decisions (Anisa, 2015). In the next definition, according to Moore (in Nurbaiti, 2008), mediation is a negotiation process intervened by a third party. However, third parties are not authorised to make decisions because they only have the role of helping parties to the conflict to agree with the outcome. Finally, according to Kovach's definition (in Nurbaiti 2008), mediation is a facilitated negotiation and is a process in which a third party seeks to ensure that the parties to the

conflict achieve satisfaction of the conflict resolution achieved. The negotiations were facilitated with the help of mediators, so that each party got the desired results. Therefore, mediation can be defined as a negotiation process involving a third party with the aim that each party involved can more easily communicate and reach agreement in resolving conflicts.

Mediation is carried out to reduce tension in negotiations by involving third parties or mediators. Mediators have an important role in mediation. Mediators are intermediaries who are willing to mediate between the parties to the conflict. The mediator not only acts as a liaison for the conflicting parties, but also gives his thoughts in resolving the existing conflicts. The main objective of the involvement of mediators is to see the truth from the various perspectives of the parties involved and see the differences between the parties to the conflict (Lovenheim et al., 2004). Based on these objectives, the mediator's role is to help the conflicting parties to find the best solution, without blaming either party, and remaining neutral. Mediators are allowed to listen, provide persuasion and inspiration to work for agreement. However, in some cases, the mediator only acts as a conduit of information, and is not allowed to interfere in the form of giving advice.

There are several types of mediations that are often applied. According to Esser and Marriott (in Lewicki, 2012), there are three types of mediation, namely content mediation, issue identification, and positive framing of the issue. Content mediation is done by helping the parties involved to make trade-offs (Lewicki, 2012). The mediator seeks to help negotiators return to the essence of their own negotiations, namely to bargain by agreeing on a joint decision. Furthermore, issue identification is done by allowing each party to make prioritised issues (Lewicki, 2012). Through prioritising these issues, it is hoped that negotiators can prioritise the importance of problem solving, so that they can return to an awareness to immediately agree on a solution. Finally, the positive framing of the issue, which is mediation that focusses on the positive output expected by each party. Through this common view, it is hoped that negotiations will soon find a bright spot and reach an agreement.

In general, the role of Adat institutions as mediators is carried out during the negotiation process, in the effort to resolve social conflicts, especially *Duan Lolat*. As in the writings of Usmany (2005), traditional institutions represented by traditional leaders act as mediators in the middle of the mediation process within the framework of the *Duan Lolat* customary order. In addition, referring to interviews with Adaut Village elders, Adat institutions also play a role as mediators in the mediation process of other social conflicts, such as land or land ownership disputes. In that case, the traditional institution was assigned as a witness and held a hearing that brought together the two parties in the dispute.

The roles and tasks carried out by traditional institutions during the mediation process show the characteristics of the mediator is in accordance with the definitions previously described.

We see that, Adat institutions are the third parties involved, so that the conflicting parties can reach an agreement in resolving conflicts. More than that, the role of traditional institutions as witnesses is also in accordance with the objectives of the involvement of mediators according to Lovenheim and Guerin (2004). Namely, seeing the truth from the various perspectives of the parties involved, and seeing the differences between the conflicting parties. For example, in the case of land disputes, conflicts generally arise because there are parties who use land that has been managed by another party. As the principle of land ownership in Tanimbar is still based on ownership rights as a result of land use rights, the party that manages the land first will automatically become the owner of the land. In such cases, the Adat institution presents witnesses to review the location of the dispute and provide facts which are then presented during the trial. Meanwhile, in the case of resolving social conflicts through *Duan Lolat*, the Adat institution together with the duan's role, acts as a mediator that facilitates negotiations between the conflicting parties. The main objective of the negotiations is to find a bright spot and reach an agreement between the conflicting parties. Furthermore, the mediation process also aims to maintain the value of kinship in the Tanimbar community.

Conclusion

The Tanimbar Islands Regency is a 3T region (outermost, foremost, and backward). This region is directly adjacent to Australia. Aside from being a border area, this area will also be a centre for oil and gas exploration in the Masela block. As a result, in recent years, the demand for land in the Tanimbar District has increased for the purposes of the defence of border areas, and the development of oil and gas industry logistics. There are five villages affected by these two policies, namely Bomaki Village, Latdalam Village, Lermatang Village, Adaut Village, and Kandar Village. The land in these five villages has attracted investors and most of them have been sold for the needs of defence, and oil and gas exploration logistics. However, in the negotiation process, the sale of the land caused many conflicts among the local people. Based on the in-depth interviews we conducted with the respondents — who consisted of traditional leaders, village officials, and residents — we found that the high and low intensity of the conflict was determined by the role of the Adat institutions in each village. Customary institutions have a significant role because of the inherent legitimacy in them. Legitimacy is obtained because Adat institutions are in the village structure based on the Regulations of the Regent and the Decree of the Village Head; all *Soas* have representatives in Adat institutions. In resolving land conflicts, Adat institutions practise *Duan Lolat*. *Duan Lolat's* role in conflict resolution is supported by its function as a communicator and mediator that connects village communities, village officials, and investors.



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