

Land Information Working Group Newsletter

July - September 2020



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Important note:

The Land Law (Revised) No.70/NA dated on 21st June 2019 was promulgated; and has already published on Official Gazette on 12th August 2020.

LIWG Meeting and activities



LIWG core members meeting

On 24th August 2020, LIWG secretariat organized core meeting to present the achievements for the first semester of 2020 and updated the progress main activities of the network especially on advocacy work. Various topics were presented and shared in the meeting:

- Presentations about main findings from the comparative of the Land Law and the Forestry Law commissioned by LIWG. This document was to explain the differences between the new Land Law and Forestry Law and their predecessor laws, namely the Land Law 2003 and the Forestry Law 2007 respectively, noting both their improvements and shortcomings. Key findings of this comparative report are:
 - ◇ Customary Land Use Rights should be addressed in the Forestry Law
 - ◇ Recognition of Customary Land Use Rights are only for individual use
 - ◇ Compensation and grievances mechanisms provisions should be more detailed
 - ◇ Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) should be present throughout both laws
 - ◇ Decision-making processes for leases and concessions of forest land should be more inclusive of communities
 - ◇ Gender provisions should be included in both laws
- Update about LIFE project for their coaching to partners on land issues and their upcoming plan for more trainings to CSOs and partners in Laos
- The LIWG secretariat presented about the main findings about the study's report on Women Land Rights in Laos. The main findings have already shared during a LIWG workshop right after the research field work. The launching of the report will be organized in October 2020.
- Good practices on the use of the Legal Calendar by LWF to raise awareness on laws about land and natural resources to communities.

The 2021 Legal Calendar development is on the process

After the first meeting in early June, the LIWG secretariat and taskforce organized numbers of meeting to continue the process of development. These meetings were very intended focusing on topics identification based on the experiences and lesson learn shared in the first meeting. From working together among taskforce members, 6 topics were identified, they are: 1) Land registration and Land titling; 2) People's participation in land lease and concession; 3) Procedure of Land Dispute Settlement; 4) Protection of conservation forests and participatory allocation of village production forests; 5) Protection and sustainable use of forest products; and 6) Impacts of chemical use in agriculture and reduction methods.

All content is now finalized both sides from taskforce members, core members of LIWG and government partners. Currently, we are waiting for approval from relevant government sectors for printing out. This process is expected to be finalized in next quarter before launching event.

Our current and previous legal calendars are also available online, visit to learn more at: <https://laolandinfo.org/category/resource/legal-calendar/>



Presentation of LWR at Lao CSO meeting

Women and Land Rights in Lao PDR:

Rural Transformation and a Dream of Secure Land Tenure



On 4th September 2020, LIWG secretariat was invited to present about our recent study on Women Land Right in Laos at the Civil Society Working Group (CSWG) meeting organized in Vientiane. In the meeting, on behalf of secretariat, LIWG International Coordinator presented main findings from study to participants in order to share the results to wide audiences to get feedback and recommendations. From the presentation, participants commented that organizations or projects should be better mainstreamed gender aspects into their projects on land tenure.

The study is now available on

Our website at: <https://bit.ly/2IFHAEJ>

Our Facebook at: <https://bit.ly/3plbhpY>

Working Group/Taskforce



Land Law Advisory Group

During this quarter, members of Land Law Advisory Group met often to discuss about key findings of the comparative analysis report on the Land and Forestry Law in order to develop further communication tools.

Land Sub Sector Working Group meeting

After lots of coordination works and effort, finally the Land Sub Sector Working Group (LSSWG) meeting was organized on 16th September 2020 and Helvetas Laos on behalf of LIWG was also a co-chaired of this meeting. Representatives from government sectors, civil society organizations, international organizations, development partners and individual international experts joined this meeting.

This meeting was organized to share updates on changes in the newly amended Land Law (2019); report on the implementation of the past work of each subgroup; and discuss, exchange and determine the future implementation of the land sub-sector. In the discussion about those topics, participants also discussed about the future plan of the LSSWG.

This meeting was also organized the panel discussion and exchange via video call from the World Bank and KfW on the land title registration project in Lao PDR.

Important note:

The Land Law (Revised) No.70/NA dated on 21st June 2019 was promulgated; and has already published on Official Gazette on 12th August 2020. The law is available to download from the link below:

- Lao version: <https://bit.ly/3kTfowD>
- (Unofficial) English translation by LIWG & GIZ Land program: <https://bit.ly/330jNJH>

LIWG's Initiatives and members



LIFE Project

LIFE coaching for partners

From July - September 2020, LIFE team organized numbers of coaching for partners both civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and development partners in many provinces such as MRLG project and Department of Lands of MONRE, GIZ Laos, APEDC, MCC Laos, CCL, World Renew, CDEA.

Most of these coaching topics cover areas of customary land right and conflict resolution; basic rights of Lao citizens on Land; training methodologies on Natural Resource Management; and contract farming. After each coaching, participants and LIFE team did the pilot activities in the village levels by applying skills, methodologies and information from the training to deliver to villagers. In each pilot village, local officials and organization staffs led the activities.

The coaching methodology of LIFE project is unique and very practical in implementing, especially in the communities.

Learn more about LIFE project at: <https://laolandinfo.org/category/life/>



Empowering ethnic youths to become agents of change in protecting land rights in their communities

ToT on legal dissemination & role play

To prepare for the second activity in the village, the training on law dissemination and role plays was organized before youth groups going to implement activity in their villages. Beside 10 youths who joined the project, their friends from village that would help them in implementing activities also joined the training.

The training included how to disseminate laws to communities with different approaches such as games, video and role plays to ensure that local people could participate and learn about laws more effectively.

After this training, 10 youths and their friends led activities in their own villages by applying methods, lesson and approaches from training.

The training was led by [LIFE](#) and [Stella](#).

See more about this training at: <https://bit.ly/3jCpJeP>



Youth's activities in communities

In September, after the training, 10 youths together with their friends organized activities to disseminate laws and legal information related to land and natural resource protection in the villages where they are from.

The outreach activity in 10 villages from 5 provinces in Laos is one of highlight of project after one year implementing the project. All processes were prepared and led by youth themselves.

Villagers who joined activities with these young folks praised their active involvement on natural resources in the village.

See more about this activity at: <https://bit.ly/37MHSnV>



“I have never joined the activity like this before. I really like this **learning approach** and it's very useful for our village”

a village committee of Vangparn village, Phonthong district, Lungprabang

Mekong Regional Land Governance (MRLG)

From 22-24 September 2020, [MRLG](https://www.mrlg.org) organized the workshop on Customary Tenure Recognition Workstream Reflection in Xiengkhuang province. This workshop was to look at the project progress implementation and initiate initial discussion to ensure that the lessons from pilot implementation inform policy development.

In the workshop, findings of the comparative analysis on Land law and Forestry Law was presented by the LIWG International Coordinator.

See more about this at: <https://bit.ly/2TduGQv>



This workshop also organized a field visit to the pilot sites, Ban Yai, Phoukoud district to learn about the recognition of customary tenure of local people in agricultural and forest lands in this pilot village. Learn more about this field trip at: <https://bit.ly/35mriZ1>

Learn more about the work of MRLG at: www.mrlg.org



LIWG blog's stories



Natural Disaster Response

Natural Disaster Response is a topic of legal calendar in the months of July – August 2020. This topic was developed base on Law on Environment Protection No. 29/NA, dated 18 Dec 2012. We presented this topic in the Legal Calendar because we hope that this could be a tool to disseminate laws related to concerned to prevent and mitigate when the disaster happens.

Read more from our post: <https://bit.ly/2FNBuky>

Eligibility for compensation for resettled people

This topic was a legal calendar topic of September – October 2020. This topic bases on Law on Resettlement and Vocation No. 45/NA, dated 15th June 2018 which specifically on article 22 Compensation for damage caused by resettlement for resettlement of general type and the compensation for special type of resettlement that follows 14 steps based on the law.

Read more from our post at: <https://bit.ly/3dPZgc8>



Quick Facts: Women in Agriculture

Women are important contributors to food production, but they need more support. Supporting women farmers can help them increase yield and feed more people.

Read more from our post: <https://bit.ly/3ipJWEf>





What in the news!

Revised (land) law allows foreign nationals to own condominiums

Under Article 132 of the law, foreigners can now purchase and own condominiums in Laos. Officials from the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the government's decision to allow foreigners to own condominiums will be a major boost to the real estate market, especially Chinese investors.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/2Gch98J>

Govt partners with hi-tech company in land surveys

Through this cooperation, modern technical systems will be used for land surveys and mapping to streamline land registration and issuing of land title deeds. The two parties will develop and utilise a modern land valuation system, and make project proposals for assistance from and in cooperation with China.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/36cTD6h>

Govt grants land concessions to Burapha for 2,000 hectares

The granted land is classified as 'unused' land in the National Production Forest Areas in Vientiane province for a 50-year concessional period for industrial plantation. This is the first step of Burapha's 60,000 hectares expansion plan.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/3ohCsXS>

Vientiane Capital Mayor addressed about land issues in Vientiane Capital

Mr Sinlavong Khoutphaythoune, Vientiane Capital Mayor presented about the assessment on land issues at the 9th Ordinary Session of the 1st Legislature of Vientiane Capital's People Assembly on 17th July 2020.

Watch video at: <https://bit.ly/2Pw5T8x>

The outcome of UPR to the government of Lao PDR formally endorses

The United Nations Human Rights Council formally endorsed the Outcome Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Lao PDR on Monday, 28 September 2020. There are 226 recommendations to Lao government made in this outcome report. Among those recommendations, there are 4 recommendations to land matters.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/3jBrXer>

Upcoming activities (October – December 2020)

- LIWG core members meeting
- CSOs and officials sharing lesson learnt on land issues and natural resources
- Women Land Rights in Laos study launching event
- Legal Calendar 2021 launching event
- Youth Sharing Experiences Workshop on Empowering ethnic youth to become agents of change in protecting land rights in their communities
- LIFE coaching for partners on land rights and natural resources protection



Thank you, we hope you enjoy reading!

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