



## Enhancing Systematic Land Registration Project (P169669)

### Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement Plan

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## ACRONYMS

APs	Affected Peoples
CDE	Center for Development and Environment
CHF	Cultural Heritage Framework
CoC	Code of Conduct
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAFO	District Agricultural and Forestry Office
DALM	Department of Agriculture and Land Management
DDIS	Detailed Design and Supervision Consultant
DIA	Designated Implementing Agencies
DoE	Department of Environment
DOF	Department of Forestry
DOL	Department of Land
DONRE	District Office of Natural Resources and Environment
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EGDF	Ethnic Group Development Framework
EGDP	Ethnic Group Development Plan
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESLRP	Enhancing Systematic Land Registration Project
ESO	Environmental and Social Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GBV	Gender-Based Violence Plan
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GOL	Government of Lao PDR
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HI	Handicap International
IFP	Investment Financing Project
ISC	Implementation Support Consultant
ISWSC	Implementation Support and Works Supervision Consultant
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KfW	German Development Bank
<i>kum</i>	Sub-district
LFND	Lao Front for National Development
LIWG	Laos Land Information Working Group
LMP	Labour Management Procedures
LSB	Lao Statistics Bureau
LWU	Lao Women's Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLGP	Mekong Region Land Governance Project
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MONRE	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
MRLG	Mekong Region Land Governance

NA	National Assembly
NEIR	National Economic Institute for Research
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOUL	National University of Laos
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
OHS	Occupational health and safety.
PAFO	Provincial Agricultural and Forestry Office
PD	Project Director
PM	Project Manager
PONRE	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment
PPA	Project Preparation Advance
RP	Resettlement Plan
SDC	Swiss Agency for International Development Cooperation
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEP	Stakeholder Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SWMP	Simple Standard Waste Management Plan
TAF	the Asia Foundation
VAC	Violence Against Children
VFI	Village Focus International
VMU	Village Mediation Unit
WB	World Bank
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF-GMS	World Wildlife Fund

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## **PART 1 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Most people in Lao PDR live in rural areas, depending heavily on natural resources, especially land and forest for livelihoods. They use and inherit land of various categories (residential, agriculture, livestock, forest land) from generation to generation. Where land registration has been conducted, a land-use certificate (for State Land) and land title certificate (for Private Land) is issued to the land users. The land users are authorized to sell their land by transfer of their land-use right to others. Land title and land-use certificates are commonly used for mortgages and guarantee to access finance from banks and microfinance institutions as well as individual lenders. Informal use on land occurs across the country and often involves socially vulnerable households located in rural areas, utilizing the land for traditional swidden agriculture and other livelihood practices. The categorization of different types of agricultural and forest land is difficult to standardize and changing land use patterns that contradict official land categorization may further complicate registration. Overlapping tenure can also result from the granting of private sector tenements for exploration and development of land subject to existing informal local use. Programs that are not carefully managed and resourced risk leading to land grabs by influential investors and the displacement of vulnerable households.

Land is the national property in accordance with the Constitution of the Lao PDR. This is re-confirmed by the Resolution on the Enhancement of Land Management and Development in the New Era, No. 026, dated 03/08/2017. The Resolution emphasizes the importance of land for livelihoods and residence of various ethnic groups, and national socio-economic development in the country. It, however, also acknowledge challenges the country has faced in the last decades since the change in the political regime in 1975. Challenges and difficulties include, but not limited to, conversion of land use classification has not been carried out strictly in accordance with the laws, uneconomic use of land, grabbing of land, wide spread of unlawful allocation of State land to individuals, continuous increase of land price especially urban lands. The Resolution also acknowledge issues related to the lack of good land management and administration, there have been problems associated with collection of land tax, transfer of land rights, lack of promotion of the hidden strengths as necessary, day-to-day increase of land complaint cases, lack of detailed legislation on conversion of land use classification constraining the State and the Lao peoples to actual benefit from lands as it should be; land acquisition for various projects is both heavy burden and sensitive causing social impacts.

Efforts have been made by the GOL to address the challenges through adoption of various policies, laws, and regulations on lands. Management of land has been improved with clear division of mandates, duties, and responsibilities between central and local authorities. The policies, laws and regulations have been implemented, but enforcement has not been as effective as it needs to be. The 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) reached resolution, urging for urgent, strict compliance with laws and regulations of management and administration.

The Resolution on the Enhancement of Land Management and Development in New Era, No. 026, was adopted by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party's Central Committee on 03/08/2017, aiming at accelerating land titling, modernizing land services, and strengthening individual, collective and customary land tenure. The Resolution provides general principles to achieve its goals, including expanding recognized land rights to collective and customary

lands, enhancing access to justice in relation to expropriation, strengthening regulations on land concessions, improving land dispute resolution mechanisms to promote fairness and transparency, and strengthening land institutions.

The Resolution was followed by the National Assembly's adoption of *The National Master Plan for Land Allocation* in 2018, which provides guidelines for systematic and sustainable planning of allocations of land and natural resources. According to the Master Plan, 70% of the total area of the country is allocated for forest cover, while 30% of the total area is allocated for economic development and residential areas.

The National Assembly (NA) has recently endorsed (June 2019) an Amended Land Law subject to some editorial comments to be addressed and Forestry Law. The Amended Land Law was signed by the President of Lao PDR on 2 August 2019. In line with existing national laws and legislation (Allocation of Land and Occupation Law (2018), Degree no. 84 on Compensation and Resettlement Decree (2016) and Agriculture Law (1998-being revised),) the Amended Land Law includes provisions on recognition of customary land use of local community and land acquisition with appropriate compensation.

The *Land Law* recognizes land use rights of individuals, legal entities, and organizations, and stipulates that these rights are managed “by registering land books, certifying land use, issuing land titles and registering transfer and changes of land use rights”. The Law also acknowledges and protects customary land use rights pending the issuance of official land titles. Lands that are not transferred to the previously described entities are considered public lands, which can be granted to Party organizations, state agencies and local administrative authorities through a titling process. Public land can also be transferred to the use of a village or cluster of villages in accordance with local land allocation plans to select land uses with temporary land use certificates. However, the current legal framework does not acknowledge communal land use rights or village land rights to agricultural or forest lands. Land considered state forestlands can be granted to the use of individuals with temporary land use certificates if they have occupied it before it was classified as state forestland. Both the permanent land titles and temporary land use certificates are issued by district (DONRE) and provincial (PONRE) offices in paper format, which is the only legally binding version of the documents. Although the *Land Law* was adopted with recommended revisions to be made by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), as of June 2020, it has not been finalized and is not yet in effect in practice.

Out of the estimated 3 to 3.5 million public and private land parcels in Lao PDR, roughly 1.2 million parcels have been registered and titles primarily cover urban areas. As part of its goal to complete the registration process, the GOL has set concrete targets in its Eighth National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and Vision 2030 to issue 400,000 new titles by 2020 and a further 800,000 titles by 2025. Since the World Bank-financed Second Land Titling Project's (LTP-II; P075006) closing in 2010, MONRE's Department of Lands (DOL) has been implementing a systematic land registration process using government resources. While many of the processes introduced by LTP-II have been maintained, activities remain primarily in urban and peri-urban areas and the costs of titles are too high for many citizens to pay. MONRE needs considerable extra resources to enhance systematic land registration in rural areas and to reduce the costs associated with individual titles.

There are currently about 600 people working on the current land registration program funded by the GOL and to achieve the 2025 target, about 400 additional staff will likely need to be recruited.

In this context, the MONRE has requested the World Bank (WB) to provide an Investment Project Financing (IPF). The objective of the project is to support the Government of Lao PDR in scaling up systematic land registration and improving delivery of land administration services. The project activities will be primarily implemented in rural areas, though some urban and peri-urban areas will also be included.

## 1.1 Project Description

- 2 The objective of the project is to support the Government of Lao PDR in improving tenure security and the delivery of land administration services in selected areas, and to provide immediate and effective response in case of an eligible crisis or emergency.
- 3 The Project Development Objective (PDO) will be achieved by supporting and improving the GOL's systematic land registration process and advancing the issuance of property titles to beneficiaries. The PDO will also be achieved through support to the modernization of the land administration system and related services for citizens.

### 3.1.1 Project Components and Activities

The project comprises of five components, as described below:

**Component 1: Systematic Registration of Land Use Rights** (US\$20.5 million, of which US\$16.9 million IDA and US\$ 3.7 million SDC). This component will support the GOL, MONRE and DOL in enhancing and scaling-up systematic land registration and issuance of 1,000,000 land titles and use certificates initially in Lao PDR. Land titles and use certificates are considered issued when they have been prepared and printed, regardless if the land holder collects them from the DONRE. The component will be implemented through:

**1.1: Scaling-up Systematic Land Registration** (US\$19.6 million, of which US\$16.2 million IDA and US\$3.4 million SDC). This subcomponent will finance i) the implementation of systematic land registration in the project provinces, including associated ESF activities, public awareness campaigns, technical assistance, contract staff recruitment and operating costs; and ii) goods required in the process such as vehicles, survey equipment, Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORSSs), ICT equipment, boundary markers and stationery. Under this subcomponent, land parcels will be surveyed and/or mapped systematically based on their occupancy. Those land parcels eligible for land titles or land use certificates will be registered to the land registry, while other land occupancy, such as certain forms of communal land holdings, will be recorded to the cadastre as possessions to improve their tenure security against land grabs, overlapping claims and concessions without proper compensation.

**1.2: Training, Capacity Building and TA** (US\$0.9 million, of which US\$0.7 million IDA and US\$0.2 million SDC). This subcomponent will finance the planning and implementation of systematic land registration related training and capacity building of government and contract staff involved in the process, through i) consultancy

service to develop training and capacity building plan; and ii) carrying out the training.

**Component 2: Modernization of Land Administration and Service Delivery** (US\$6.2 million, of which US\$5.6 million IDA and US\$ 0.6 million SDC). This component will support the GOL, MONRE and DOL in improving delivery of land administration services (surveying, registration, transactions, subdivisions, etc.). This will be achieved through:

**2.1: Enhanced Service Delivery** (US\$2.8 million, of which US\$2.2 million IDA and US\$0.2 million SDC). This subcomponent will finance improvements to service delivery through: i) a Business Process Reengineering Assessment and Customer Satisfaction Surveys; ii) planning and piloting of land administration service centers; iii) construction and renovation of PONRE, DONRE and service centers; iv) procurement of goods such as office equipment, furniture, stationary and ICT equipment; v) recruitment and training of staff.

**2.2: Scanning, Digitization and Archiving of Existing Land Records** (US\$0.6 million, of which US\$0.6 million IDA). This subcomponent will finance digitization of about 440,000 existing land records to ensure their safety, accelerate transition to a digital land administration system and enhance the use of office space. This is achieved through i) TA to prepare Document Management and Digital Archive Strategy; and ii) outsourcing the digitization to a professional company.

**2.3: Lao LandReg Development and Rollout** (US\$2.8 million, of which US\$2.0 million IDA and US\$0.4 million SDC). This subcomponent will finance further development and roll-out of Lao LandReg to enhance digitalization of land administration system and service delivery. This is achieved through i) preparation of ICT Strategy and Technical Quality Review of Lao LandReg and Data Protection and Cyber Security Study; ii) office renovations to enhance the server room facilities of DOL, PONREs, DONREs and service centers; iii) ICT equipment; iv) further developments of the Lao LandReg; and v) training of Lao LandReg operators.

**Component 3: Implementation, Policy and Legal Framework Development** (US\$1.2 million, of which US\$1 million IDA and US\$0.2 million SDC). This component will support the further development of inclusive and comprehensive land policies and regulatory framework, as well as their implementation procedures, through i) preparation of policy and system studies and technical guidelines and manuals; ii) dissemination of policies, laws and regulations; and iii) organizing training workshops for government staff. These policies will address at least the issues related to survey and registration of customary and communal lands as well as lands within state forestlands.

**Component 4: Project Management** (US\$3.4 million, of which US\$1.5 million IDA and US\$1.9 million SDC). This component will support the overall project management, coordination with Development Partners and operations of the PMU and the Project Steering Committee (PSC), through i) operating costs associated with project implementation, PMU and PSC; ii)

consultancy services for financial management, procurement, coordination, ESS, public awareness raising, training, ICT, mid-term and final evaluation, audits as well as short term consultants based on needs; iii) training programs and study tours; and iv) office equipment and furniture.

**Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component** (CERC, US\$0.0 million). Reflecting the strategic approach taken in Lao PDR across the Bank's portfolio, this Component will provide immediate response to an eligible emergency. As such, in the event of such eligible emergency (as defined in the CERC Operational Manual, an annex to the POM), and at the request of the Government, the Component would finance emergency activities and expenditures through the reallocation of funds from the Project.

### **3.1.2 Project Beneficiaries**

The primary beneficiaries of systematic land registration will be landholders of primarily rural areas of all 18 provinces nationwide while the primary beneficiaries of improved land administration services will include also those urban, peri-urban, and rural residents that have their land rights already registered. Special attention will be paid to the rights of women and vulnerable persons as possible under the current legal framework. The Land Law and Forest Law forbid issuance of full titles to certain types of communal lands and lands within state forestlands, which are used mainly by ethnic (minority) groups and poorest segments of the society. Therefore, some types of communal lands will be recorded to the cadaster as possessions to improve their tenure security against land grabs, overlapping claims and concessions without proper compensation, while the policy component of the project aims to address the limitations of both communal land rights and land rights within state forestlands. Investors will benefit from secure access to real estate, improved access to credit, and improved speed of registration.

Additional beneficiaries will include land market professionals (surveyors, lawyers, valuers) and organizations associated with mortgaging (commercial banks), who will benefit from more accurate and accessible real estate data and the ability to provide improved, more informed services to the public. Government institutions and agencies, including MONRE and the Ministry of Finance (MOF), will benefit from increased revenues from land and real estate taxes and fees (e.g., property tax, transfer tax, and transaction fees). Improved land data information will also improve the GOL's ability to provide services, and the private sector in providing additional services using land information. Investments in geodetic infrastructure, the LIS and property registration will benefit government authorities who are responsible for climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster management planning and response. More generally, the Project is expected to benefit the country's population by increasing capacity to respond to emergencies through the Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC).

### **3.1.3 Project Cost and Financing**

The total project financing is USD 25 million loan from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) and USD 6,312,250 grant from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

### **3.2 Geographical Coverage**

The project is expected to be implemented in all 18 provinces including Vientiane Prefecture and all districts that are outside state forestlands.

Note that the German Cooperation through KfW/GIZ, is planning to implement a similar project on land registration in four provinces in the north (Houaphan, Xiengkhouang, Oudomxay and Xayabouly). That project is currently under preparation, and there is a strong coordination among both projects. In addition, with the proposed development objective of improving sustainable forest management and enhance livelihoods and tourism opportunities in selected landscapes in northern, central, and southern Lao PDR, the World Bank is also currently preparing a new project on forest lands: Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods Project (P170559).

### **1.2 Stakeholder Engagement**

The World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), which came into effect in October 2018, is applied to this project. This will be one of the first projects in Lao PDR applying the ESF.

As stated at the ESF, the stakeholder engagement activities will apply for the entirety of the project. Its main goal will be to effectively reach out to affected and interested stakeholders in this project to ensure accessibility, accountability and cultural appropriateness. Specific objectives of the stakeholder engagement are to:

- Ensure that beneficiaries and affected communities will be engaged, especially on project design options in compliance with ESS10 of the ESF.
- Identify all project stakeholders including their priorities and concerns, and ensure the project has ways to incorporate these.
- Identify strategies for information sharing and communication to stakeholders, including project information on social risks and impacts, as well as consultation of stakeholders in ways that are meaningful and accessible throughout the project cycle.
- To establish an accessible, culturally appropriate, and responsive grievance mechanism; and
- To develop a strategy for stakeholder participation in the monitoring of project impacts.

This SEP includes (i) Stakeholder identification and analysis; (ii) Planning for how the engagement with stakeholders will take place; (iii) Consultation reports with stakeholders before the appraisal stage; (iv) Grievance mechanism; and (v) Procedures for reporting to stakeholders. The contents of the SEP shall comply with all the requirements included in the ESF from the WB (ESS10, “Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure”). The SEP shall include the Grievance Mechanism for the project to address the concerns and grievances of project-affected parties regarding the environmental and social performance of the project in a timely manner. It shall include, inter alia, the details stated at the APPENDIX 1 (on Grievance Mechanism) of ESS10 of the ESF.

## PART 2 PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

The Project will involve different groups of stakeholders from national to village levels. The project stakeholders and the level of their involvement will be pre-identified and mapped through the stakeholder analysis by DOL, the project implementing agency in collaboration with the Department of Environment (DOE) under the same Ministry (MONRE). Main groups of stakeholders are individuals or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by the Project, as well as those who may have interests in it and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively. In general, there are two groups of stakeholders:

- (i) **Affected Stakeholders:** Those who will be likely impacted by the project positively or negatively. These stakeholders are mainly project communities or local businesses living or operating in the project areas. Examples include landholders and those affected by office renovation works, such as impacts related to dust/noise and land acquisition and land registration activities. A guiding principle is that engagement with these stakeholders will be commensurate with the level of impacts they suffer; and
- (ii) **Interested Stakeholders:** Those who are not impacted by the project but who may be interested in the Project outcomes and who may have an influence in the project. These stakeholders may include local people who are not directly impacted, government authorities working in relevant areas, National and International NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

### 2.1 Stakeholders of the Project

Main groups of stakeholders of the Project can be classified as follows.

#### 2.1.1 Affected Stakeholders

- Landholders (e.g., land use certificate, land title and customary rights).
- Land user.
- Ethnic peoples with collective attachment to the project area.
- Disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals/groups.
- Local communities; and
- Private investors (e.g., hydropower, mining, agri-business, and infrastructure).

#### 2.1.2 Interested stakeholders.

- a) Relevant government departments at the national, provincial and district levels, involved in issues of land, forest, wetland, conservation, investment, development, research, data generation and education, including:
  - 1) Department of Land (DOL)/Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).
  - 2) Department of Environment (DoE), MONRE.
  - 3) Department of Forestry (DoF), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)
  - 4) Department of Agricultural Land Management (DALM), MAF.
  - 5) Department of Water Resources (DWR), MONRE

- 6) Tax Department, Ministry of Finance (MOF) (Specific Department to be identified in consultation with DOL)
  - 7) Department of Public Information and Dissemination, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) (Specific Department to be identified in consultation with DOL)
  - 8) Lao Front for National Development (LFND)
  - 9) Lao Women's Union (LWU)
  - 10) Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB)
  - 11) National Economic Institute for Research (NEIR)
  - 12) National University of Laos (NUOL).
- b) NGOs/civil society and international organizations working on issues of land, conservation, gender, ethnicity, and vulnerable groups:
- 1) SNV Netherlands Development Organization.
  - 2) Swiss Agency for International Development Cooperation (SDC)
  - 3) Mekong Region Land Governance Project (MLGP)
  - 4) The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
  - 5) The German Development Bank (KfW)
  - 6) Center for Development and Environment (CDE)
  - 7) Laos Land Information Working Group (LIWG).
  - 8) Village Focus International (VFI).
  - 9) HELVETAS Swiss Inter-cooperation
  - 10) Green Community Alliance
  - 11) Oxfam International.
  - 12) Save the Children International.
  - 13) CARE International.
  - 14) Handicap International (HI).
  - 15) World Wildlife Fund (WWF GMS).
  - 16) The Mekong Region Land Governance (MRLG)
  - 17) Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS); and
  - 18) International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

## 2.2 Stakeholder Analysis

Due to the long list of interested stakeholders, it is useful to group into categories such as those interested in land administration, gender, ethnicity, and vulnerability, presented by Table 1.

**Table 1: ESLR Project Stakeholder Analysis**

Group	Stakeholders	Interest or Concern	Proposed Strategies (further information also in Tables 4 & 5)
<b>1. Affected Stakeholders</b>			
<p><b>Landholders/ land users (including disadvantage/vulnerable individuals and communities, and private investors)</b></p>	<p>Individuals, communities, including disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals/groups and entities/investors, holding land with land title, certificates, or customary rights.</p>	<p>They will be positively affected by the project as their lands will be registered. They will receive land title. Some of them maybe adversely affected.</p>	<p>They will be consulted during the project preparation and preparation of the ESF documents, to understand their views, expectations, and concerns. Note, however, that due to COVID-19 issues, consultations maybe considered under two scenarios:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The COVID context stayed until the end of 2021 (public gathering would be banned).</li> <li>2) The current COVID context improves and public gathering be permitted starting Early 2021.</li> </ol> <p>Under each scenario, two round of consultations at central and local level were conducted during the project preparation. In other words, no matter which scenario is taken, two rounds of consultations are to be conducted. The first round of public consultation was conducted at central level and local level, separately. Note that this is engagement on the preparation of the ESMF documents, rather than engagement process during project implementation. At central level, one face-to-face public consultation was conducted, while at local level, a virtual consultations was done with at sub-national/local level stakeholders in 15 (out of total 18) provinces covering the all (northern, central and southern) parts of the country.</p> <p>They will be consulted during project implementation for site-specific activities, at village-level consultations to introduce the project as well as to discuss and disclose the draft Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) including a special focus on gender, ethnicity and vulnerability issues and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).</p> <p>They will be involved during the preparation, identification, mapping, and land registration stages.</p> <p>Through exercises of participatory mapping at local level, this project will identify and map ALL the land holders and types of land uses of non-forest areas in the selected municipalities/districts. Land users must be primary, not secondary as secondary uses such as borrowing, or renting are not registered and titled.</p> <p>This project will promote a process where all the mapped land holders will be eligible for</p>

			<p>this project. The process will be participatory and transparent.</p> <p>If there are claims related to land tenure during the mapping exercise (quite common in this type of projects), then they will be recorded in the project's maps and documents.</p> <p>Because of the current national land legal framework, only some of the land holders recorded in the maps will get the highest level of certificate (land title or land certificate). However, based in parallel discussions with GOL during project preparation and implementations, some or all the eligible land holders are expected to receive not necessarily some sort of recognition (which specific sort of recognition for each eligible land holder cannot be confirmed at this stage of project preparation), but their land will be mapped to the cadaster.</p> <p>Women may need to be consulted separately, regarding Gender Based Violence (GBV) risks.</p> <p>Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage</p>
<b>Ethnic peoples if found with collective attachment to project area.</b>	Ethnic people representatives from the 18 provinces, namely: Mon-Khmer, Hmong-Lu Mien, and China-Tibetan.	They will be positively affected by the project as their lands will be registered. They will receive land title. Some of them maybe adversely affected, including encroachment on traditional lands.	<p>They will be consulted during fieldwork (case studies) at the planning stage to understand their views, expectations, and concerns.</p> <p>They will be consulted at village-level consultations to introduce the project as well as to discuss and disclose the draft Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) including a special focus on gender, ethnicity and vulnerability issues and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).</p> <p>They will be involved during the preparation and land registration stages. FPIC will be required if circumstances apply (Please see Part 3 of this document for description of the circumstances).</p> <p>Women may need to be consulted separately, regarding Gender Based Violence (GBV) risks.</p> <p>Translation maybe required. Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage</p>
<b>Interested Stakeholders</b>			
<b>Contractors in charge of office</b>	Contractors will be encouraged to hire local people for unskilled	They will want good labor standards, fair pay, and good living	Introductory training and due diligence on staff Code of Conduct (gender, violence, children), training on gender. Labor

<b>renovation work, and their staff</b>	labor, in particular interested women.	conditions in worker's camps.	contracts. Posters on aspects Code of Conduct.
<b>Government authorities responsible for land related issues, including forest and conservation areas</b>	Department of Land, Department of Forestry, Department of Water Resources	They will want to do it on time and in line with project agreements. Will be interested if specific (negative) impacts.	Consultations/meetings before and during project implementation to inform them of the project. Ongoing communication, meetings, and field work between project authorities to ensure everyone is updated on timelines, objectives, mitigation measures, etc.  Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage
<b>Government authorities responsible for environmental issues.</b>	Department of Environment, Department of Water Resources, MONRE, Department of Forestry, MAF and their vertical lines at provincial, district and village levels.	These departments would be interested in ensuring that environmental and social issues, including forest and livelihoods are addressed in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.	Consultations/meetings before and during project implementation to inform them of the project. Ongoing communication, meetings, and field work between project authorities to ensure everyone is updated on timelines, objectives, mitigation measures, etc.  Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage
<b>Government authorities responsible for development, research, and education</b>	MPI, LFND, LWU, NEIR, NSB, NOUL, and their vertical line (except NOUL), at provincial, district and village level.	These governmental institutions would be interested in ensuring that project activities fit into broader issues of their responsibilities such as planning, investment, development, gender, ethnicity, and research/statistics related to land issues.	Consultations/meetings before and during project implementation to inform them of the project. Ongoing communication, meetings, and field work between project authorities to ensure everyone is updated on timelines, objectives, mitigation measures, etc.  Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage.
<b>Government authorities responsible for issues related to women, vulnerable and ethnic people.</b>	The Lao Front for National Development (LFND), through its Department of Ethnic Affairs (DEA). LFND is a GOL mass organization with a strong territorial presence in all provinces and districts.	The LFND would be interested and involved in ensuring that project issues related to vulnerable and ethnic group be adequately and properly addressed.	Consultations/meetings before and during project implementation to inform them of the project. Ongoing communication, meetings, and field work between project authorities to ensure everyone is updated on timelines, objectives, mitigation measures, etc.  Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage.
<b>Development Partners</b>	GIZ, KfW, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	They are interested in land registration and tilting.	Consultations with these organizations were conducted through individual meetings and public consultations at the preparation and finalization stages of the key documents of the ESLR, including SEP, ESMF, EGDP and LMP.

<p><b>NGOs/Civil Society/Entities interested in land issues.</b></p>	<p>CDE, Green Community Alliance HELVETAS Swiss Inter-cooperation, IUCN, LIWG, MLGP, SNV Netherlands Development Organization; VFI, WCS and WWF-GMS</p>	<p>These organizations would be interested in land administration issues.</p>	<p>Obtaining inputs of these organizations through individual meetings as well as public consultations at the drafting and finalizations stage of the key documents for the project, including SEP, ESMF, EGDP, and LMP. The objectives of consultations are to obtain their expectations and comments on the proposed project design, potential risks and impacts associated with the project, engagement strategy of DOL/MONRE, including their concerns and issues related to land rights. There will be follow up consultations during project implementation.</p> <p>Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage.</p>
<p><b>NGOs/ International Organizations working on ethnic, gender and vulnerable groups</b></p>	<p>CARE International. Handicap International (HI); Oxfam International; and Save the Children International</p>	<p>This group would be interested in making sure that the project address issues of gender, ethnicity, and vulnerable groups adequately.</p>	<p>Obtaining inputs of these organizations through participation in meetings and public consultations at the drafting and finalizations stage of the key documents for the project, including SEP, ESMF, EGDP, and LMP. The objectives of their consultations are to obtain their expectations and comments on the proposed project design, potential risks and impacts associated with the project, engagement strategy of DOL/MONRE, including their concerns and issues related to gender, ethnicity and vulnerability.</p> <p>Follow up consultations will be undertaken during project implementation.</p> <p>Disclosure of relevant reports related to the environmental and social aspects of the project through the DOL webpage</p>

### **PART 3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

The SEP has the following objectives:

- Ensuring meaningful consultation and considering of stakeholders' expectations, concerns, and suggestions/opinions in the project implementation arrangements.
- Creation of avenues for complaints handling and grievance management; and
- Creation of opportunities for information sharing and disclosure.

To achieve these objectives, the Project shall:

- Provide meaningful information in a format and language that is readily understandable to stakeholders.
- Provide information in advance of consultation activities when possible.
- Disseminate information in a manner and location easy for stakeholders to access it.
- Establish a two-way dialogue that gives the Project and stakeholders the opportunity to exchange views and information, and have issues heard and addressed.
- Ensure inclusiveness in representation of views, including those of women, ethnic, and vulnerable people.
- Ensure any obstacles to participation, which shall be identified are removed so that voices of different stakeholders can be heard.
- Ensure clear mechanisms for responding to people's concerns, suggestions, and/or grievances.
- Incorporate feedback into project or program design, and report back to stakeholders.
- Monitor stakeholder engagement activities and include project stakeholders in monitoring to the extent possible; and
- Incorporate stakeholder engagement as part of the ESLR Project team management responsibilities, and ensure staff, in particular the Environment and Social Officers (ESOs) are equipped with specific responsibilities and budget.

The SEP should guide appropriate disclosure of information to ensure transparency of decision-making processes and access to information about the registration process and its outcomes. The approach to engagement activities will consider the needs of ethnic groups (including, when required, Free, Prior, and Informed Consent - FPIC), vulnerability, language, and literacy to ensure not only risks are managed but benefits are accessible to all. Women and other vulnerable groups will have to be also meaningfully engaged during project preparation and implementation.

As per the ESS7, FPIC is required in circumstances in which the project will:

- (a) have adverse impacts on land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation (For detailed description of the potential impacts, please see EGPF, a separate document on Ethnic Group People Framework, for more details).
- (b) cause relocation of Ethnic Peoples Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities from land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership, or under customary use or occupation; or
- (c) have significant impacts on Ethnic Peoples Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities' cultural heritage that is material to the identity and/or cultural, ceremonial, or spiritual aspects of the affected Ethnic Peoples Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities' lives (Para 24-26, ESS7).

FPIC will apply to all titling activities in EP communities as the project is dealing with land.

Stakeholders shall be engaged throughout the project lifecycles, including planning, preparation, office renovation and registration stages. Stakeholder engagement, however, shall be dynamic and flexible to changes in each stage of the project lifecycle. This SEP should be read together with other project documents such as the project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Labour Management Procedure (LMP), Ethnic Group Development Framework (EGDF) and Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

Several engagement approaches exist, and the Project shall select the most appropriate ones, depending on the type of stakeholders and the objectives of engagement. Please see APPENDIX APPENDIX 2 for stakeholder engagement methods.

This SEP is a living document throughout the project lifecycle and will be updated periodically, considering inputs from consultations and in agreement with the WB. When there are constraints on conducting public meetings, a Technical Note on Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in World Bank-support operations under the COVID-19 outbreak circumstance is applied. Please See ANNEX 5 for the WB's Technical Notes.

### **3.1 Disclosure of Information**

Disclosure of information refers to making information accessible and in a manner that is appropriate and understandable to interested and affected stakeholders. Disclosure of information is an on-going process of the ESLRP with defined stages: before World Bank project appraisal, and during project implementation.

Project information will be disclosed in both English and Lao as appropriate.

The guiding principles are:

1. Transparent.
2. Accessible.
3. Presented in a straightforward manner.
4. Disclosed as early as feasible.
5. Used to support consultation activities; and
6. Provided with meaningful and useful information.

#### **a) Before World Bank Project Appraisal**

- i. Purpose, nature and scale of the Project and its components, including potential risks and impacts to local people from environmental and social perspectives as well as ways to enhance project benefits.

#### **b) During project Implementation.**

- i. Detailed impacts, mitigation measures and project schedule.
- ii. Job opportunities, if any.
- iii. Training on gender, labour rights and health, as appropriate; and
- iv. Monitoring reports.

Main methods of disclosure are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Disclosure of Documents**

Project Stage	List of Documents	Method of Disclosure	Timetable/ Location	Target Stakeholders	Responsibilities
<b>Prior to World Bank Appraisal</b>	Draft ESCP, SEP and executive summary of draft ESMF	Hard copy and electronic of the draft documents distributed to target stakeholders well in advance of first round consultation  One-on-one meetings with selected stakeholders.	July 10-16, 2020	Relevant stakeholders for individual discussion.	DOL/MONRE, World Bank
	Draft SEP, ESMF, EGPF, ESCP, LMP plus executive summary in Lao language	Disclosed Project website at DOL/MONRE on February 18, 2021, but hard copy and electronic of the draft documents distributed to local stakeholders early on February 12, 2021	February 12 2020 and Feb 18, 2021		
	Final SEP, ESMF, EGPF, ESCP, LMP plus executive summary of ESMF disclosed in both Lao and English languages	Disclosed on Project website at DOL/MONRE on May 12, 2021.			
	Draft SEP, ESMF, EGPF, ESCP, LMP	National Consultation in Vientiane	Feb 18, 2021	All interested stakeholders	DOL/MONRE
	Draft SEP, ESMF, EGDF, ESCP, LMP	Local consultations at provincial, district and village levels.	Feb 18, 2021	Relevant Provincial Departments, District Offices working on land, forest, and conservation areas. Interested NGOs and CSOs may also be included.	DOL/MONRE

<b>Project Implementation</b>	Public Information Booklets. Detailed RPs, including information on eligibility, entitlement matrix, timelines, GRM and/or options for voluntary donations.	Local consultations.  Consultations with Affected People (APs)  One-on-one meetings with APs  Project website (include also Final Version of SEP, ESMF, EGDF, ESCP and LMP, including feedback from consultations) and site specific plans.	April 2021 onwards (post World Bank appraisal)	People impacted by land registration.	DOL/MONRE, ESOs, GDR and Implementation Support Consultant (ISC)
	ES screening forms, expected impacts, and mitigation measures those impacting people's health and safety, jobs, civil works (office renovation), staff code of conduct.	Local consultations  Trainings to Contractors  Training to workers  Public Boards  Radio  Newspaper  Posters  Code of Conduct  Project website	Local consultations and disclosure of document in December 2020. Other activities from January 2021 onwards	Affected and interested stakeholders	DOL/MONRE, PM, ESOs and ISC.
	Monitoring reports	Local consultations and project website	Likely July 2021 onwards	DOL/MONRE, GDR, affected stakeholders and World Bank	DOL/MONRE/ PM, ESOs and ISC
	Key elements in Ethnic Peoples (e.g., Social Assessment, procedures for FPIC if applicable, EPP, GRM, etc.) if applicable.	Local consultations, including consultations separated by gender and/or age group.  Pictorial posters and/or in local language  Village announcement  Trainings (on project process,	Locally in affected villages, if any.	Ethnic Peoples impacted by the project, with special consideration for women and/or the vulnerable.  Also include NGOs working on ethnic people, active in the area (TBD)	DOL/MONRE/ PM, ESOs.

		GRM, gender and/or other issues as relevant)			
		Other as may be desirable by IPs			

### 3.2 Stakeholder Consultations

During preparation stage, consultations took place at national and regional (local) level focusing on ESMF documents. At the national/central level, a face-to-face consultation meeting was held in Vientiane attended by representatives of concerned ministries and development partners on February 22, 2021. At the local level, representatives from concerned provincial and district offices were invited for participation in the regional consultations, which was virtually conducted on February 23, 2021. These local stakeholders were recommended to share brief information on ESF instruments, meet and obtain feedback from representatives of villages prior to the meeting. Consultations at the village level would be undertaken during implementation by ESLRP’s mobile unit, covering implementation issues. Comments/feedback can be submitted also through the GRM mechanism. Site-specific SEPs are not required. The ESMF documents are living documents and can be improved throughout the project lifecycle including feedback received from national, regional, and village levels as well as through the GRM.

Consultation is a bidirectional dialog mechanism between the ESLR Project and its stakeholders. ESLR Project workshops will provide opportunities to exchange project information and get input, including on issues such as contractors' working conditions, women's participation, and ways to minimize possible project risks, particularly to vulnerable groups.

Some helpful criteria that should guide consultations with stakeholders at local level, especially those affected, include:

- Face-to-face consultations should include all stakeholder groups for specific parts of land rights, such as women, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable people, including, where appropriate, breaking it down by gender and age. The field team will be responsible for organizing this.
- Focus group discussion (FGD) should be conducted locally/culturally sensitive and without external intervention or coercion so that interviewees can talk openly. Note that this might not be feasible to conduct in every village.
- Meeting and survey notices should be appropriately informed in advance at prominent locations, and details should be disclosed in advance where applicable; and
- Comments and feedback obtained from the participants should be gathered and integrated as far as possible into this SEP, other project documents and the ongoing implementation of the project, and stakeholders should be made aware of how this was achieved in follow-up meetings / consultations.

Although certain restrictions on COVID is still imposed by the government, gathering for consultations purposes is now permitted with social distancing and preventative measures applied. With this, consultation process was carried out as soon as the draft ESMF documents and proposal for organizing consultations the central and local level reviewed by the WB.

Two rounds of consultation meetings at central and local level were conducted during the project preparation as discussed in the Section 3.2.2.

### **3.2.1 Consultations with Ethnic Peoples (if relevant)**

The SEP should be coordinated with the EGDF. If Ethnic Groups are found in the project areas, it will be assessed if circumstances requiring Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) apply and/or are desirable. Criteria when the FPIC is required is provided in Part 3 of this SEP. Determination on FPIC if applies should be agreed with the World Bank, considering the requirements of the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and as provided for in the EGDF for the project. Regardless of whether FPIC is required, special attention should be given to the need for consultation with ethnic peoples with EGDF. The government mass organizations including LFND and LWU with local presence nationwide have mandate to represent and protect the ethnic groups and ethnic women's rights and interest. In ethnic villages, tribal leaders are usually elected as the head of village LFND representing the them and chairing the village mediation unit. In multi-ethnic villages, leaders or representatives of each ethnic groups are usually included in the community organization. Both LFND and LWU have been and will be part of past and further consultations. In addition, international NGOs including Helvetas will involve in the project implementation and consultations as the JSDF grant recipient to implement the parallel project for Public Information Awareness Services for Vulnerable Communities (PIASVC).

### **3.2.2 Methods of Consultations**

Consultations were undertaken in two ways: individual meetings combined with interviews and public consultations at the central and regional levels. The former took place at the central level such as meeting with selected ministries and organizations while the latter involves virtual meetings with a larger group of concerned and interested stakeholders, at the national and regional level. Due to the travel restriction measures in force associated with the COVID-19 outbreak in Laos and neighboring countries, virtual means of consultations with the regional/local stakeholders were applied e.g through WhatsApp, video and audio connection.

There were two rounds of public consultations conducted at national and regional levels. The objective of the first round of public consultation is to present the main expected activities under ESLRP with special attention paid to the environmental and social assessments and frameworks (ESMF documents) to be carried out and prepared before Appraisal, obtain initial expectations and comments coming from affected and interested stakeholders, and to validate the engagement strategy proposed by DOL/MONRE to ensure meaningful consultation and the consideration of stakeholder's inputs, expectations and concerns into the implementation arrangements for the project, including feedback on environmental and social mitigation measures and their implementation.

The objectives of the individual meetings/interviews applied during the first round consultation are to obtain their expectations and comments on the proposed project design, potential risks and impacts associated with the project, engagement strategy, including their concerns and issues related to equality, equity, and livelihoods issues of different groups of people i.e., ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups. Interviews were conducted with concerned Government Agencies such as Lao Front for National Development (LFND), Lao Women's Union (LWU), National Statistics Bureau (NSB), and National University of Laos

(NOUL) to clarify and obtain data/information on issues of Ethnicity, Gender and Social Economic Development Statistics, and related research results.

Methods for individual meetings/interviews includes the use of semi-structured questions to meet the need of meeting of each specific organization. The semi-structured questions were sent to each organization before the meeting so that relevant informants for their perusal and preparation for interviews. Interviewers include DOL staff and consultants. Key informants are those knowledgeable to the questions to be asked but depending on nomination of each organization. Interviews took place with the following organizations in July 2020:

- Department of Environment, MONRE
- Department of Water Resources, MONRE
- Department of Forestry, MAF
- Department of Agricultural Land Management, MAF
- Tax Department, Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Justice
- National Front for Lao Development
- Lao Women's Union
- National Statistics Bureau
- National Economic Institute for Research (NEIR)
- National University of Laos (NUOL)
- Land Information Working Group (LIWG),
- German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ),
- German Development Bank (KfW),
- Village Focus International (VFI),
- Mekong Region Land Governance Program (MLGP) and
- Swiss Agency for International Development Cooperation (SDC)

The second round of public consultation was organized at both central and regional level. The objective of this round is to report back to stakeholders listed above, presenting the draft project's Environmental and Social report and ESF instruments for their review and comments. Before carrying out this second round of consultations, draft versions of the assessments and frameworks (including executive summaries translated into Lao language) has been publicly disclosed and distributed among the participants on February 18, 2021. However, the hard and electronic copies of these draft ESF documents had been distributed to the participants on February 12, 2021.

Key points of each meeting were recorded as Minutes of meeting. Inputs were incorporated into the EMSF document as much as possible. For example, issues brought up by the interviews with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) include potential issues with boundaries between water conservation areas (including wetland) and individual lands. Currently, demarcation of wetland boundaries completed in 4 provinces: Attapue, Borikhamxay, Xienkhouang, and Vientiane. Wetlands maps for these 4 provinces can be

provided a later stage. However, still no such maps in the other provinces, which the ESLR operates. Such issues have been incorporated into the ESMF document.

Workshops, involving affected and interested stakeholders were used for public consultations. Presentations of the contents of each ESMF documents (ESMF, SEP, EGDF, LMP) were made to the participants, before questions and discussion. Focus-Group Discussions were used for the discussion. Further explanation on methods for stakeholder Engagement is provided in APPENDIX 2.

#### **3.2.2.1 Central-level Consultations**

Consultations at central level are especially useful for targeting representatives of government, NGOs and other interested groups that have an interest in the project and may also be able to influence the project. These stakeholders were invited for participation in consultation workshops at both national and regional levels.

National Consultations was held by DoL, MoNRE on 22 November 2020, to disclose and discuss the draft versions of the ESCP, ESMF, LMP, EGDF and SEP with interested stakeholders as defined by this SEP. The minutes of the consultation taken by DOL during project preparation can be found in

### APPENDIX 3.

Further consultations on ESLRP components can be coordinated during the comprehensive design and/or the project implementation monitoring. Minutes of consultation will be prepared, and suggestions will be integrated into project design or technical guidelines as appropriate (see

APPENDIX 3). Stakeholders will also be informed about how recommendations have been considered and/or incorporated through email or letter communication. Further workshops for stakeholders may take place at other stages of the project.

### **3.2.2.2 Provincial-level Consultations**

#### ***Provincial/Regional -level consultation:***

Following Consultation at central level, DoL, MoNRE organized a virtual consultation for provinces was held on 23 February 2021. 15 (out of total 18) provinces were involved in the consultations. These provinces are: Phongsaly, Luang Namtha, Bokeo, Oudomxay, Lung Prabang, Xaysomboun, Vientiane, Vientiane Capital, Borikhamxay, Khammouan, Savannakhet, Salavanh, Champasak, Sekong, and Attapeu. Vertical lines of Government stakeholders at provincial level and district level participated in the Provincial consultations. Representatives at district and village level were also invited for the consultation. Due to the travel restriction associated with COVID-19 outbreak, the representatives of the villages passed their messages and feedback via the district and provincial participants to the DOL.

Like material used for consultation at central level, draft versions of the ESCP, ESMF, LMP, EGDF and SEP were used for consultations at this level. The minutes of the consultation carried out by DOOL during project preparation can be found in

## APPENDIX 3.

### 3.2.2.3 Training

To better engage stakeholders, training on specific issues will need to be conducted. Examples of important issues for training include grievance redress mechanism, labour rights, gender, HIV/AIDS, STDs, gender-based violence. As some of such issues are sensitive, special measures would need to be taken to ensure that participants feel comfortable. Examples include female-only or male-only groups that would require facilitation by men or women only, as appropriate. Trainings might be carried out by qualified entities such as ESOs, ISC, NOGs or CSO based on their areas of expertise.

### 3.2.2.4 Consultations with Staff/Workers

The project shall ensure that unskilled workers (office renovation) are derived from local communities as much as possible, as to minimize the influx of labour. Assuming that men and women in the project area are available and interested in being hired, a proposed target of 15% of female unskilled workers is recommended. Contractors and their staff need to be well consulted and training on sensitive issues such as good neighbors (for staff from outside the project area), Staff Code of Conduct, gender-based violence, child labour, gender, labour rights, HIV/AIDS, and STDs.

Staff/workers need to be aware of knowledge and access to worker's grievance redress mechanism (as per their contract) as well as the project's GRM detailed in SEP. Contractors and their staff will be consulted through trainings, on-site interviews, and through regular feedback with supervisors and DDIS/ISC consultants.

## 3.3 Consultation Activities and Timeline

Two rounds of public consultations were held at both central and local/regional levels. The first round The Consultation activities are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Stakeholder Consultations**

Consultation	Stakeholder	Topic	Method	Location/Timing/ Frequency	Views on Gender, Ethnicity and/or Vulnerability	Responsible
<b>Prior to Appraisal</b>						
<b>Round one</b>	Central-level consultation	Proposed project and potential risks and impacts and risk management measures to be incorporated in draft SEP, ESMF, EGDF, ESCP, LMP	Interview and meeting with individuals (both face-to-face)	July 10-16, 2020	Topics of gender, ethnicity and vulnerable groups related to land issues area discussed	DOL/PM, ESOs with support from consultants
	Regional/ Local-level consultation		Virtual interview/audio calls with individuals	July 10-16, 2020		
<b>Round 2</b>	Central-level consultation	Draft SEP, ESMF, EGDF, ESCP, LMP	Face-to-face meeting where ppt presentation on the outlined key	February 22, 2021	Gender, ethnicity and vulnerable groups considerations related to land issues reflected in	DOL/PM, ESOs with support from consultants

			features of ESF documents presented and discussed		the ESF documents	
	Regional Local-level consultation		Video or audio meeting with 15 out of total 18 target provinces) where ppt presentation on the outlined key features of ESF documents presented and discussed	February 23, 2021		

**Project Implementation**

	Land holders, land users and villages/areas to be covered	Selection of target villages and land parcels for registration based on the criteria, identifying risks and mitigation measures through screening forms and other project related documents. Exact extent of works, including potential impacts, timing, project GRM, jobs, community health and safety	Local consultations, FGD, job announcements, billboard on land registration, trainings on gender	Expected October 2020 onwards	Focus group discussions with women and vulnerable, including Ethnic Groups if relevant. Priority in unskilled jobs.	DOL/PM and ESOs, ISC/DDIS
	Ethnic groups, if relevant.	To be identified through the screening process - Project impacts and benefits, mitigation measure, GRM.	Local consultations, Social Assessment	TBC - October 2020 onwards	TBC - FGD with women and vulnerable	DOL/PM and ESOs, DDIS, Ethnic Group Consultant (TBD)
	Project workers (Office construction and Renovation)	Code of Conduct, community health and safety, labor standards, GRM	Trainings and posters of code of conduct at worker's camp, trainings on LMP, and community health.	Before and during civil works	Specific gender trainings, more TBD depending on staff.	Contractor, supervised by ESO and DDIS/ISC
	Supply Chain	Labor standards, indentured and child labor	Due diligence checks and meetings	Before contracting with supply chain	N/A	Contractor, supervised by ESO and DDIS/ISC

### **3.4 Reporting-Back to Stakeholders**

The key method to inform and get feedback from stakeholders are consultations. It will be the responsibility of DOL, MONRE to ensure that there are records of project consultations and discussions and, where appropriate, to incorporate their comments into project documents. After meetings with inputs about how their comments were handled, stakeholders who provided relevant suggestions have been followed up with. Particular attention have been paid to understanding and integrating aspects of gender within the project. Comments and views of ethnic peoples have been and will be incorporated in line with EGDF and WB's ESS-7, under the umbrella of Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

The method of reporting back to stakeholders rely on the stakeholders themselves. There are basically two key methods:

- For national-level stakeholders, an email and/or official letter were sent after workshops on how comments/suggestions have been taken into account.
- For local-level stakeholders, follow-up meetings/consultations will be held to let stakeholders know how comments/suggestions have been incorporated; and
- For Ethnic Group People, ongoing consultations in line with this SEP and the IPPF shall ensure that Ethnic People views are considered and that they are informed of it.

### **3.5 Outcomes of Two Rounds Consultations Conducted**

Two rounds of public consultations were held at central and local/regional (provincial) levels. Feedback, recommendations, and concerns raised during the consultations were used to validate key assumptions and improve risk mitigation measures proposed in the ESMF. These processes were also used to ensure that the ESMF is known to stakeholders. A summary documenting each of these meetings, including date, number of participants, main results is included as an annex to the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

The first-round consultation was conducted during July 10-16, 2020 to mainly to inform the stakeholders at both and local levels of the proposed project, potential risks, and impacts (both positive and adverse) and obtain their feedback and suggestions on measures to manage risks. An information leaflet on the project had been distributed in both hard and electronic copy prior to the consultation. The stakeholders consulted understand the need and importance of the proposed project to support systematic land registration and improve land tenure for the land users while acknowledging the potential risks and impacts highlighted. The project should apply They suggested the project team provides more detailed project information and identifies mitigation measures to address and mitigate the risks with special attention to women's right to land use, ethnic and vulnerable groups of people and customary land users. The project should promote ethnic people and women's participation in decision making and in the land registration and the grievance mechanism should be in place for the land users to raise their concerns and feedback on the project. GIZ suggested that the existing Land Use Information System (LUIS), owned by the Government of Laos (GOL) should be useful for the ESLRP. Almost all concerned agencies expressed their willingness to support and work with the project.

The draft ESMF was prepared with the above comments from the 1<sup>st</sup> round consultation largely reflected. The draft ESMF was publicly disclosed at MONRE's website on 18 February 2021 and copies disseminated to key stakeholders, including civil society groups. The electronic copy of earlier draft ESMF had been sent out via WhatsApp and email to some stakeholders on 12 February 2020 prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> round consultation workshop at central level on 22 February and local/provincial level on 23 February for stakeholders from government and civil society institutions. The final package of ES documents (ESCP, SEP, ESMF, LMP and EGDF) cleared by the World Bank was disclosed on the same website on May 12, 2021. (Please see APPENDIX 5 **Error! Reference source not found.** for documentation of the consultations). Public consultation at central level was physically conducted in Vientiane to discuss the draft ESMF as well as ESCP, SEP and EGDF. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Anongsone Phommachanh, Director General, DOL, and attended by representatives of relevant departments (23 people) and civil society groups (6 people), while the consultation with provincial level stakeholders was virtually done via video connection due to the COVID-19 regulation in force and was chaired by the same chairperson with participation of Representatives of 18 provinces.

- Key points of discussion (including responses) from the first round of consultations are as follows:
- What are your thoughts on this project?
- What are the project risks and impacts on the environment and society (both positive and negative)?
- Do you think the mitigation measures and ESF tools that have been prepared are sufficient and appropriate to address the impacts of the project?
- Do you have any additional suggestions or comments?

Responses to the key questions are as follows:

- The project should bring positive outcomes to the people of Lao PDR,
- There is strong support for application of the World Bank Standards and related environmental laws of the Lao PDR to ensure that environmental and social concerns of the project is addressed.
- Land use planning should be complete before land registration activities, but so doing may cause delays in the project, so the project should get started where possible.
- Addressing boundary issues between conservation areas of roads, forest lands, water bodies, and private lands will be challenging. There is a need for proper interpretation of relevant laws such as water law in terms of conservation of riverbank. Relevant articles of the water resources law stipulates that it is prohibited to build structures in the conservation areas of rivers, but the Articles do not prohibit people to use the conservation areas for livelihood activities such as riverbank gardens, for example.

- Compensation for losses of access will be important as the project would result in the restriction of access to certain areas for NTFPs for livelihoods previously available to certain groups of people in each village.
- Gender aspects need to include names of both wife and husband if own by both. Also, all names of sons and daughters need to be included.
- Customary rights and livelihoods of local people need to be considered by the project.
- The current draft of ESMF can be improved with provision of a diagram. Currently, a description of the process is provided, but a diagram showing the process would be helpful.

In addition to the points of discussion, main takeaways are documented. Information obtained (including responses) during the consultations have been integrated into the ESF documents (if appropriate).

Key Points of discussion from the second round of consultations are as follows:

1. The project is seen as particularly important in many aspects and hence there is no objections expressed throughout the consultations.
2. There is significant support for the implementation of the project as well as ESMF tools, including the SEP, EGDF, LMP as they are highly in line with related, national laws and regulations.
3. The need for support through training, awareness raising, communication, equipment, and transportation so that local government agencies can carry out the project as well as the ESMF properly and on time. Sufficient financial resources will need to be allocated to rural, mountainous provinces and districts due to difficulties in access to all villages.
4. There are concerns over potential dispute between land holders and conservation areas such as roads, national borders, 3-types of forest, and water resources, including wetlands.
5. The project will need to pay special attention to gender issues. Different ethnic groups have different cultures and customs, hence the lack of such attention will result in the loss of rights of women in some ethnic groups.
6. Ethnicity issues will be important for the project to consider. Some ethnic groups may have objections to the project if not well communicated.
7. There is a need for improved legislation to speed up the process of land registration and tiling.
8. Customary land use rights will be important part of the project. It is not clear as to how customary land rights of a groups of households can be addressed, meaning if the land title can be given to each individual household or as a group.
9. It is important that the land registration and titling process be participatory by relevant stakeholders.

10. Land classification is needed before registration and titling, otherwise it will be difficult, if not possible.

11. Participatory approach is critical for the project to be successful, including the implementation of the ESMF tools.

12. Need for setting up of committee at local level to oversee the project, including land registration and titling process and implementation of the ESMF tools.

Although no representatives of districts and villages and ethnic groups directly involved in both round consultations due to the current travel restriction associated with COVID-19 control measures, the CSOs and government mass organizations at the provincial level including Lao Women's Union (LWU) and Lao Front for National Development (LFND) were representing these local stakeholders in their respective provinces. Before the consultation, the provincial stakeholders had been requested to either meet some of their district colleagues and ethnic communities to share the project information and obtain feedback from them.

#### **PART 4 GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM**

The objective of the grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is to be a general complaint mechanism for issues related to the project. GRM does not apply to person-to-person disputes, but only state-to-person disputes. Person-to-person disputes should be dealt with by the regular land registration dispute resolution mechanism.

The basis for the confirmation of land ownership is through verification by actual surveys with participation of land holders, neighboring land holders and relevant local authorities, including district land units of DONRE, service centers, village authorities and fieldwork teams. Steps taken for the field measurement surveys for verification purposes are:

- 1) Notification of land parcels in the village by the village chief to fieldwork team,
- 2) Notification of the village chief to land holders in advance of the field survey,
- 3) Actual field survey based on information provided by the village chief with participation of each land holders, neighboring land holders, fieldwork team (including district land office and service centers) and village authorities.

According to the Instruction on Land Registration and Titling (2014), public display is required to be carried out 30 days in advance before land registration and titling, and via the media at least 3 days in row. DONRE is to organize a village meeting, involving DONRE Land Management Unit, Field Team of Land Registration, Representatives of the District Women's Union, Village Authority, Elder Group of the Village, Village Women's Union, and representatives of each family in the village and other relevant stakeholders. The field teams of land registration and titling in coordination with authorities of the target village are to organize meetings with landholders in areas of target registration and titling 2-3 days in advance, including preparation of various documents, demarcation, participation of land holders, resolution of boundary conflicts, etc.

Both physical and legal data of each land parcel in question are displayed for public verification and inquiries for a period of 30 days. Landholders may challenge the mapping results during this period. In the case of administrative errors, necessary correction or rectification will be made by the ESLR Teams. In the case of legal disputes, the land parcel in question will not be eligible for certification, to prevent further disputes or escalation of conflicts.

Risk management at the implementation level is mostly handled directly by ESLR Mobile Team, who report to Service Centers and DOL as appropriate. Public inquiries and complaints are managed on a case-by-case basis (further described in the following Section 3 on Grievance Handling).

As per the current regulation, communities and their representatives have the right to participate or decline to engage in the ESLR process.

Under the ESLR approach all land parcels in a village would be mapped and registered with the land office and relevant data entered the electronic database and title certificates will be issued for land parcels previously not certified and free of encumbrances (i.e., no competing claims, no overlaps with Forest Areas, concessions, and other land parcels). This approach not only focuses on building public confidence in land administration through a participatory process but also invests in technological upgrades and adoption of appropriate policies and guidelines to support operations. The ESLR process also reinforces the importance of decentralized land administration and management models and good practices in governance of resources.

In the context of ESLR, the ESMF seeks to enhance MONRE current grievance redress mechanisms in three ways:

- 1) by strengthening coordination and capacity of vertical line of MONRE at provincial and district level in preventing and managing disputes through enhanced community participation and transparency.
- 2) by bolstering availability of personnel and financial resources; and
- 3) strengthening community-level dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation.

The ESMF differentiates between 'cases' arising during the implementation process and 'grievances' reported after or separately to field level implementation. The ESMF does not attempt to add another layer of feedback and grievance redress reporting but aims to strengthen in-house capacity in preventing complaints by investing in more meaningful community engagement and participation. Investments in capacity building for dispute mediation will be sought.

#### **4.1 Case Management During ESLR Implementation**

During the ESLR implementation, particularly during the physical and legal data collection, community resistance or tension may occur. If so, the following steps may be taken:

- 1) ESLR Teams assigned to the field will report to Service Centers at district, provincial, regional and DOL level as appropriate, upon identification of potential resistance from communities or stakeholders.

- 2) Community engagement will be revisited, and meetings or consultations will be organized, as necessary. Village chiefs, village mediation unit/committee and/or ESLR village facilitation teams to facilitate discussion may be involved.
- 3) Formal agreement will be made between ESLR Teams and the communities/landowners aggrieved as to whether ESLR activities should continue.
- 4) If the decision is to continue, then necessary improvement measures for ESLR implementation will be agreed on by the communities/stakeholders.
- 5) If the decision is to stop the activities, a written agreement and handover document shall be signed by the communities/stakeholders. Copies of data obtained, including maps produced shall be handed over to the village authorities for their reference.
- 6) A new location of ESLR shall be then identified and the process will be repeated.



## 4.2 Grievance Redress Handling

Mechanism of the Project for complaint resolution would consist of three tiers:

**Tier 1. Local Committee (Village Chief or Community Leaders):** Field teams will maintain a Record Book and description of Roles, Mandate, and Responsibilities of the Local Committee.

**Tier 2. Quasi-formal submissions to the Field Teams or local land offices.** The Field Team will maintain a register and record of details as First Information Received (FIR), including:

- a) Date and mode of receipt of the complaint.
- b) Name of the person submitting the complaint (not compulsory).
- c) Details of the complaint, including land parcel location, etc.
- d) Specific issues to be addressed the Field Team; and
- e) Status of grievances received (completed, in progress, escalated to district/provincial level)
- f) Proposed next steps by the Field Team, in consultation with land office.

When a complaint is submitted to the Field Team, the first step is to conduct a field investigation by concerned officers and an aback-to-office report is submitted to the Service Center at District Level. Details on field observations and recommendations will be included. The field investigation and enquiries together with the complainant and other parties will continue until the complaint is resolved, after which the Field Team will record the results and close the case. If the complaint is not resolved, then the investigation officer shall prepare a report and submit it to the Land Office for further action.

**Tier 3. PMU (DOL):** This tier functions under the leadership of the PMU. This is to consider unsolved complaint referred from local level. The PMU Complaints Handling Committee comprises of senior officials. Based on the nature of the complaint, the PMU will ensure that parties to resolve the complaint are accurately represented and a field investigation is completed. At this stage, the PMU Committee may also assess if the Field Team complies with due procedures and performed its duties in accordance with the guidelines.

A team of at least two focal staff may be appointed for ESF implementation. One mainly focusses on Environment and the other on social aspects. The social focal staff is expected to handle, monitor, and report on GRM. This should be specified in his TOR/letter of appointment by PONRE/DONRE. No need to have another person to oversee GRM due to shortage of personnel in the local offices. He/she will be trained and responsible for day-to-day ESF/ESSs and GRM oversight, including receiving complaints from ESLR stakeholders, managing coordination, and liaison with ESLR Taskforce and Adjudication Committee. He/she will document GRM status and any pending complaints, requiring coordination with higher level authority within MoNRE vertical line and/or other sectoral agencies. Importantly, disputes and grievances arising from ESLR processes are expected to be resolved locally, hence strengthening the existing MoNRE's capacity in handling of disputes will be important as part of the operationalization of the ESMF.

## 4.3 Grievance Procedure

Wherever possible, the project team shall seek to resolve the complaint as soon as possible, and thus avoid escalation of issues. However, where a complaint cannot be readily resolved, then it must be escalated. To resolve grievances of PAP effectively and quickly; according to

the Law on Grievance Redress 012/NA (December 5, 2014), to ensure an effective and efficient grievance, a mechanism for the project is proposed as follows:

**Stage 1:** The first level of complaint resolution, following traditional methods in Laos, should be the Village through its Village Mediation Unit (VMU) and/or Sub-district (*kum*) level who may be able to resolve issues on the spot. The VMU at the village level would comprise of representatives of ethnic group community leaders, and head of mediation unit or village elder persons.

Complaints can be submitted in verbal or written forms. It is expected that some complainants such as ethnic minority or vulnerable individuals/households might not be able to write any complaints. Complainants may also retain the right to bypass the VMU procedure and as such can direct their grievance directly to DONRE and PONRE, as provided by law in Lao PDR.

In cases where grievance is related to a labour dispute, the grievance may be first submitted to the contractor and/or human resource staff of the contractor directly.

**Stage 2:** in cases where grievances cannot be resolved on the spot, the second level of complaint people will be able to file grievances directly with ESO at DONRE. People will have been informed of the ESO's contact information during consultations. The ESO will be able to record the grievance and offer a solution within 15 days, consulting with the DOL's Project Manager and Director, as needed. This may include a visit to the project site by the ESO if necessary. There are no fees or charges levied for the lodgment and processing of grievances at this level.

**Stage 3:** in cases where grievance still cannot be resolved, or not resolved to the satisfaction of the any complainant, he/she shall have the right to submit a complaint to the PONRE as desired by the complainant. The administrative arbitration organization shall make the arbitrated decision within 20 days. Like the two previous stages, there are no fees or charges levied for the lodgment and processing of grievances at this level.

**Stage 4:** if the complainants are still unsatisfied with the arbitrated decision made by the administrative arbitration organization at the Provincial level, after receiving the arbitrated decision, they can file a lawsuit in a civil court according to relevant laws and regulations of the Lao PDR. The complainant will bear the cost at this stage but will be reimbursed for their expenses by the Implementing Agency, DOL, MORE if their complaint is successful.

Complainants may opt to raise their grievances directly to PMU/DOL via hotline call or commonly used WhatsApp to be set up under the project. Contact detail of focal staff from PMU and PONRE responsible for GRM should be provided in project information leaflet/booklet to be prepared and distributed to all project villages well in advance of consulting and GRM training for village mediation committees.

It is important to note that the WB ESF and GRM does not apply to person-to-person disputes, but only state-to-person disputes. Person-to-person disputes should be dealt with by the regular land registration dispute resolution mechanism.

#### 4.4 Recording Grievances

Established and managed by the DOL/MONRE's SOEs, a complaints register will be established as part of the project to record any concerns raised by any stakeholder during the implementation of this project. Any serious complaint will be communicated with the World Bank within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.

A summary list of complaints received, and their disposition, along with key statistics on the number of complaints and duration taken to close out, must be reported annually. A unique number is assigned to each record reflecting year and sequence of complaint received (for example 2020-01, 2020-02 etc.). Complaint records (letter, email, record of conversation) should be stored together, electronically or in hard copy under the responsibility of the DOL/MONRE's ESO.

Grievances will be recorded in a Grievance Logs (Table 4). Information provided by the Table shall include:

- Stakeholder name and contact details (if not anonymous).
- Details of the nature of the grievance.
- Date received, way it was responded to, and
- How it was submitted, acknowledged, responded to, and closed out.

Grievances can be submitted anonymously, or the aggrieved person can also request their name be kept confidential. Responsibility for the Grievance Log will be with the ESO office and Project Directors/Managers of DOL/MONRE.



## **PART 5 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING**

### **5.1 Implementation Responsibilities**

Program Steering Committee will be established to provide guidance both for ESLRP as well as KfW's LMPL project. The PSC will be chaired by MONRE/DOL and is envisioned to have participants from National Geographic Department of Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Forestry of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao Women's Union, Lao Front for National Construction, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning and Investments. It shall be responsible for facilitating inter-agency coordination and cooperation in executing Project activities.

DOL, MONRE has a project team in charge, with a Project Director in the lead, a Project Manager and Environment and Social officers (ESOs).

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be the responsibility of MONRE Project Director (PD), Project Manager (PM) and Environment and Social Officer (ESO). They will guide the process of stakeholder engagement throughout the preparation and implementation of the ESLRP. DOL/MONRE shall have an ESO office with staff and budget, and it will be the responsibility of this office to oversee the delivery of this SEP. Certain parts of the SEP, as detailed above, will also be the responsibility of contractors or consultants, as necessary and the ESO will oversee this work as appropriate. ESOs report to their respective Project Managers and Directors.

The ESOs, under the guidance of the PD/PMs, will be responsible for:

- Leading, or supervising, consultations, as per the SEP.
- Leading, or supervising, the disclosure of information, as per the SEP.
- Reporting on grievance resolution, as per the SEP.
- Review monthly monitoring reports provided by contractors and/or consultants; and
- Regularly reporting to the Project Directors.

Stakeholder engagement should be periodically evaluated by the Project in line with overall monitoring and other relevant project documents. The Project will strive to include project stakeholders in monitoring activities.

The ESOs are supported by consultants during the project preparation phase, and trainings to the ESO on the WB ESF and stakeholder engagement shall be conducted. Additional capacity building of the ESO will be needed during project implementation and should be done as described by Table 5.

**Table 5: Staff and Responsibilities for SEP Activities**

Staff		Responsibility
DOL/MONRE	Project Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews and approves monthly reports on grievance redress and stakeholder engagement; and</li> <li>Keeps World Bank informed on the implementation of the SEP.</li> </ul>
	Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees ESO and the process of grievance redress and stakeholder engagement; and</li> <li>Submits monthly reports to the Project Director.</li> </ul>
	ESO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements stakeholder engagement activities as described in the SEP, including consultations, disclosure, trainings on gender-based violence, road safety, etc.</li> <li>Coordinates with village and commune authorities and contractor on the grievance redress mechanism, following up that grievances are recorded and promptly resolved.</li> <li>Oversees stakeholder engagement activities being conducted by the contractor and/or consultants.</li> <li>Coordinates with other agencies; and</li> <li>Leads the process of identification of Ethnic Peoples or Ethnic Groups.</li> </ul>
Contractor	Chief Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carries out consultations with stakeholders on project timeline, mitigation of civil work activities (such as dust, traffic), informs stakeholders about jobs.</li> <li>Ensures careful consideration of women and vulnerable groups, including them in consultations and that they do not miss out on job opportunities.</li> <li>Conducts training on Code of Conduct for workers, including on appropriate behavior and relations with community and gender-based violence.</li> <li>Conducts trainings and awareness activities on road safety; and</li> <li></li> </ul>
	Environment and Social Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses the progress, accessibility, and efficiency of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).</li> <li>Conducts trainings on gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS, road safety and others as described in this SEP and/or as required by DOL/MONRE.</li> <li>Assists in the identification of Ethnic Peoples, working with the ESO.</li> <li>May be tasked with preparing the Social Assessment and Ethnic People's Plan (IPP) if relevant, or this may be the task of a separate consultant; and</li> </ul>

**Contact details of Implementing Agency:**

Department of Land (DOL)

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)

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## **5.2 Internal Monitoring**

The objective of Internal Monitoring of the SEP implementation is to ensure targeted consultations and disclosure activities are taking place. With the support of senior ESF International consultant and ESF national consultant, an Internal Monitoring will be conducted and reported by the ESO of DOL/MONRE, under the overall guidance of the Project Directors and Managers. The involvement of local stakeholders in monitoring activities shall be encouraged. Internal Monitoring will consist of monthly reports during the implementation of the project, part of overall monitoring. Ethnic Peoples should be particularly involved in monitoring impacts that affect them, and this would be detailed in an EGDF.

Monitoring shall focus on:

- Level of understanding of stakeholders about the project and project objectives, including in relation to labor and community health and safety.
- Levels of impacts within expected parameters (more/less).
- Community feedback incorporated into project design and planning.
- Adequacy and success of implementation of mitigation measures.
- Main grievances and efficacy of GRM.
- Overall community satisfaction.
- Ease of approaching contractors and/or the ESOs, including timely acknowledgement and resolution of questions and/or complaints.
- Type of information disclosed.
- Methods used for stakeholder engagement.
- Minutes of consultation meetings.
- Number of staff working on Stakeholder Engagement; and
- Plans for the next month and long-term plans.

Monitoring specific to ethnic groups will be done in line with EGDF.

## **5.3 Monitoring by IS Consultant**

DOL/MONRE shall monitor SEP activities. Monitoring topics should include:

- Adequacy of stakeholder engagement, including activities, staffing and budget.
- Review of grievances submitted, time to respond, resolution of grievances and complainant's satisfaction with the process; and
- Interview of sample households to assess satisfaction with stakeholder engagement and knowledge of the project and related programs.

Additional monitoring on ethnic groups may also be relevant in line with project RP and EGDF (if applicable).

## APPENDIX 1: Documentation of Consultations

<b>Title of Consultations:</b>	
<b>Location and Date:</b> [name of the village/place and date]	
<b>Objective and agenda:</b> [explain the objectives and agenda of the consultation]	
<b>Participants:</b> [which stakeholders targeted, how stakeholders were invited, number of participants who attended and their gender and if they are ethnic groups. Note information on vulnerable groups]	
<b>Summary of the Consultation:</b> [describe the format/style of the consultation, who facilitated it, the language used, summary of information presented]	
<b>Questions/ Comments made and responses:</b>  [summarize the main questions asked and the responses given]	
<b>Photos</b>	

## APPENDIX 2: Methods for Stakeholder Engagement

Method	What it Used For
<b>Information Boards in Sub-district Offices, worker's camp, and other relevant locations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To disseminate information, announce meetings, advertise jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Information Booklets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide clear and summarized information about the project and particular impacts and mitigation measures (such as land acquisition and environment).</li> </ul>
<b>Summaries of Environmental and Social Impact Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide summaries of main environmental and social documents (RPs) and how project impacts are being mitigated.</li> </ul>
<b>Correspondence by phone/ email/SMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute project information to government officials, CSOs and NGOs. Invite stakeholders to meetings.</li> </ul>
<b>Print media and radio announcements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminate project information to large audiences, announce meetings, advertise jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>One-on-one interviews and/or Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit views and opinions.</li> <li>Enable stakeholders to speak freely and confidentially about ideas or concerns.</li> <li>Get information regarding sensitive issues such as Gender Based Violence (GBV), labor influx, women workers, child labor, etc.</li> <li>Information gathering on, and consultation with, IP groups (if relevant).</li> <li>Social due diligence (on supply chain, IP issues, voluntary land donations, involuntary land acquisition, other); and</li> <li>Project monitoring.</li> </ul>
<b>Formal meetings and consultations (national/ provincial)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present project information</li> <li>Allow stakeholders to provide their views and opinions.</li> <li>Build relations with high level stakeholders and ensure initiatives of different ministries, donors and/or NGOs are well aligned.</li> </ul> <p>Distribute/disclose technical or other project documents</p>
<b>Village-level meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present/disclose project information to communities and other stakeholders in the project area.</li> <li>Allow stakeholders to provide their views and opinions on the project, including proposed Grievance Mechanism.</li> <li>Announce project initiatives/jobs (such as hiring local people, including women).</li> <li>Conduct trainings on relevant topics (such as road safety, gender).</li> <li>Discuss ethnic groups issues (if relevant), involuntary land acquisition and/or voluntary land donations.</li> <li>Build relationships; and</li> <li>Project monitoring.</li> </ul>
<b>Small group trainings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target specific groups of people in trainings or meetings (for instance, targeting contractors to train on GBV, conducting community trainings on road safety, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Surveys (i.e., socioeconomic, inventory of losses, other)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather information from individual stakeholders that may be specifically impacted by the project, such as by loss of assets or relocation, or who are voluntarily donating land; and</li> <li>Gather information on a specific topic (such as ethnic groups)</li> </ul>
<b>Website and social media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclose project information, project reports, timelines, project updates</li> </ul>

### APPENDIX 3: Minutes of First Round Consultations

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
01	10 July 2020	Department of Environment, MONRE	6 persons	Focus on the project's ESMF instruments to avoid/mitigate the adverse impact on the land registration implementation and its infrastructure construction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Adverse environmental impact</b> from the civil work and the fieldwork of mobile unit such waste generation, water pollution.</li> <li>2. <b>Adverse social impact</b> on the community health and safety throughout the construction work in the adjacent local community</li> <li>3. <b>The conflict issue</b> of the landowner regarding the land registration.</li> <li>4. <b>Impact land tenure rights of the women and indigenous people.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The project had to send the project description and its component (including project activities) to DOE, and then DOE will provide the letter for the DOL that project will be required the ESIA or not?</li> <li>2) All the project's ESMF document must be shared with DOE.</li> <li>3) What measures does the DOL have any mitigation measures to deal with issues related to land registration, especially overlapping registration?</li> </ol>
02	13 Jul 2020	Department of Forestry, MAF	7 persons	Focus on the role of community forestry and land tenure right in the forest area and how that program or scheme impacts the ESLRP.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Customary land right</b> within the forest areas.</li> <li>2. <b>Forest Area Conflict</b> -the private land area's land registration process will be a conflict with the three forest categories and another unclassified forest area approx. 300,000 hectares.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The project must coordinate DOF to gather the forest area geodata sets to ensure that registered land parcels will not be involved within forest areas.</li> <li>2) Request the project to recruit DAFO staff (forest management section) to participate in the land survey's mobile unit to ensure that the area does not fall into the three forest types.</li> </ol>
03	14 Jul 2020	Department of Agricultural Land Management, MAF	5 persons	Focus on the role of land tenure right in the agricultural land area and how that program or scheme impacts the ESLRP.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Land-use allocation</b> - land registration program may result in conflicts over land use in eight categories, especially in the village are not completed the land-use allocation yet.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Request the project to recruit DAFO staff (agricultural management section) to participate in the land survey's mobile unit to ensure that the area does not fall into the three forest types.</li> </ol>

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
						3. Requested to project should be shared the registered agricultural land area with DALaM.
04	14 Jul 2020	Department of Public Information and Dissemination , MOJ	9 persons	Focus on lessons learned and process of media and awareness raising strategy in land registration process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Awareness and public consultation</b> - The project staff's ability to conduct the awareness-raising needs to ensure people attend to the land registration process and ensure that they will understand the benefits of land titling.</li> <li>2. <b>Customary land</b> right of the women and indigenous people.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The grievance readiness mechanism must be existing processes by following the Law on the Handling of Petitions (2005); the project must ensure issue or problem regarding the land registration process will be resolved in a transparent and timely manner resolution.</li> <li>2) Department of Public Information and Dissemination is committed to assisting the project team in its public relations and training of project staff to disseminate laws and other regulations related to tenure right; to make the local community to understand land use rights issues and provide them the knowledge to a willingness to attend the land registration process.</li> <li>3) To be advised, the project must conduct the pre and post awareness and public consultation to ensure people will be using the land titling in the right way and protect their tenure right as well.</li> </ol>
05	15 Jul 2020	LIWG	2 persons	Focus on the experience and lessons learned of NGO engagement in land registration process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project policy on the <b>land customary right</b></li> <li>2. The <b>grievance redress mechanism</b> process of the project.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project must be creating the GRM in the transparency and accessible process to ensure that the indigenous people can access this mechanism to resolve the land tenure right issue.</li> </ol>

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
					<p>3. <b>Women's right and indigenous people's right</b> in the land registration process.</p>	<p>2. The project will be ensured that indigenous peoples are able to participate in decision-making about activities affecting their lands, territories, and resources through their own freely chosen representatives.</p> <p>3. The project needs to ensure equal access of women and men to project information and consultation processes.</p> <p>4. All the project awareness-raising program and village consultation with the indigenous people's village should apply the FPIC approach to ensure that they will be a misunderstanding their tenure right and not lose their right to the registration and adjudication process.</p>
06	16 Jul 2020	MLMG	2 persons	Focus on the experience and lessons learned of NGO engagement in land registration process.	<p>1. The project policy on the <b>land customary right</b></p> <p>2. The <b>grievance redress mechanism</b> process of the project.</p> <p>3. <b>Women's right and indigenous people's right</b> in the land registration process.</p>	<p>1. The project will be ensured that indigenous peoples are able to participate in decision-making about activities affecting their lands, territories, and resources through their own freely chosen representatives.</p> <p>2. The project must be creating the GRM in the transparency and accessible process to ensure that the indigenous people can access this mechanism to resolve the land tenure right issue.</p> <p>3. The project should study the previous lessons learned from other projects regarding the tenure rights throughout</p>

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
						the Mekong region, such as Cambodia, Vietnam, etc., as well as other projects implemented in Lao PDR in the past.
07	21 Jul 2020	Department of Tax, MOF	2 persons	Focus on government agencies' experience and lessons on socio-economic context, mainly the land tax revenue.	<p>1) <b>Costs of titling</b> - it will be raised as a question of whether land titling programs are expensive? It depends partly on the intrinsic costs (and benefits) of alternative options, the ability to afford costs, and, of course, who is paying. Absolute formal land tenure registration systems, particularly titling, tend to be expensive, and inaccessible for low-income groups.</p> <p>2) <b>People's willingness to pay attention to land registration project</b> - because the project will be conducted in the countryside area. Almost all people there are still poverty, and they have a large land area, especially the agricultural land; they might think that their land tax payment will be increase when they have a land title. This will be added the question of what short and long-term impacts these have on low-income groups.</p>	<p>1. Request DOL to update the information registered land parcel and title with the Department of Tax to assist the land taxation collection. DOT's information was an out-update information, especially the land titling conversion from the agricultural land to residential land.</p> <p>2. Need a project to ensure that people are willing to attend to the land registration process and improve the land registration fee (it is possible to make it a cheaper and accessible process), and make a meaningful village consultation to ensure that they will understand beneficial of land title</p>
08	23 Jul 2020	National Commission for the	4 persons	Focus on government agencies' experience and	<p>1. <b>Gender-based violence</b> throughout the project implement.</p>	<p>1. Request to the project will be applied the gender equality and female empowerment to all project phase in</p>

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
		Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children, LWU		lessons on women's rights in the land tenure aspect.	<p>2. <b>Women's land rights</b> in the land registration project need special consideration because disparities between men's and women's roles in land ownership and natural resource management mean that they are likely to be impacted differently by tenure-related impacts. In the countryside, women often tend to have more inadequate access to land and rights in the same group than men, suggesting weaker appreciation of women's rights to land under both customary and statutory tenure systems, especially the land titles (almost indigenous people they put their husband's name on the land title even to their own property)</p>	<p>both land registration process and the worker and staff who will involve with the project.</p> <p>2. The project needs to ensure equal access of women and men to project information and consultation processes.</p> <p>3. All project activities should apply the gender-based violence mitigation measure to ensure that there are not create any adverse impact to the women from the project implementation</p>
09	14 July 2018	National University of Laos (NOUL)	4 persons	<p>1) What do you think about the SEP? (Briefly present the SEP before asking this question).</p> <p>2) Any key findings of research/studies by NOUL related to land administration/registration, including gender, ethnicity, and land issues.</p>	<p>Multiple classifications of land would make it difficult for mapping and titling. Using simple classification such as based on physical characteristics would make it easier for mapping. Customary rights and livelihoods of local people need to be considered. Numerous research related to land administration and management have been conducted through Bachelor and Master Theses. To use them, there is a need for synthesis. This would take time and hence might</p>	

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				3) Any other concerns/recommendations for the ESLRP. 4) Request for documents, including related research reports.	not be able to respond to the urgent need of the ESMF. Nevertheless, such knowledge can be transferred to ESLR through contribution of NOUL during the ESLR implementation. Contribution of NOUL can be in the form of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Related training</li> <li>2) Human resources (lectures, students)</li> <li>3) Related research documents (distributed across faculties)</li> <li>4) GIS</li> </ol>	
10	16 July 2021	National Institute for Economic Research (NIER)	3 persons	1) Key research findings by NEIR related to land administration/registration issues? 2) Any other concerns/recommendations for the ESLRP. 3) Request for documents, including related research reports.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No research related to land administration conducted by NIER, but on impacts of concession projects.</li> <li>2. Potential contribution to the ESLR implementation includes policy improvement/development.</li> <li>3. Potential issues:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. boundary issues such as demarcation of roads and private lands.</li> <li>b. Practically, there are differences in compensation for losses of land due to development activities between lands with and without land titles. Why?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
					<p>c. Gender aspect: need to include names of both wife and husband if own by both. Also, all names of sons and daughters need to be included.</p>	
11	15 July 2018	German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)	4 persons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Where is/are your project/s implemented? Which Province/s, District/s?</li> <li>2) What are objectives and activities of your projects? Are they about land administration?</li> <li>3) What do you think about the SEP? (Briefly present the SEP before asking this question).</li> <li>4) What are key issues encountered by the project/s in relation to land administration, including gender, ethnicity, and land issues?</li> <li>5) Is the draft Grievance Redress Mechanism appropriate? Any suggestions for improvement?</li> </ol>	<p>Land registration project of GIZ is being carried out in Xayabouri, Houphanh and Luang Namtha provinces. In Luang Namtha the Land Registration Project focuses on a few districts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Viengphoukha,</li> <li>2) Long</li> <li>3) Sing</li> <li>4) Nale, and</li> <li>5) Namtha.</li> </ol> <p>Areas of activities of the GIZ project include land use planning and physical procedures.</p> <p><b>Boundary issues</b> for land registration faced by GIZ project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How wide public roads is?</li> <li>• How wide irrigation canals is?</li> <li>• Boundaries between different types of conservation areas such as wetlands, conservation forest, protection forest, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Customary Land Use Rights:</b> The GIZ project has seen issuing of land title for households based on their customary rights. The project, however, has not seen this happen to collective land,</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Land use planning should be complete before land registration activities,</li> <li>2) The existing Land Use Information System (LUIS) owned by the Government of Laos (GOL) should be useful to the ESLRP. It is accessible by projects such as ESLR.</li> </ol>

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) Any other concerns/recommendations for the ESLRP?</li> <li>7) Request for any related project documents.</li> </ul>	although it happened elsewhere in the country.	
12	17 July 2020	Lao Front for National Development (LFNC)	1) people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) How are the ethnic groups formally classified?</li> <li>2) Is the draft methodology to screen the presence of ethnic minority in the project area appropriate (to be briefly presented before asking this question)? Any suggestion for improvement.</li> <li>3) Is the Grievance Redress Mechanism as proposed by the SEP (to be briefly presented before asking this question) appropriate? Any suggestion for improvement?</li> <li>4) Any other concerns/recommendations for the ESLRP?</li> <li>5) Request for documents, including decrees, regulations, maps ethnic groups in the 12 provinces.</li> </ul>	<p>The Department of Ethnicity has been involved in land and forest pilot project with the Department of Land and Department of Forestry. The Pilot Project is being carried out in Khammouan province.</p> <p>Ethnic groups: 49 ethnic groups formally used since 2008. The number of ethnic groups, however, was updated to be 50 ethnic groups in 2018. The newly updated ethnic group was “Brue”.</p> <p>A book on ethnic groups, including definitions and livelihoods has been published by the LFNC. This should be useful for the ESLRP, particularly in term of screening.</p> <p>Decree 227 dated 24/6/2020 is a key document of the LFNC in dealing with complaints/grievances. It sets out principles and procedures for complaints/grievances to be addressed by the LFNC.</p> <p>In 2018, the LFNC issued guidelines on the consultations with ethnic groups affected by Public and Private Development Project. The Guidelines contains methodology and steps of consultations with ethnic groups.</p>	

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					Although the terms “ethnic groups” mean all ethnic groups in Lao PDR according to the resolution No. 213/NA, in the Guidelines the term “ethnic groups” mean “Mon-Kmer, Hmong-Mien and Chinese-Tibetan families that are defined in the Ethnic Groups in Lao PDR Green Book, published and disseminated by the LFNC in 2008.	
13	10 July 2020	Department of Water resources (DRW), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	5 people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any inventory of wetlands in the 12 provinces? If so, are there any maps or boundaries of the officially approved wetlands? How should the ESLRP be conducted to address wetland issues?</li> <li>2. Any approved or planned conservation areas of water resources such as riverbanks, etc. in the 12 provinces? If so, are there any maps/clear boundaries of the officially approved conservation areas?</li> <li>3. Is the Grievance Redress Mechanism as proposed by the SEP (to be briefly presented briefly before asking</li> </ol>	<p>Legislation on wetlands and conservation areas are being developed but have not been finalized. Demarcation of wetland boundaries completed in 4 provinces: Attapue, Borikhamxay, Xienkhouang, and Vientiane. Wetlands maps for these 4 provinces can be provided a later stage.</p>	

No.	Date	Department/ Organization	Number Participants	Key Questions/Points Discussed and Follow-up	Project Concerning Issues	Recommendation
				<p>this question) appropriate?</p> <p>4. Any other concerns/recommendat ions for the ESLRP?</p> <p>5. Request for regulations on wetlands and conservation areas of water resources (under the Amended Water Law 2017) and any documents on the responses/concerns above, if any.</p>		

## APPENDIX 4: Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Consultations

<b>Title of Consultations:</b>	
<b>Location and Date:</b> [name of the venue/place and date]	Vientiane Capital, 22-23 February 2021
<b>Objective and agenda:</b> [explain the objectives and agenda of the consultation]	Objectives of the consultations are to introduce the project together with ESMF tools and to obtain comments and inputs, including comments and suggestions of the participants
<b>Participants:</b> [which stakeholders targeted, how stakeholders were invited, number of participants who attended and their gender and if they are ethnic groups. Note information on vulnerable groups]	<p>Participants of the Consultations at Central Level, undertaken in July 2020: National University of Laos, National Economic Research Institute, National Statistic Bureau, Department of Tax/Ministry of Finance, Lao Front for National Development, Lao Women’s Union, Department of Environment, Department of Water Resources, Department of Forestry, Department of Agriculture and Land Management, Ministry of Justice, Land Information Working Group (LIWG), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), German Development Bank (KfW), Village International, Mekong Region Land Governance Program (MLGP), Swiss Agency for International development Cooperation.</p> <p>Participants of the Consultations at Central Level, undertaken on 22 February 2021: Department of Customs, Ministry of Finance, Department of Water Resources, Department of Environment, Ministry of Justice, Lao Front for National Development, MRLG, Department of Legislation, Department of Land, Village International, GIZ, the World Bank.</p> <p>Participants of the Consultation at local level, held on 23 February 2021: offices of the above Departments at provincial and district level. Selected village representatives also participated in the consultation.</p>
<b>Summary of the Consultation:</b> [describe the format/style of the consultation, who facilitated it, the language used, summary of information presented]	The first day of the consultation, 22 February, the consultation took place in a meeting room, while the second day of the consultations was a virtual style of consultation, involving representatives from 18 provinces. The consultations were chaired by Mr. Anongsone Phommachanh, Director General of the Department of Land, with assistance of facilitation by the Senior Social Consultants. Lao language was used for the consultation. Information presented include objectives and targets of the ESLR project, environmental risks, and impacts, ESMF tools, including ESMF, SEP, EGDF, LMB and ESCP.
<b>Questions/ Comments made and responses:</b> [summarize the main questions asked and the responses given]	<p>Key questions asked are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your thoughts on this project?</li> <li>• What are the project risks and impacts on the environment and society (both positive and negative)?</li> <li>• Do you think the mitigation measures and ESF tools that have been prepared are sufficient and appropriate to address the impacts of the project?</li> <li>• Do you have any additional suggestions or comments?</li> </ul> <p>Responses to the key questions are as follows: 1. The project is seen as especially important in many aspects and hence there is no objections expressed throughout the consultations.</p>

2. There is significant support for the implementation of the project as well as ESMF tools, including the SEP, EGDF, LMP as they are highly in line with related, national laws and regulations.
3. The need for support through training, awareness raising, communication, equipment, and transportation so that local government agencies can carry out the project as well as the ESMF properly and on time. Sufficient financial resources will need to be allocated to rural, mountainous provinces and districts due to difficulties in access to all villages.
4. Addressing boundary issues between conservation areas of roads, forest lands, water bodies, and private lands will be challenging. There is a need for proper interpretation of relevant laws such as water law in terms of conservation of riverbank. Relevant articles of the water resources law stipulates that it is prohibited to build structures in the conservation areas of rivers, but the Articles do not prohibit people to use the conservation areas for livelihood activities such as riverbank gardens.
5. The project will need to pay special attention to gender issues. Different ethnic groups have different cultures and customs, hence the lack of such attention will result in the loss of rights of women in some ethnic groups. Names of both wife and husband if own by both need to be reflected by the land title. All names of sons and daughters need to be included.
6. Ethnicity issues will be important for the project to consider. Some ethnic groups may have objections to the project if not well communicated.
7. There is a need for improved legislation to speed up the process of land registration and titling.
8. Customary land use rights will be important part of the project. It is not clear as to how customary land rights of a groups of households can be addressed, meaning if the land title can be given to each individual household or as a group.
9. Livelihoods of local people need to be considered by the project.
10. It is important that the land registration and titling process be participatory by relevant stakeholders.
11. Land classification is needed before registration and titling, otherwise it will be difficult, if not possible.
12. Participatory approach will be needed for the project to be successful, including the implementation of the ESMF tools.
13. Compensation for losses of access will be important as the project would result in the restriction of access to certain areas for NTFPs for livelihoods previously available to certain groups of people in each village.

14. Need for setting up of committee at local level to oversee the project, including land registration and titling process and implementation of the ESMF tools.

15. The current draft of ESMF can be improved with provision of a diagram. Currently, a description of the process is provided, but a diagram showing the process would be helpful.

Photos



## **APPENDIX 5: Technical Note on Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings**

With the outbreak and spread of COVID-19, people have been advised, or may be mandated by national or local law, to exercise social distancing, and specifically to avoid public gatherings to prevent and reduce the risk of the virus transmission. Countries have taken various restrictive measures, some imposing strict restrictions on public gatherings, meetings and people's movement, and others advising against public group events. At the same time, the public has become increasingly aware and concerned about the risks of transmission, particularly through social interactions at large gatherings.

These restrictions have implications for World Bank-supported operations. They will affect Bank requirements for public consultation and stakeholder engagement in projects, both under implementation and preparation. WHO has issued technical guidance in dealing with COVID-19, including: (i) Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Action Plan Guidance Preparedness and Response; (ii) Risk Communication and Community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response; (iii) COVID-19 risk communication package for healthcare facilities; (iv) Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19; and (v) a guide to preventing and addressing social stigma associated with COVID-19. All these documents are available on the WHO website through the following link:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>.

This Note offers suggestions to World Bank task teams for advising counterpart agencies on managing public consultation and stakeholder engagement in their projects, with the recognition that the situation is developing rapidly, and careful regard needs to be given to national requirements and any updated guidance issued by WHO. It is important that the alternative ways of managing consultation and stakeholder engagement discussed with clients are in accordance with the local applicable laws and policies, especially those related to media and communication. The suggestions set out below are subject to confirmation that they are in accordance with existing laws and regulations applying to the project.

Based on the suggestion above, in the case of ESLR Project, stakeholder consultation and engagement activities should not be deferred, but rather designed to be fit for purpose to ensure effective and meaningful consultations to meet project and stakeholder needs. Subject to the coronavirus situation in the country, and restrictions put in place by governments, the following are suggested:

Review the country COVID-19 spread situation in the project area, and the restrictions put in place by the government to contain virus spread.

Review the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP, particularly the approach, methods and forms of engagement proposed, and assess the associated potential risks of virus transmission in conducting various engagement activities.

Be sure that all task team and PMU members articulate and express their understandings on social behavior and good hygiene practices, and that any stakeholder engagement events be preceded with the procedure of articulating such hygienic practices.

Avoid public gatherings (considering national restrictions), including public hearings, workshops, and community meetings, and minimize direct interaction between project agencies and beneficiaries/affected people.

If smaller meetings are permitted, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels, including WebEx, Zoom and skype meetings.

Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders.

Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, public announcements, and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Such channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions.

Employ online communication tools to design virtual workshops in situations where large meetings and workshops are essential, given the preparatory stage of the project. WebEx, Skype, and in low ICT capacity situations, audio meetings, can be effective tools to design virtual workshops. The format of such workshops could include the following steps:

*Virtual registration of participants:* Participants can register online through a dedicated platform.

*Distribution of workshop materials to participants, including agenda, project documents, presentations, questionnaires, and discussion topics:* These can be distributed online to participants.

*Review of distributed information materials:* Participants are given a scheduled duration for this, prior to scheduling a discussion on the information provided.

*Discussion, feedback collection and sharing:*

Participants can be organized and assigned to different topic groups, teams or virtual “tables” provided they agree to this.

Group, team, and table discussions can be organized through social media means, such as WebEx, Skype or Zoom, or through written feedback in the form of an electronic questionnaire or feedback forms that can be emailed back; and

*Conclusion and summary:* The chair of the workshop will summarize the virtual workshop discussion, formulate conclusions, and share electronically with all participants.

In situations where online interaction is challenging, information can be disseminated through digital platform (where available) like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, Project weblinks/ websites, and traditional means of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, phone calls and mails with clear description of mechanisms for providing feedback via mail and/or dedicated telephone lines. All channels of communication need to clearly specify how stakeholders can provide their feedback and suggestions.

*Engagement with direct stakeholders for household surveys:* There may be planning activities that require direct stakeholder engagement, particularly in the field. One example is resettlement planning where surveys need to be conducted to ascertain socioeconomic status of affected people, take inventory of their affected assets, and facilitate discussions related to relocation and livelihood planning. Such survey activities require active participation of local stakeholders, particularly the potentially adversely affected communities. However, there may be situations involving ethnic communities, or other communities that may not have access to the digital platforms or means of communication, teams should develop specially tailored stakeholder engagement approaches that will be appropriate in the specific setting. The teams should reach out to the regional PMs for ENB and Social Development or to the ESSA for the respective region, in case they need additional support to develop such tailored approaches; and

In situations where it is determined that meaningful consultations that are critical to the conduct of a specific project activity cannot be conducted despite all reasonable efforts on the part of the client supported by the Bank, the task team should discuss with the client whether the proposed project activities can be postponed by a few weeks in view of the virus spread risks. This would depend on the COVID-19 situation in the country, and the government policy requirements to contain the virus spread. Where it is not possible to postpone the activity (such as in the case of ongoing resettlement) or where the postponement is likely to be for more than a few weeks, the task team should consult with the OESRC to obtain advice and guidance.