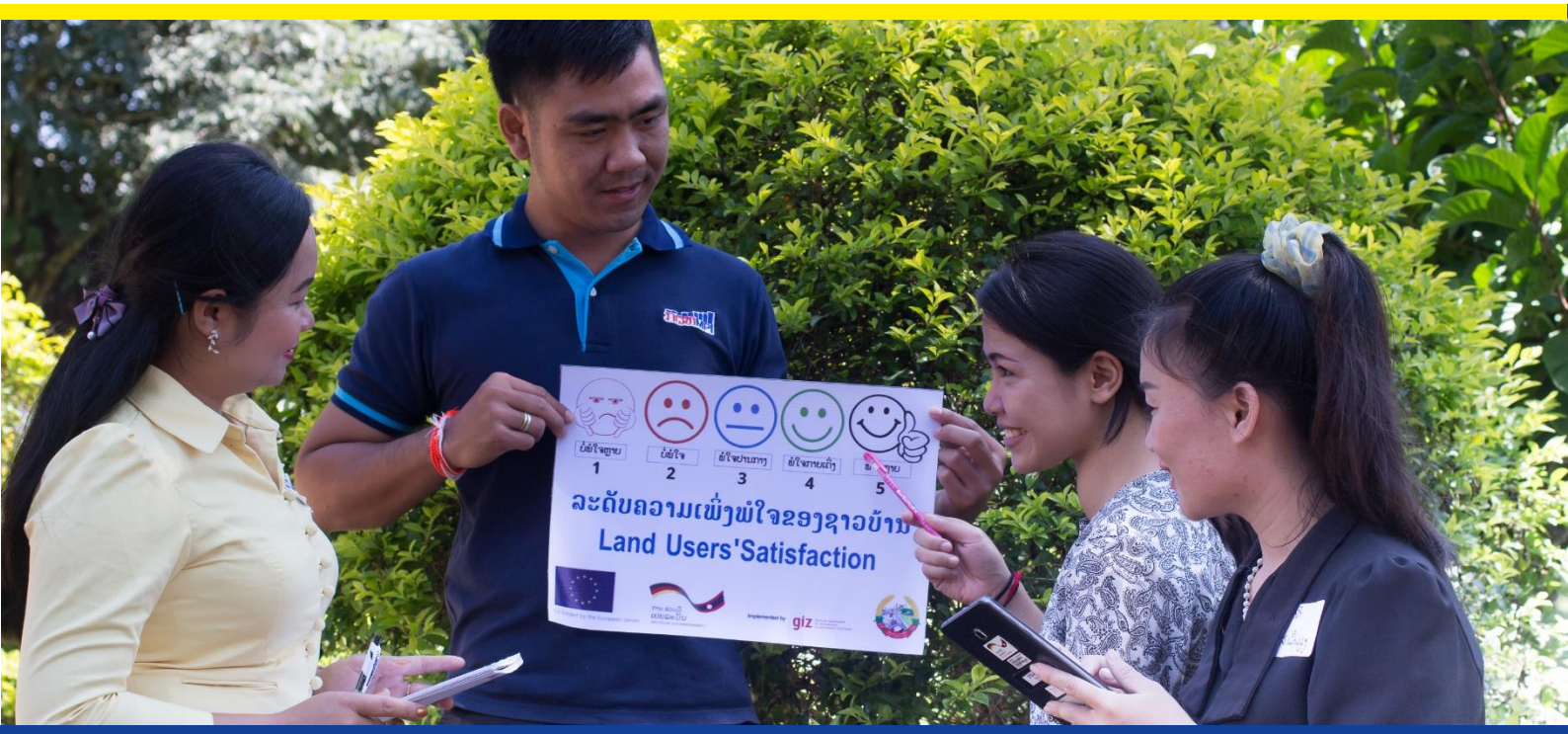


Promoting Responsible Governance of Investments in Land (RGIL) in Laos

Context

Laos plans to graduate from least developed country status by 2024. To spur economic growth, the Lao government builds on a resource-based export economy, major mining projects, the constructions of dams, and the expansion of plantation agriculture. A key focus is the promotion of foreign direct investment in agriculture and forestry, to promote technology transfer for intensification of the agricultural sector and thus employment and income for the rural population.

However, agriculture and forestry investment projects are placing growing pressure on land as a resource. Due to the lack of suitable and efficient protective measures, transparency, and adequate conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, such investments often lead to conflict, forced expropriation, and economic displacement with a possible impact on poverty and malnutrition. These negative effects are exacerbated by the lack or unclear recognition of tenure rights and a generally low tenure security in Laos, where only about one third of land parcels are titled. Consequently, the rural population, especially women and socially marginalised groups, often lack reliable access to land or are otherwise negatively affected by investment projects.



Project name	Promoting Responsible Governance of Investments in Land (RGIL)
Commissioned and co-funded by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), European Union (EU)
Implemented by	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Political partner	Ministry of Planning and Investment
Target provinces	Bolikhamxai, Luang Prabang, Sayabouri, Vientiane Province
Target groups	Government authorities (at national, provincial, and district level), agricultural investors (foreign and domestic), local land users (especially smallholder farmers, vulnerable groups, and women)
Duration	November 2019 – July 2023

Implemented by
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Objective

As part of the GIZ-supported Enhanced Land Tenure Security (ELTeS) project, RGIL Laos fosters Investment Quality Promotion to ensure that agriculture and forestry investments in land are productive, contribute to sustainable land management and respect the rights and needs of local populations.

Outputs

To achieve this, the project aims to strengthen the capacities of

- **Government authorities** to administer and guide investments in land in accordance with established legislation and recognised principles such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments (RAI);
- **International and domestic investors** to comply with internationally recognised principles for responsible investments in land;
- **Local land users,** especially smallholders, vulnerable groups, and women, to advocate for their legitimate rights to land and for their needs in land investment processes.

Activities and tools

Policy-level support through analysis of the national regulatory framework for investments in land and mandatory environmental and social minimum standards, and development of recommendations for their improvement to inform the national level policy dialogue.

Assessment of capacity development needs of national and sub-national authorities, investors and communities regarding responsible agricultural investments, and development of corresponding capacity building measures as well as training materials and guidebooks.

Community legal empowerment and awareness raising on land rights, grievance mechanisms, and rights to participatory consultation.

Investors Dialogue Fora for investors, communities, and government officials on specific investment projects and project-related conflicts and mediation measures.

Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues between government officials, investors, and village representatives on investment issues, new rules and regulations, and findings from Investment Project Monitoring.

Investment Project Monitoring (IPM) through a digital investment project data collection and monitoring system which delivers land-, environmental-, and labour-related project performance results.

Projected key results

30 private investments in land comply with the agreed land use.

55% of local land users affected by private investments in land are generally satisfied with the investment.

50% of disputes occurring in the target communities are resolved with the participation of relevant stakeholders.

30 private investments in the project area are guided by principles of national and international guidelines.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

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Design/Layout GIZ

Photo credits GIZ/Khankeo Oupravanh and Bart Verweij

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RGIL and ELTeS are implemented within the Global Program on Responsible Land Policy as part of the German Special Initiative “One World – No Hunger” of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). RGIL is co-funded by the European Union.

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication

As at May 2021, Vientiane