



Newsletter

Land Information Working Group



Majority of landownerships in the development project area belong to individuals. When development projects will take place, prior compensation for the loss of land, houses, etc. to affected people are necessities before starting the projects. It is important to ensure the fairness to affected people. If projects have not had budget to cover compensation to affected people in the project area, they should be allowed to continue to live or do the cultivation there. For this case, project owner should not take the land without a certain timeline.



Mr. Bounpone Sisoulath, Chairperson of Standing Committee of the Economic, technology and Environment Committee of the National Assembly stated in the 10th Ordinary Session of the 8th Legislature of NA, on 3rd November 2020. Read [more](#).

Inside This Issue

LIWG meeting and activities

Meetings and activities organized by secretariat during this quarter especially on study/research sharing

LIWG's Initiative and members

Key activities from LIFE project and partners for the promotion work on customary land rights

Blog stories

Stories and recommended readings on natural resources

What in the news!

Highlights news on land and natural resource issues in Laos

Upcoming activities

Upcoming activities of LIWG and its initiative and members

LIWG Meeting and activities



Legal Calendar 2021 launching event

On 4th December 2020, LIWG secretariat together with taskforces organized the Legal Calendar 2021 launching event at Faculty of Architecture, National University of Laos.

This launching event aimed to present the topic of legal calendar 2021 to public to understand better for the meaning of each topic and how those topics link to laws related to land and natural resources in Laos. In this event this year, the taskforce members also presented the process of development legal calendar to audiences and share experiences on the use of legal calendar in the community levels.

For this year's launching event, there were representatives from different faculties from NOUL, government partners, Civil Society organizations (who are LIWG members) and partners attended this event.

- 7 topics are presented in the legal calendar 2021:
 - ◇ Customary land rights
 - ◇ Land registration and land titling
 - ◇ Participatory in land lease and land concession
 - ◇ Land conflict resolution
 - ◇ Participatory Conservation Forest protection and Management
 - ◇ Protection and sustainable use of forest products
 - ◇ The impacts from the chemical use and reduction mitigation
- See photos of this event at: <http://bit.ly/3hqxxAA> or watch this event by Lao National TV at: <http://bit.ly/3aNpwEJ>
- The Legal Calendar 2021 is also available on our website at: <https://bit.ly/392UOoA>



Women Land Rights Study in Laos launching event

To present the result of study on Women Land Rights in Laos, LIWG secretariat organized the launching event on 14th October 2020 in Vientiane. The event was co-chaired between LIWG and Faculty of Laws and Politics, National University of Laos.

There were many guests from different organizations from government partners in the central and local levels, National University of Laos and LIWG members attended this event.

This event did not just to present the result from this study to participants, but there were also sharing experiences from local government about their raising awareness works on women and land rights in local levels as well as the challenging each face.

See more about this event at:

<http://bit.ly/38g06vT>



Interactive learning and sharing lesson on land, forest, natural resources



To create the space for staffs from CSOs and INGOs and officials to learn and share the lessons learnt and improve the cooperation for more effective of work outcomes on land and natural resources in Laos, on 12th November 2020 LIWG secretariat organized the yearly interactive learning and sharing lesson on land, forest, natural resources and environment in Vientiane.

The presentation from Department of Land on the land law dissemination and the development of sub-legislation was the highlight of the discussion, especially on the plan to disseminate and how to ensure people can access to land law in the understandable way that can help to protect their rights over their land.

In addition, there was also the sharing on the study report on the impact of Covid-19 to agriculture and food security as well as the introduction topics of Legal calendar 2021 to participants in this session.

There were representatives from government partners and LIWG members organizations joined this event to share and had discussion on topics presented in this sharing session to collect idea for further work, partnership towards contribution to the more sustainable socio-economic development.

LIWG Core members meeting

On 13th November 2020, LIWG secretariat organized core meeting to share the key achievement and update the process of network's work as well as up-coming activities.

In the meeting, LIFE, Stella, CLE and LIWG secretariat together with youths who joined project shared the result of Voice project on Empowering ethnic youths to become agents of change in protecting land rights in their communities to LIWG members and partners (More about this please continue to read in the session below in the LIFE project).

Highlight topics were also presented and shared in the meeting. A presentation of LIWG Reserve Fund presented by committee to members aiming to strengthen the sustainability of the secretariat. In this meeting, the chair also invited members who are able to contribute towards this reserve fund to coordinate with secretariat. This is the continuous topic and it will continue to be discussed about this with members.

The meeting also had a sharing from LIWG committee about world bank project on project of Public Information and Awareness Services for Vulnerable Communities in Lao PDR. This project is under discussion and secretariat will announce to members after the final process.

To understand more about gender in the area of natural resources, LIWG secretariat invited its member, [SODA](#), a NPA, to share the keys findings of their gender study to participants in the meeting.

From sharing from SODA and the study on women right lands that LIWG commissioned, the group discussion was organized in the meeting to continue discussion about member's works on gender issues and to share challenging each face, especially in the remote areas. This discussion was important for members to learn from each other about experiences and providing suggestion to each other to address the challenging regarding to gender issues.



The good practice: Legal Calendar as the learning tool on land and natural resources

To capture the good practices of the LIWG on land rights advocacy and learning to share with [Bread for the World](#) (BftW)'s partner organizations from Southeast Asia and the Pacific, LIWG secretariat in supported by its members to produce video on the use of Legal Calendar as a good case study of LIWG and it's funded by BftW.

The video is in the final process and will be shared also to LIWG members and partners.

LIWG's Initiatives and members



LIFE Project

LIFE coaching for partners

From October - December 2020, LIFE team continued to organize numbers of coaching to its partners both civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and development partners such as GIZ Laos, Cord Laos, Department of Lands of MONRE, DALaM of MAF and provincial and district counterparts.

The coaching included advanced and basic curriculums which covering areas of recognizing of customary land tenure and communal land titling; basic rights of Lao citizens on Land and land conflict resolution.

After each coaching, participants in the coaching did pilot activities in target villages and they applied skills, methodologies and information from the coaching to deliver to villagers. In each pilot village, local officials and organization staffs led activities.

From reflection of the coaching, LIFE sees that most of participants are very active and they can learn to use methodologies effectively especially, women who could lead and explain content of each topic to villagers very well. One of the highlight from coaching was that the pilot activities in the villages were run by ethnic languages such as Khmu, Pong and Hmong and this is very important to ensure that local people understand laws in their own languages.

Learn more about methodology of LIFE coaching at: <http://bit.ly/35cDEUm>

Voice Project: Youth Sharing Experiences Workshop on Empowering ethnic youths to become agents of change in protecting land rights in their communities

To create the opportunity for youths who joined the project to share experiences and the result from the project implementation, LIFE, LIWG, Stella and CLE organized the sharing experience workshop on Empowering ethnic youths to become agents of change in protecting land rights in their communities to LIWG members and teachers and students at Faculty of Laws and Politics to learn about their involvement in the project after one year-implemented project.

On 12th November 2020, youths shared experience with more than 150 students and professors from Faculty of Law and Politics, CLE in Vientiane and Champasack and other related faculties from National University of Laos. There were many interesting tools prepared by youths to demonstrate in this event including: heart head hand (tool for facilitation), River Of, games and role plays to explain about issues and laws. In this event, youth performed two role plays related to the situation in their villages namely: land grabbing and health issue because of using chemical in agricultural activities.



On 13th November 2020, the event was organized to share the result of the project LIWG members, partners, and donors. This sharing event was organized in the interactive way which participants could talk and discuss closely with youths who joined the project. In the panel discussion, representatives from organizations and youths who involved in this project discussed and answer questions from participants, especially about the lesson learn and the future plan of youths that they would like to continue their efforts to be part in improving the environment in their communities to be better.

A lot of university students expressed their interests in participating in this project if there is next phase. In addition, there is also a strong expression from professors that they are interested in supporting their students to such opportunities.



Participants praised for the achievement from implementing this project, especially to youths who could lead activities in their communities very well and get positive feedback from their own communities.

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

From result of the project, we have learn that youths developed themselves a lot in term of their capacities and understanding of issues that communities are facing related to degraded natural resources. This proves that they are ready to be part of change and willing to make their communities better.



“To be part of this project, it did not only improve my capacities, but also creating the learning opportunity within my community about land and natural resources in my hometown.”

Saimai Chanthalasy, one of youth participants of the project

Even it came to an end of this project, but we hope that this youth group will continue their efforts to create positive changes in their communities one day.

This project would not be possible if no support from generous donor, [Voice Laos](#), who always understands and believes in the power of youths to make a better change.



Training of Trainer to LIWG members for the use of Legal Calendar 2021

To strengthen the capacities of LIWG members on the use of Legal Calendar, LIFE and LIWG secretariat organized the Training of Trainers to LIWG members and partners, who are CSOs and government representatives from 30th November – 1st December 2020.

This is the first training for LIWG members and partners to build the capacity for the use of Legal Calendar and so that they could do raising awareness activities effectively in community level.



“I have learnt many interactive methodologies from this training that I could apply for disseminating legal calendar in the community. It also helps us to have a better plan on legal calendar dissemination.”

LWF staff, Legal Calendar 2021 Training of Trainer

This training based on new topics of legal calendar 2021 and led by LIFE team to provide the methodology on how to disseminate legal calendar to communities in the effective way and learn to apply interactive tools into legal calendar dissemination such as using posters, video and role play to explain content of topics of legal calendar to villagers.

See more about this training at: <http://bit.ly/39a7Bph>

Japan International Volunteer Center Laos (JVC Laos)

On 25th December 2020, Japan International Volunteer Center Laos (JVC Laos) organized Legal Calendar 2021 Launching Meeting in Savannakhet province.

The event aimed to present all topics from the legal calendar 2021 to JVC Laos counterparts before they can disseminate to communities and local authorities.

After this event, JVC Laos together with its counterparts will disseminate legal calendar 2021 to district levels and communities in their target areas in Savannakhet province.

JVC Laos is one of LIWG member who is active and very engaged in using legal calendar as the tool to raise awareness and disseminating legal information to local communities since the beginning of the legal calendar development.

See more about this event at: <http://bit.ly/2Xga2Bi>



Blog's stories and Recommended readings



Blog Stories

Liability of investors for work accidents and chemical pollution

In the legal calendar of November - December 2020, we present the topic on Liability of investors for work accidents and chemical pollution. 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: <http://bit.ly/3951tP9>



Land discussion: How state land are managed and used?

Land issue is always to highlight topic discuss in the society and in the national assembly session. We have seen that each session, land issue is one of highlight discussion that public raised concern and questions regarding to land issues happening in the wide country. Especially, granting state land for development projects that causing loss of land and impacts to local livelihoods.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/3q47SlS>



Recommended Readings

Briefing Note

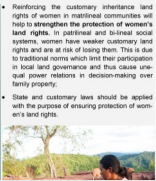
December 2020



Women's Land Rights Study in Laos

Key Messages

- Women's land rights are closely linked to customary gender-based power systems.
- However, these rights are also subject to change due to many local and external factors.
- In all the research villages, women had less access to and control over land. This is part of the phenomenon of de-agrarianization and de-feminization in agriculture, triggered by policies fostering monoculture farming and transfer of land to investors. This has caused a reduction in land and forest being used for animal raising, livestock, and collection of non-timber forest products, all of which results in food insecurity.
- The socio-cultural changes in agrarian transformation, like the division of labour, threaten women's land rights with increasing gender inequality, loss of socio-cultural identity, and rising inter-generational conflicts.



Women and Land Rights in Lao PDR: Rural Transformation and a dream of secure tenure

It's a recent study commissioned by LIWG and supported by Bread for the World and CARE International in Laos. Download this full report at: <https://bit.ly/2IFHAEJ>

We also produced the briefing note of this report as the summary of this report which highlights key messages and important topics from the report. Download this briefing note at: <http://bit.ly/38eYbsb>

LAND LEASES AND CONCESSIONS IN THE LAO PDR

A CHARACTERIZATION OF INVESTMENTS IN LAND AND THEIR IMPACTS
Based on field data of 2014-2017



Land Lease and Concessions in the Lao PDR: A Characterization of investments in land and their impacts

This report is based on field data of 2014 - 2017. It is published by Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern, Switzerland.

The report can be downloaded at: <http://www.decide.la/en/publications>

Atlases of Land Cover and Participatory Land Use Plan in three provinces: Champasak, Attapeu and Sekong,

These atlases are compilations of the village land-use maps contained in the PLUPs (Participatory Land Use Planning), and the corresponding land-cover map for each target village in these three provinces. This report was published by Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Project.

Download this publication at: <http://bit.ly/392lsy1>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS IN LAO PDR: WHY IT MATTERS

Agriculture and rural development are two of the available driving forces best suited to eliminating hunger and poverty sustainably and mitigating the negative socio-economic effects of climate change. However, agriculture is contributing only 10 percent of the country's GDP due to factors including low productivity and lack of modernization, among other issues. To ensure both private and public investments are needed to raise agricultural productivity and incomes, particularly in rural areas. In Lao PDR, additional investments of USD 45 million per year are needed to achieve the target for SDG 2 by 2030, of which 34 million should specifically target agriculture.

What are better investments?
A responsible investment in agriculture and food systems contributes to sustainable development, enhances food security and nutrition, promotes more productive, sustainable and inclusive food

COVID-19 impacts on the agriculture sector of Lao PDR: More reason for responsible investments
In Lao PDR, the pandemic's impacts on public health have been rather limited at the time of publishing. This notwithstanding, the country has been particularly affected by socio-economic impacts on domestic and regional supply chains collapse, and with these household incomes and consumer demand. The tourism industry and the service sector have been hit the worst, with high economic losses, a rise in the unemployment rate (surging from an average of 2 percent to 21 percent), and a declining economic growth projection in 2020. This could potentially push 214,000 people deeper or back into poverty, with additional challenges to the achievement of SDG 1 (End poverty in all forms everywhere) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food System in Laos: Why it matters

This publication is developed by FAO. These are guidelines to promote investment in food, agriculture, and forestry in the ASEAN region that contributes to multi-faceted development in the regions.

Download this at: <http://bit.ly/3hKlZCl>



A guideline on Assisted Natural Regeneration

This guideline is developed by Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Project to provide steps, methods, and procedures to carry out the Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) activities.

Download at: <http://bit.ly/35fcQD4>

What in the news!

The government approves the sale of land along either side of the 450 Years Road in Vientiane

93 plots of land within 50 meters along both sides of the 450 Years Road, will be sold off at market rates with the aim of raising funds to repay the Bank of the Lao PDR for the road's construction.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3mLVdB1> and [here](#)

Authorities discover concessions granted on state land in four provinces without evidence of formal agreements

According to a report by Mr. Bounthong Chitmany, the inspection authority found state land had been leased on behalf of the government in Phongsaly of 112 projects, 13 projects were uncovered that had duplicate names. In Luang Prabang of 24 projects, only 23 projects were officially registered. In Sekong, it discovered three projects without an official concession. And in Attapeu, 11 projects operated without proper concessions.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/325Vozc> and [here](#)

The government gives licenses for mining exploration in the area around 7 million hectares, covering of 30.75% of country's area

Since 1990, Laos has opened the door for foreigner companies to invest in the mining sector. To date, 214 companies have been given exploration contracts by Lao government. With that, 21 companies are under prospecting, 70 companies are in the process of exploration, 43 companies are under feasibility studies; and 80 companies are operating and extracting.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/3ojbFKr>

A new urban development master plan covering area of 61,600 hectares in Vientiane Capital, the third master plan

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>

Lao government gave green light for 31 dam projects in Saysomboun province

Of the 31 projects, 14 projects were approved by central level and 17 projects were approved by provincial level of Saysomboun province. Within these projects, 8 projects are already completed and the rest are still under construction and feasibility studies.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/38ibk56>



Upcoming activities (January – March 2021)

- LIWG Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Land Sub-Sector Working Group Meeting
- Women's customary land tenure study
- Legal Calendar 2021 distribution and booklet on the use of Legal Calendar 2021
- LIFE coaching on land rights and natural resources for partners
- Training on the use of Legal Calendar 2021 in provinces for LIWG members



Thank you for reading our newsletters. We wish you a New Year 2021 full of optimism, joy, happiness and luck!

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