

NEWSLETTER

Land Information Working Group



**Happy
New Year
2025!**

View our 2025 Legal Calendar:
<https://tinyurl.com/y5zxv92>

LIWG Activities & Working Groups

LIWG coordinates multiple working groups and communities of practice to build connections and trust for dialogue and engagement in land governance issues. Read about recent events on Pg 2 & 3.



PIASVC Project Updates

The project aims to improve access to land related information, rights and responsibilities of citizens by providing awareness-raising and legal counseling services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. PIASVC is funded by Japanese Social Development Fund through the World Bank and co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Read more on Pg 5 & 6.



LIWG Activities & Working Groups

CSO Sharing Event 2024

The CSO sharing event on December 6, 2024 brought together members, particularly local CSOs, to exchange information and lessons on land and forestry issues within the Lao PDR. Land rights recognition in protected forest areas and REDD+ projects were two emerging topics that were discussed. The LIFE project shared a success story of student volunteers' work with villages to establish fish protection areas. The event concluded with a collaborative SWOT analysis, encouraging members to identify areas in which LIWG could further support and add value for members. The CSO members proposed that LIWG facilitate learning opportunities and technical support on proposal writing, project implementation and research. Furthermore, members wanted increased dialog with government and business sectors and to be able to raise up data from members' implementation at grassroots to engage with broader, macro-level issues.

Knowledge-sharing among members



Do you know of any REDD+ projects in Laos?

Who benefits from REDD+ projects? What kind of benefits?

Are there any negative impacts of REDD+?



Outstanding Farm, Factory, Agriculture Company Visit by CBP - RAI team

Members of the Community Best Practice on Responsible Investment (CBP-RAI) from various organizations visited a model farm and agricultural processing plant on October 29-30, 2024. The team engaged with the entrepreneurs to learn from their experiences and successful agricultural production processes that meet current market demands. Of particular interest was the effective use of technology and innovation to boost agricultural yields and maintain quality standards for large retail chains. The CBP team also observed how the company aligned its production plans with specific customer needs and transformed challenges into opportunities by analyzing consumer behavior and identifying suitable production areas. CBP members will be able to use refer to these best practices when disseminating and training target communities. Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/yc2f53ae>





Women's Land Rights Field Visit in Champasak Province by COP-WLR

During November 5th to 8th, the Community of Practice on Women's Land Rights (COP-WLR) visited three target villages of member organization WWF-Laos in Khong District, Champasak Province, together with local government counterparts. The purpose was to sensitise the villages on gender equality in land issues using the WLR tools developed by LIWG, provide opportunity for the villagers to seek legal counselling from a registered lawyer, and increase the ability and confidence of the COP members and government counterparts to use the WLR tools to facilitate awareness-raising on gender. Read more <https://tinyurl.com/jw76ty9r>

The COP-WLR is supported by MRLG.



Women's Land Rights Sharing Event



On November 26, 2024, LIWG facilitated a workshop to share lessons from the field and latest developments on women's land rights. Members of the COP-WLR reflected on experiences from the past three field visits, particularly the unique implementation challenges and issues faced by communities in each of the different geographic regions (mountainous North, commercialised Central, riverside South). ADWLE shared their experience of contributing to the periodic reporting process on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Lastly, participants discussed improvements to the WLR training materials and implementation protocols, target areas for future field trips, and how to further promote women's land rights. Read More <https://tinyurl.com/4c5ub3nm>



Interested in becoming a member of LIWG or any of its working groups?
Contact: co@laolandinfo.org



Legal Calendar

Legal Calendar 2025 Launching Event

The 2025 Legal Calendar was officially launched on December 3, 2024 at an event attended by over 50 persons, including from the National Assembly, Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry, Faculty of Law and Political Science, media, CSOs and INGOs. Over 13,000 copies have been printed and will be distributed by LIWG to the National Assembly, government agencies and member organizations for their use in dissemination work at villages across Laos. Read More at <https://tinyurl.com/bdfsab3w> and view the legal calendar 2025 here <https://tinyurl.com/y5xzxv92>

"The value of the calendar is presenting legal information in an attractive and easily understandable format."

- Mr. Khanthong Phengsilai, Deputy Director General of Administration - Protocol Department, National Assembly

Training of Trainers on Legal Calendar 2025

Following the launch of the legal calendar, a two-day ToT was conducted on December 4-5, 2024. The training was designed around the six calendar topics:

1. Ownership - land use rights and loss of land use rights
2. Gender equality in land use management
3. Protection of forest land and participatory management of water sources at the village level
4. Responsible investment in concessions to exploit natural resources
5. Responsibility in the management and use of chemicals
6. Encroachment of forest land

Read more <https://tinyurl.com/2d2jn5j2>.

Videos on each topic are available in Lao, Khmu, Akha, Hmong languages here: <https://tinyurl.com/4mrn4xvy>





PIASVC Project Updates

Refresher Training of Trainers on Access to Justice



From October 7th to 11th, 2024, the PIASVC project conducted a refresher ToT for sub-grantees on the topics of conflict mediation and land-related legal counseling at the village level. The 5-day training combined theory and practice, including simulations of filing petitions, from village-level mediation to court filing. The training aimed to equip sub-grantees with basic knowledge of village-level land dispute mediation, enabling them to apply the acquired knowledge at the grassroots level using the tools and posters provided by the project. Sub-grantees will continue to raise awareness on this topic in their target villages across 8 Provinces. Read more

<https://tinyurl.com/4mx45k83>

Access to Justice resources are available at

<https://tinyurl.com/2wf5dfc7>,

<https://tinyurl.com/3u2hwden>

Sub - Grantee Monitoring Field Visit in Xiengkhoang Province



In November 2024, LIWG and the PIASVC project management team observed sub-grantee PDDA's delivery of awareness raising on village mediation and customary land rights to 199 villagers from 7 target villages in Mok district, Xiengkhouang province. Videos in Hmong language and visually engaging posters developed under the PIASVC project have helped the majority Hmong villagers more easily understand how traditional land rights fit within national laws and how to formalize those rights under the Land Law (2019). Read More: <https://tinyurl.com/axbx9245>

“Government representatives coming to remote villages to disseminate useful information helps reduce conflicts and promote harmony within our communities.” - Villager



PIASVC Project Updates

Volunteer village facilitators from Laongarm and Salavanh districts share lessons and experiences



Village Focus International (VFI), a member of LIWG and a sub-grantee of PIASVC project, hosted a festival to share experiences and success of their volunteer village facilitators from Laongarm and Salavanh districts on December 11-12, 2024. Village facilitators receive training from VFI to assist with knowledge dissemination within their communities.

This event was attended by over 238 participants, including government officials, provincial and district representatives, academics, civil society organizations, and villagers from 24 target villages. The event enabled village authorities, village mediation units and the village facilitators to exchange experiences and lessons learned. It also showcased tools and materials customized by VFI for training and outreach in target villages. These materials were designed based on the needs and input of the target group and aim to be easy to understand and adaptable to various community contexts.

Read More <https://tinyurl.com/3h8yxzsw>

'I am very proud to have been part of this project to strengthen village volunteers. I learned a lot from this activity, such as gender equality, improving my skills and confidence in explaining laws, providing advice, and mediating conflicts among villagers. I believe that what I have learned will benefit myself, my village, and the wider community'

- Village facilitator, Huaypao Village



LSSWG & Focal Groups

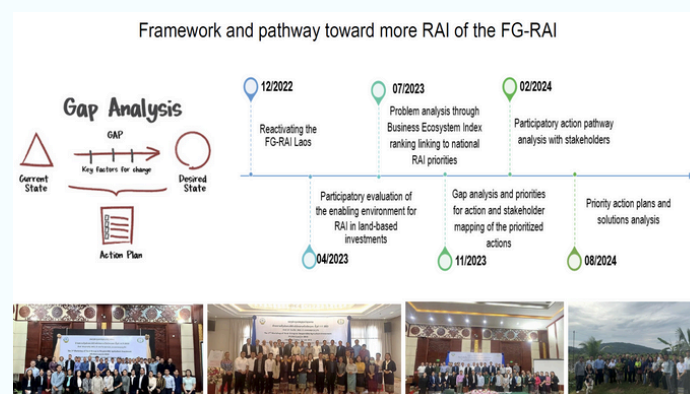
Focal Group Women Land Rights



The Focal Group on Women's Land Rights (FG-WLR) met on December 19, 2024 to undertake final preparations to prepare to present itself to the Land Sub-Sector Working Group (LSSWG) in early-2025. Initial members of the FG-WLR include a diversity of gender experts from iNGOs and CSOs, lawyers and academics. The FG-WLR also undertook a small-scale SWOT analysis and strategic planning to develop a roadmap for its future operation once it is formally established under the LSSWG in 2025. The initial establishment of the FG-WLR has been supported by GIZ and Helvetas Laos.

Focal Group Responsible Agriculture Investment

There are also FG RAI that has primary objectives to facilitate knowledge exchange and support among stakeholders involved in agriculture and forestry land-based investments. This includes coordinating with members to implement the ASEAN-RAI guidelines, sharing best practices and lessons learned, and disseminating relevant policies and regulations. By acting as a platform for dialogue and collaboration, FG-RAI aims to influence policy decisions, improve investment practices, and ultimately enhance the sustainability and inclusivity of land-based investments in Laos. Read more <https://tinyurl.com/sw8vbpb4>





UPCOMING EVENTS (JANUARY – MARCH 2025)

- PIASVC Annual Symposium event
- PIASVC Sharing Event
- LIWG Annual General Meeting 2025 (AGM)
- Land Sub-Sector Working Group (LSSWG)
- Women Land Rights Campaign
- Land Advisory Working Group (AG Meeting)

Thanks for Reading our Newsletters

