



October to December

Newsletter

Land Information Working Group

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LIWG Meetings and Activities



Legal Calendar 2022 launching event

After several meetings of the legal calendar taskforce consisting of LIWG members and counterparts and with comments and suggestions from members, the legal calendar 2022 development process was finally completed and the calendar was launched on 8th December 2021. This is the 13th year since it started in 2010. For the year 2022, the main topics are 1) Acquisition of customary land use rights; 2) Dissemination of information about development projects to communities in the form of free, prior and informed consent; 3) Public participation in leases or concessions of state land; 4) Impacts of climate change and risk reduction; 5) Gender Equality in Agriculture, Forest and Environmental Protection; 6) Agricultural contracts and 7) Land Inheritance.

Guests, partners and members joined the event and shared their views of this new legal calendar, especially to continue the effort to ensure the effectiveness of its use in the practice in the community level. See photos of this event [HERE](#).

"The legal calendar is a very suitable tool and many people can access and get the important legal information on land and natural resources", Mr. Anothai Chanthasay Deputy Director General of Department of Lands – MONRE emphasized the importance of the legal calendar.

The event was also broadcasted on Lao TV program. Please click [HERE](#) to watch.

The legal calendar of the year 2022 is now available to download on **our website**.

Throughout the year, members, partners and counterparts will disseminate and distribute the 2022 legal calendar in different parts of Laos.

Follow us on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) to get regular updates on the Legal Calendar contents and activities

Interactive sharing and learning session between Lao CSOs on natural resources and environment



The yearly "Interactive sharing and learning session between Lao CSOs and Lao staff from INGOs on Land, Forest, Natural resources and Environment" of 2021 was organized on 7th December 2021 as a hybrid meeting and via online platform. This sharing event was to create an opportunity for all CSOs and Lao staff of INGOs to have a space for interactive sharing of lessons learnt, and to help improve communication, networking and cooperation for more effective work outcomes.

Many interesting topics were presented at the meeting:

- LIWG secretariat updated the work of LIWG as well as the upcoming activities and projects
- KCDA shared their experiences on Strengthening the Village committee on land and forest under the SPIRIT project supported by CORD Laos
- Promoting Responsible Governance of Investments in Land in Laos by GIZ Laos
- A brief update was given on the new developed Legal Calendar 2022 and the feedback from the use of the previous Legal Calendar in community level.
- LIFE project team updated their new coaching curricula on communal land, responsible investment, women rights on natural resources and conflict resolution (related to land).

All participants shared that this event was a good space for member's organizations to share experiences and lessons learnt which can create the opportunity for members to work together in some areas.

This event is organized yearly to provide the space for members to share lesson learnt and collaborated among members.

Community of Practice on Women Land Rights activities

We shared an update on the objectives and the workplan of the CoP in our previous E-Newsletter. During the last 3 months, the following key activities were implemented:

Training of Facilitator: Demonstration and planning for pilot activity

From October – November 2021, CoP members regularly met to update the works especially on the first draft of facilitation guide on Women Land Rights. The workshop to test the tools was organized on 26th November 2021. Members and LIWG secretariat joined the workshop to demonstrate the tool including three main activities: 1) Sharing a story on land; 2) Card activity on gender and land; and 3) law dissemination.

This workshop was important to test the tool and reflect on the process before applying in the communities. It was also to ensure the readiness of CoP members to facilitate the activities at the community level.

Presentation of the findings of the Women Land Rights studies in a regional dialogue

Women land rights organized by Bread for the World

On the 7th October 2021, LIWG was invited at a regional event organized by Bread for the World to present the findings of the 2 cases study conducted on Women Land Rights by the network and how it has also influenced the work of LIWG.

Pilot activity in target villages of Xay district, Oudomxay province



Following the training on the use of the facilitation guide on Women Land Rights among CoP members, the LIWG secretariat, together with members, piloted the awareness raising tools in two project-target villages of Oxfam Laos (LIWG member): Phonhom and Nachang villages, Xay District, Oudomxay Province from 13th to 17th of December 2021.

The facilitation guide on Women Land Rights proved to be a user-friendly guide and suitable for work at community level. Most of the activities conducted focused on participation for both men and women through the card activity, sharing story and laws related dissemination.

Villagers who joined the activities shared that it was very important for their community to understand better on gender equality regarding natural resource management, especially on land use rights. Many villagers shared that this activity helped them to be aware and see clearly the linkage between gender equality for equal use and resource management related to land tenure.



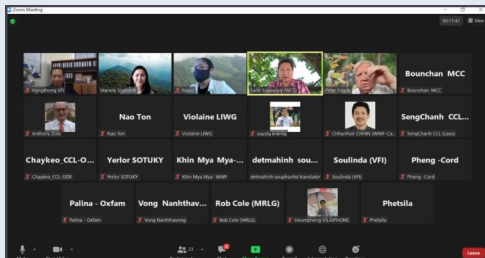
The second piloting will be conducted in the beginning of 2022 in the LIWG member's project area in Southern province. See more photos of the pilot activity [HERE](#).

As mentioned in the previous E-Newsletter issue, this CoP is to encourage and complement members' work on land and women by working together among LIWG secretariat and representatives of LIWG members to develop tools to raise awareness on women's land tenure in target villages where members of this CoP are based. After the pilot activities, the tools, including the facilitation guide and the animated videos, will be made available for all LIWG members to adapt and use them in their project areas.

More updates about the tools and stories from the fields will be shared in our next E-Newsletter issue.

Now you can read our story of change of women land rights in Oudomxay province [HERE](#).

Study session on Guidelines on Responsible Agricultural investments in Laos



To update LIWG's members work on Responsible Agricultural Investments (RAI) in Laos, the secretariat organized a virtual study session on the RAI guidelines in Laos on 30th November 2021. At this session, two member's organizations presented their

newly developed guides promoting RAI in Laos.

- The first guide was presented by Village Focus International (VFI) on **Guide on Responsible Agriculture and Forestry Investment in Lao PDR** (a case study for Chinese Investors). It aims to provide principles and implementing methods to promote responsible investment in the agriculture and forestry sector in Lao PDR. The guide was developed by the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), VFI and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in Laos. The guide is available in three languages: Lao, English and Chinese which can be downloaded [HERE](#).
- The second guide was presented by Oxfam Laos on **Guidance for Sustainable Rubber** which aims to promote responsible policy and sustainable practices and reinforce the implementation of relevant guidelines on the Responsible Rubber Investment Practices in Laos. This is a voluntary guideline which it is currently being piloted by OXFAM through the engagement with rubber companies via the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Oudomxay province. For this guidance, Oxfam adapted the guidelines to the Lao context, initially developed by the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals and Chemicals and Vietnam Rubber Group. The aim is to publish this Guide by the middle of the year 2022.
- From sharing these two guidelines, participants all said that these were good tools to engage with the private sector to encourage them to be more responsible related to their investments. However, it's still needed to see how effective of these guidelines in the implementation, especially regarding the enforcement to ensure that these guidelines can be applied by all investors in Laos.

Development of briefing notes to the Land Law and the Forestry Law:

Following the recent assessment of the new Land Law and Forestry Law in Laos, LIWG together with the Advisory Group (mainly GIZ, FAO, MRLG, WCS, RECOFTC, WWF and some independent consultants) engaged in a process of development of 5 briefing notes. They are now available on our website:



- Safeguards in cases of loss or expropriation:** [ບົດສະຫຼຸບຫຍໍ້: ການ](#)

[ຮັບປະກັນໃນກໍລະນີເກີດມີການສູນເສຍທີ່ດິນ ຫຼື ການເວນຄືນ - LIWG \(laolandinfo.org\)](#)



- Customary Tenure Land Rights in Lao PDR:** [ບົດສະຫຼຸບຫຍໍ້: ສິດຄອບ](#)

[ຄອງທີ່ດິນຕາມປະເພນີ ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ - LIWG \(laolandinfo.org\)](#)



- Gender and Social Inclusion in respect of land:** [ບົດສະຫຼຸບຫຍໍ້: ການປຸກ](#)

[ຈິດສຳນຶກກ່ຽວກັບບົດບາດຍິງຊາຍ ແລະ ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງສັງຄົມຕ່ຳທີ່ດິນ - LIWG \(laolandinfo.org\)](#)



- Tenure Rights to Land for Collective Purposes:** [ບົດສະຫຼຸບຫຍໍ້: ສິດ](#)

[ຄອບຄອງທີ່ດິນເພື່ອຈຸດປະສົງລວມໝູ່ - LIWG \(laolandinfo.org\)](#)



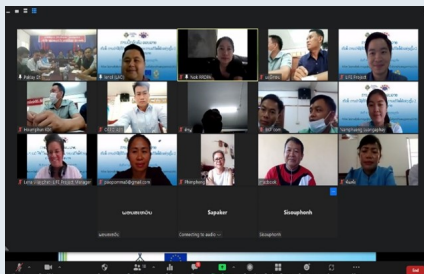
- Tenure Rights in State Forestland in Lao PDR:** [ບົດສະຫຼຸບຫຍໍ້: ສິດໃນ](#)

[ການຄອບຄອງທີ່ດິນເຂດພື້ນທີ່ປ່າ ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ - LIWG \(laolandinfo.org\)](#)

These briefing notes aim at informing the policy makers and development partners on the gaps and difficulties to implement the laws and provide some recommendations.

LIWG's initiative, members and partners

LIFE Project's Activities



Coaching to RRDPA in Sayaboury (Customary Land Rights and Responsible Agricultural Investment) and Training to 12 target villages in Phiang and Paklay District from October to December 2021 (under CARE Funding)

Under the 2021 Co-Funding from CARE, LIFE and RRPDA implemented a coaching series on contract farming and customary land rights in Sayaboury Province. 12 villages were targeted. The main problems were forest encroachment through contract farming, issues with the new dam in Paklay and unsustainable use of forest resources. Due to the on-going lockdown in Sayaboury, all trainings were implemented online. In December, RRDPA and LIFE were able to travel to Sayaboury and to support the government district staff to implement training at village level.

Coaching to partners both at in-person and online trainings

Training of Trainers on the use of the Legal Calendar 2022

In the course of the coaching, law dissemination in two villages in Yommalath district took place. This activity was co-funded by Bread for the World.

The Booklet on the use of the Legal Calendar 2022 is now available to download [HERE](#)

CCL on World Food day 2021: Our action for the future

According to World Bank report (2020), in Lao PDR, 5% of the total population is suffering from malnutrition. Children under 5 and women are the most affected groups, especially within the ethnic minorities in the Northern uplands: 40% of the children under 5 are stunted, only 10% of the women meet their minimum daily diet needs (Lao Social Survey 2017).

For 40 years, CCL has supported the population in Northern Lao for a better and sustainable food security through several interventions: nutrition campaigns in the villages; agriculture support for food production, agro-ecology practices; water sanitation and hygiene; livelihoods and value chain development.

Today, CCL supports over 15 000 smallholder farmer families in Northern Lao.

Read more: <https://ccl-laos.org/story/world-food-day-2021/>

VFI: Webinar on improving customary land tenure for smallholder farmers in Laos

To present the experiences and outcomes from the Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR) project in Laos, VFI organized a webinar session virtually on 18th November 2021 on Improving customary land tenure for smallholder farmers in Laos: application of fit-for-purpose and gender responsive land tools and approaches.

In the session, there was also sharing from different partners on their experience on customary land tenure recordation in Laos.

Four topics were presented in the session:

- The SALaR interventions and outcomes in customary land in Laos
- The development and implementation of Forest Management Plan in the same target areas of SALaR project
- The sharing of the Customary tenure Pilot in Khammouane Province
- The presentation on customary land tenure recordation

Partners, government representatives from department of Land as well as LIWG members joined the session.

Several materials and publications were produced documenting the achievements of the project in each country (including in Laos) and these materials can be accessed online from [UN Habitat](#) and [VFI](#) websites.

Sub-Sector Working Group

Sub-Legislation Focal Group Meeting under LSSWG

In accordance with the mandates of the Land Survey and Land Allocation Division and to respond to the requirements of the land management work in the new era, the Division has developed a draft ministerial instruction on land conversion. To ensure the comprehensiveness and relevance of the content of the legislation, the Division organized a consultation meeting on the draft legislation under the framework of the Land Sub-Sector Working Group (LSSWG) on the 3rd November 2021.

At the meeting, there was a presentation of the draft instruction on Land Conversion and technical discussion to gather comments from development partners and other relevant stakeholders. The Division also introduced a concept of a case study on land conversion in Sisattanak District, Vientiane Capital.

All the key points/actions, especially the update on the draft instruction, will be included in the minutes of the meeting which will be shared soon with all LIWG members.

Recommended publications and knowledge websites

Contract farming in Laos: Responding to a rising agricultural trend

This discussion note on “Contract farming in Laos: Responding to a rising agricultural trend” by Mekong Regional Land Governance Project (MRLG) explores common practices of contract farming in Laos, which have rapidly expanded for export crops across many provinces since the early 2000s. The analysis highlights benefits and challenges of contract farming from the perspectives of farmers, investors and government agencies, to support sub-legislation aimed at reducing risks and improving the outcomes for farmers and investors.

The discussion is available for download on the MRLG website:

For English version: <https://bit.ly/31nsMnI>

Key Themes in Land Governance: Synopses of Research, Policy and Action in the Mekong Region

The Mekong Land Research Forum at Chiang Mai University, with the support of the Mekong Region Land Governance project, has grouped together research on land into 14 key themes. In order to help different users make more sense of the available material, we have synthesized knowledge on each of the key themes in a set of synopses. In this book, researchers bring all 14 synopses together as a consolidated resource relating to the state of knowledge on land governance in the Mekong region.

The book is available for download at: <https://bit.ly/3mRJRhs>

Knowledge for Development (K4D) platform in Lao PDR

The Knowledge for Development (K4D) platform provides easy access to thematically integrated geographic information layers on a wide range of topics that can help to guide important decisions on land management.

The platform has been developed as part of the Knowledge for Development (K4D) Project, technically supported by the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern, with funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The system is hosted and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).

There are several maps and publications available to download in both Lao and English. Explore this website at: www.k4d.la

The Digital Legal Aid Platform in Lao PDR



The Platform aims to increase people's access to legal aid services provided by Legal Aid Offices of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Justice Departments in provinces throughout the country, which is being piloted in four provinces for now such as Xiengkhouang, Savannakhet, Attapeu and Sekong.

Digital Legal Aid is an opportunity to strengthen legal aid service provision for vulnerable and hard to reach groups. In particular, the mobile applications and chat functions, or possibly in future using A.I. powered “chatbots” like in many other countries.

This Digital Legal Aid was produced to be a user-friendly digital legal aid platform by providing guidelines for both service providers and users, as well as an introduction video for simple steps on access and choices for seeking legal assistance.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3HsExJh>

The Digital Legal Aid Platform can access through this website: <https://legal-aid.moj.gov.la/>

In addition, LaoLaw—The official law app, which includes all laws of Lao PDR and notify amendments and updates. It is now available to download on **Play Store** for Android and **App Store** for IOS.

Blog stories

Impacts of chemical use in agriculture and mitigation methods

The topic of Legal Calendar for the month of November – December 2021 on “**Impacts of chemical use in agriculture and reduction methods**” aims to raise awareness of the public to access and use information properly especially the safe use of chemicals in agriculture. It's essential for all parties such as investors, project owners, and the public to have an obligation to ensure there is no harm to the environment and the health of the people.

The topic also presents the important role of relevant government agencies to monitor and enforce the law when the violation occurs.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3FPMnfD>

What's in the news!

Lao Front to NA: Tackle inappropriate land occupation, lack compensation



Lao Front asks Government to Address Land Disputes and Compensation. 2021
© Phouthen Passon News

The Lao Front for National Development has told the National Assembly (NA) to push the government to address inappropriate occupation of land and the lack of compensation given to people affected by development projects.

"Compensation for the loss of crops by those in agricultural areas affected by construction projects often fails to meet state criteria, while project owners have used administrative authorities against residents without sufficient reason", Vice President of the Lao Front, Ms Khamchanh Phomsengsavanh told.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3F5cZsd> & [here](#)

Authorities ban sale of land reserved for smart city



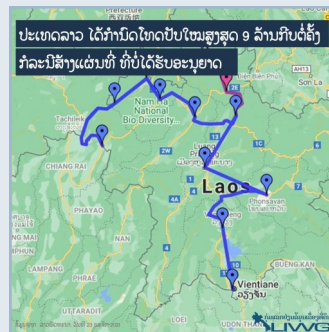
Authorities have banned the sale of land in 12 villages in Saysettha and Hatxayfong districts, Vientiane capital after the government gave the green light for a private company to build a planned smart city. This smart city is intended to include an industrial zone that will produce

goods for export using the Laos-China railway.

Residents are to be fully compensated for loss of land and crops at a rate set by the government, while the project says it aims to create new jobs for the local population.

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

Laos Imposes Fines of Up to LAK 9 Million for Unauthorized Mapping



Laos has set a maximum fine of LAK nine million for any individual, entity, or organization that conducts unauthorized mapping, uses unauthorized maps, or conducts any activities related to surveys and maps that have not been authorized by relevant authorities.

These fines for unauthorized mapping were set under the Lao Law on Surveying and Mapping, which was approved by the recent session of the National Assembly in November 2021. The law is now awaiting official promulgation by the President of Laos.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/312aOlb>

Innovation in the numbers as Laos launches the 3rd Census of Agriculture



The 3rd Lao census of agriculture that was carried out in 2019 - 2020 includes fundamental data on the organisational structure of agricultural holdings, such as farm size, land tenure, land use, the structure of livestock populations, gender-disaggregated data, forestry activities, fishing activities, and household food security.

The preliminary results of the census will be a key instrument for the government in carrying out effective socio-economic and rural development plans to improve living standards in rural areas.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3zhLJVL>

Glasgow COP26 Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use

The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) took place in Glasgow, Scotland from 31st October until 12 November 2021. As part of the state's commitment, more than 100 countries have signed on the Declaration on Forests and Land Use. From the list, there are only 4 signatories from ASEAN including the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Vietnam (Laos is not yet on this list).

Read more: <https://bit.ly/31oH2fl>

Upcoming Activities (January—March 2022)



- Community of Practice on Women and Land Rights: pilot the awareness raising activities in southern province of Laos.
- Publication of the study on Women's Access and Tenure Security in Customary Forest Tenure Systems in Laos.
- Revision of the briefing notes related to legislation on land rights.
- LIWG annual General Meeting.
- Update on the World Bank and SDC-funded project

News Year Note!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your trust, your feedback and your partnership throughout the year 2021. Also, we thank you for staying active together with us. We are looking for more strengthening partnership and initiatives with you for the year 2022.

May the New Year fill your lives with happiness and wealth.



Thank you for reading our Newsletter

