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Beneath the Silence:

women, indigenous peoples, and corporate power
Unveiling Human Rights Abuses in Laos



Joint Civil Society Submission to be considered by the UN Human Rights Council during the Universal Periodic Review (Fourth Cycle), 49th session (April–May 2025), Lao PDR.

Submission by

Manushya Foundation, Power By Keyboard and Lao Youth Network for International Accountability



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BENEATH THE SILENCE: WOMEN, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND CORPORATE POWER - UNVEILING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN LAOS

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A. INTRODUCTION

We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this Joint Civil Society UPR Shadow Report, which will be reviewed by the United Nations during the 4th cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2025. This report, focusing on the situation in Laos, represents our collective efforts to bring attention to critical human rights issues and advocate for meaningful change.

Manushya Foundation (Manushya) was founded in 2017 as an Intersectional Feminist organisation dedicated to strengthening local communities and advocating for human rights in Laos. We work to ensure that these communities are at the forefront of decision-making processes that affect their lives and to amplify their voices in speaking truth to power. Manushya defends local communities and seeks justice with them at the United Nations, focusing on a broad spectrum of human rights issues, including women's rights, gender equality, digital rights, and climate and environmental justice.

Power by Keyboard (ຂັບເຄື່ອນດ້ວຍຄືບອັດ) was created by pro-democracy youth in March 2022 and advocates for true democracy while criticising Lao PDR's growing dependency on China. It focuses on human rights, including China's dominant influence on investments in Lao PDR and education rights for Lao youth. The page also addresses environmental concerns and fiercely supports LGBTQI+ rights in Laos.

Lao Youth Network for International Accountability (LYNIA) is a group of human rights lawyers and activists working anonymously on various issues related to development and human rights in Laos. Through capacity building, the Youth Network hopes to gain knowledge to hold the Lao Government accountable on its international human rights and development obligations and commitments, in particular in the context of UN human rights mechanisms, climate justice, environmental rights and responsible business frameworks.

The comprehensive analysis and data presented in this report are a result of on-the-ground data collection, diligent monitoring, and the substantial efforts of Manushya Foundation, Power by Keyboard, and the LYNIA, who are deeply committed to advancing human rights and achieving genuine progress for the people of Laos.



B. KEY CONCERNS

Women's Rights in Laos

Human Trafficking

1. Discussing women's rights in Laos would be incomplete without mentioning human trafficking. The government often boasts about its various initiatives, such as **training programs, awareness campaigns, the 2016 Anti-Trafficking Law, and article 215 of the Penal Code**. However, these efforts, while well-delimited in theory, fail to tackle the fundamental issues at play: extreme economic hardship.ⁱ The Lao government has accepted 9 recommendations regarding human trafficking, including 115.119 to intensify efforts to combat human trafficking, especially of women and children, 115.121 to take steps against trafficking in persons with a focus on child victims and women, 115.122 to enhance measures to combat trafficking, 115.123 to improve law enforcement practices and provide victim support, 115.124 to protect women and children victims by improving access to shelters, 115.125 to end child trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation, 115.126 to enhance international cooperation against trafficking, 115.127 to raise awareness in vulnerable remote communities, and 115.128 to take preventive measures in the fight against human trafficking.ⁱⁱ
2. In 2024, the Lao government's response to the pressing issues of **forced online scams, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (GTSEZ)** could only be described as comically inadequate. This region, notorious for its scam operations and exploitation, continues to trap countless victims—many trafficked directly from Laos—into situations of forced labour and abuse. Despite the removal of 2,614 vulnerable workers from the GTSEZ between 2022 and 2023, the authorities managed to "identify" only 25 victims. This remarkable statistic raises eyebrows, as the government conveniently categorises serious trafficking offences as "labour disputes".ⁱⁱⁱ When asked about statistics during the recent CEDAW review, the delegation proudly announced the existence of a statistics bureau in Laos. However, they lamented their limited resources regarding the Monitoring and Evaluation System.^{iv} It's a pity their detection skills for trafficking victims don't match their proficiency in identifying dissenters. Parallely, prosecutions remain a rarity, particularly when low-level officials are involved in facilitating these acts with falsified documents. Adding to the absurdity, the newly constructed Bokeo International Airport, reportedly funded through dubious means, has not implemented any anti-trafficking measures. Even with 170 police officers deployed in the GTSEZ in 2023, only 45 trafficking cases were investigated, leaving one to wonder about the sincerity of their efforts.^v What a Surprise! In May 2024, a Lao Ministry of Public Security official confessed to a lack of resources.^{vi} One can't help but wonder: why bother funding the fight against such crimes when simply looking the other way is far less demanding? **Clearly, the government prefers to keep its hands clean while trafficking and exploitation keep lining their pockets with dirty money.**



Access to justice

3. *You might ask: why don't the victims file complaints?* While we've touched on access to justice before in this report, the reality is that the legal framework in Laos utterly fails, especially when it comes to securing justice for women and their unique challenges. The government is quick to parade its so-called initiatives aimed at empowering women, boasting about laws like the **Legal Aid Decree No. 77/Gov.** Yet, these initiatives are a cover-up for their shocking lack of real implementation.^{vii}
4. A recent 2024 study on Laos's Supreme Court^{viii} paints a pretty dismal picture. A jaw-dropping 76% of courts can't even manage basic facilities, like toilets with sanitary napkin dispensers or breastfeeding rooms. But wait, there's more! A staggering 71% of courts don't provide any kind of remote hearings. Meanwhile, 63% of courts can't even handle urgent cases properly. It's almost like they're trying to win an award for incompetence. When it comes to funding for gender equality, the situation is equally grim. Training on gender equality and diversity? Let's just say it leaves a lot to be desired; 53% of court employees have no training on gender discrimination, and 67% find that mandatory training on gender equality is rarely available. A shocking 70% of survey respondents say there's barely any money for gender equality strategies and 72% think resources to address gender-related issues are practically non-existent. In a truly heartwarming gesture, the government has chosen to raise the minimum wage for civil servants in 2024, particularly those in military and police roles.^{ix}
5. Recent cases illustrate this phenomenon. In one particularly charming display of 'customer service', **women working at a hotel** were used as literal human targets in a ring-toss game for Chinese clients.^x *Who said diplomacy was dead?* Laos and China show us that 'partnership' means working hand in hand to degrade human dignity. Then there's the **mysterious death of a woman**, weirdly echoing another dismemberment case in the same spot. Both, naturally, ignored by the authorities.^{xi} But don't worry, everyone—the Lao representatives at the CEDAW review proudly presented their "mediation units" as a fantastic alternative to the actual justice system. These informal justice mechanisms are led by village heads, who surprisingly are all affiliated with the country's only political party, with "the goal to achieve harmony by non-confrontational means". When a committee member requested clarification on the impartiality and transparency of these leaders, we'd love to tell you their response. But the lack of clarity, precision, and conciseness left us more confused than before and we're not even sure *they* understood what they said.^{xiii}
6. As hinted above, accountability mechanisms are inadequate as well. Over half of participants report that mechanisms to address inappropriate behaviours are rare or absent. A striking 65% of participants believe that the measures to hold judges and managers accountable for gender-related issues are nothing more than a facade.^{xiii} Nanthida Phoumichit, or '**Nesxy**,' was sexually harassed and assaulted during a



Parliamentary Committee conference in April 2024. Her attacker, exploiting his government position, threatened legal retaliation. After fleeing to Bangkok, harassment persisted as authorities pressured her parents to force her to return and cease speaking out on social media. They violated her privacy, searching both her and her mother's phones for information. Nesxy's ordeal exemplifies transnational repression, with teachers, hotel staff, and local authorities all complicit in victim-blaming and attempts to silence her. This situation exposes the Lao government's failure to hold perpetrators accountable, allowing influential figures to avoid justice and discouraging women from coming forward. Despite supporting recommendations on education (115.177, 115.184, 115.187), human rights education (115.37-38-41-42-201), and women's participation (115.200, 115.192-198), Laos has failed to implement these commitments, as seen in Nesxy's case.^{xiv}

Recommendations to the Lao government

- a) In accordance with the 2020 UPR Recommendation from Czechia, provide a comprehensive overview of the legislative and policy measures implemented to combat trafficking in persons. This overview should particularly focus on the protection of child victims, women, and members of ethnic minorities.
- b) Take decisive action to prevent and combat human trafficking, particularly in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone. This should involve the development and enforcement of specific policies, legislation, and mechanisms aimed at addressing trafficking in this area.
Establish complaint mechanisms and support services within special economic zones to ensure that potential victims of human trafficking can report incidents safely.
- c) Access to necessary assistance, protection, and remedies must be prioritized to support victims effectively.
- d) Mandate regular public reporting on human trafficking cases, detailing the number of identified victims, investigations, and outcomes to enhance government accountability.
- e) Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for anti-trafficking initiatives, allowing for independent assessments of the government's effectiveness in addressing these issues.
- f) Enhance training programs for law enforcement officials to improve their ability to identify trafficking situations and victims, ensuring a victim-centred approach in investigations.

Business and Human Rights in Laos

Legal Framework & Marginalized Communities

7. Laos is home to over 49 ethnic groups, making it the most ethnically diverse country in Southeast Asia. However, the government refers to Indigenous Peoples (IPs) as "ethnic groups," denying them recognition of their indigenous status, self-



determination, and specific rights. The country's population is divided into four main language families, with Lao-Thai speakers comprising two-thirds, while the rest, who speak Mon-Khmer, Sino-Tibetan, and Hmong-Ew-Hmien languages, are considered IPs.^{xv}

8. According to **Article 17 of the Lao Constitution (2015)** and **Article 3 of the 2019 Land Law No.70**, all land in the country is « the ownership of the national community where the State represents the ownership holder and manages lands in a centralized and uniform manner». Therefore, registering ownership of land is necessary for individuals, but rural and indigenous communities face obstacles in conforming to this obligation mainly due to language barriers and challenges tied to accessing the registration process. This situation ultimately undermines the customary land rights of these communities and leaves them with little to no avenue for remedy in case of rights violation.^{xvi} IPs in Laos also face systemic exclusion from meaningful participation in decision-making processes, particularly concerning development projects, often suffering from forced evictions and land grabs. These actions are carried out under the guise of conservation and investment, with little regard for **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)**—a violation of their rights under international agreements.
9. In December 2023, the Lao government repealed **Decree 84 on Compensation and Resettlement Management in Development Projects (2016)**,^{xvii} which had previously outlined guidelines for fair compensation and resettlement of affected communities. To add to the absurdity, the government claimed that resettlement and compensation are already covered in the **2018 Law on Resettlement and Vocation (No. 204/P)**^{xviii} and the **2019 Land Law (No. 70)**,^{xix} which is supposedly why Decree 84 is no longer needed. However, these laws don't actually provide effective solutions. The weak enforcement of these laws has allowed Lao authorities to seize land without hesitation, prioritizing investors over local communities. As a result, countless local villagers have been displaced and dispossessed of their lands for development projects, often with little to no meaningful participation or consultation process involved. As of 2018, reports indicate that the government of Laos has granted over 1750 land concessions to different companies. These concessions involve the use of lands owned by local communities for prolonged periods, with some agreements stretching as far as 100 years.^{xxi} Essentially, the government is all about creating more laws to tighten its grip on the people while conveniently reducing any accountability for itself.^{xxii}
10. Under the **2018 Law on Resettlement and Vocation**,^{xxiii} individuals displaced by development projects are entitled to compensation for losses related to income, property, crops, and vegetation. Developers are obligated to ensure that the living conditions of displaced individuals are at least as favorable, if not better, than their previous circumstances. Despite this, the law is seen as disproportionately



empowering private developers, often lacking sufficient oversight and failing to guarantee fair compensation and relocation for affected communities. The inadequate regulations and accountability mechanisms lead to exploitation and insufficient support for those who are displaced.

11. The **2019 Land Law**, aimed at regulating land use rights, has largely benefited state and private interests, leaving Indigenous communities vulnerable. The law centralises government control, offering vague guidelines and allowing for greater government discretion in land acquisitions. The law does not adequately address the rights and needs of indigenous communities, facilitating the exploitation of their ancestral lands for development projects without proper consultation or compensation. As a result, Indigenous peoples face increased vulnerability and the potential loss of their cultural heritage.^{xxiv}

12. By now, it is evident how the Lao authorities operate—engaging in rhetoric without taking meaningful action to protect and safeguard the country's flora and fauna. This pattern has been demonstrated once again. On June 20, 2023, Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone introduced a **new decree on protected areas**, a theoretical step toward better managing and safeguarding Laos' biodiversity. This decree seeks to balance benefits for both people and nature by engaging nearby village residents in co-managing the protected areas through a "Guardian Village" approach, aligning it with Laos' goal to keep 70% of its land under forest cover. It builds on the **2019 National Green Growth Strategy and Forestry Law**, which laid out broader plans for sustainable development. These frameworks paved the way for other recent regulations, such as the **2022 CITES Decree**, and the soon-to-come updates to the **Wildlife Law and Forestry Strategy**, aimed at making Laos' green growth ambitions a reality by 2035. Again, these are no more than empty gestures designed to appease the international community; in practice, they remain largely unenforced and ineffective. In line with these lies, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry recently released **guidelines for Village Forest Management Plans**. These aim to standardise and enhance forest management at the village level while strengthening local authorities' ability to protect forest areas. **The Country Action Plan (CAP) for the Recognition of Land-Use Rights in Forestland**, launched in November 2023, also aims to improve land rights and security for communities in forest areas. However, it creates challenges for IPs. While the CAP offers a chance to recognise their customary land rights, the rules for figuring out who qualifies are unclear. This makes it hard for many to get Land-Use Certificates. Furthermore, for those who moved into State Forests after they were established, there's a real risk of eviction without guaranteed fair compensation, leaving them exposed and at risk of losing their homes.^{xxv}

13. In terms of **corporate accountability**, the **Lao Constitution** does include provisions for environmental protection, notably **Articles 19 and 21**. **Article 19** emphasises the state's commitment to promoting the protection and restoration of degraded



environments to ensure their sustainability, urging all organisations and citizens to safeguard biodiversity and use natural resources responsibly; meanwhile, **Article 21** highlights the government's focus on economic development that harmonises with cultural growth and environmental sustainability, prioritising the development of human resources. The government has also introduced various laws, such as the **2022 Decree on Environmental Impact Assessment**, the **2017 Law on Minerals**, and the **2012 Environmental Protection Law**, which ostensibly aim to protect the environment. These laws suggest that thorough Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) should be conducted before project development and that projects must adhere to environmental standards. However, the reality often diverges sharply from this ideal, as proper EIAs are usually overlooked or inadequately executed. Moreover, Laos lacks a comprehensive legal framework to effectively hold corporations accountable for environmental damage, allowing investors to prioritise their profits while largely disregarding the consequences for local communities and the environment. While Laos noted recommendation 115.56 from Norway during the 2020 Third UPR Cycle, which called for the development of a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP-BHR), the government has nonetheless announced efforts to draft the plan. However, the lack of tangible progress and continued absence of corporate accountability suggest that these efforts are more about creating an illusion of reform than implementing meaningful change. The status quo, where corporations operate with impunity, remains unchallenged, revealing the government's comfort with inaction and lack of responsibility.^{xxvi}

14. Despite having laws to “protect” communities, the Lao government seems to be on a mission to build dams without a care in the world. Sure, these dams might lure in foreign investment and boost GDP—electricity was a sparkling 8.9% of it in 2021. But let's not kid ourselves, with Lao's legendary corruption and its usual lack of transparency, it's hard to believe local communities will see any real benefits.^{xxvii} As a matter of fact, we have been witnessing the Lao government's pattern of exploitation extending to development projects, such as the **Don Sahong dam**, where local communities have faced forced relocations without proper consultation or adequate compensation. Protests against such developments are often met with suppression, including the arrests of residents advocating for their rights. Other projects, like the **Laos-China Railway** and **Luang Prabang dam** projects, reveal similar issues related to land acquisition and compensation. Many residents are still awaiting compensation for the land they lost to railway construction, while those displaced by the Luang Prabang dam are demanding five times the amount currently offered by the government.^{xxviii}
15. Further compounding the issue, the **Sino Agri International Potash Co** plans to relocate over 2,130 families from 23 villages in **Luang Prabang** and **Xayaboury** provinces. Protests against perceived inadequate compensation have resulted in arrests, illustrating the repression of dissenting voices. The victims of these projects



suffer not only the loss of land and livelihoods but also face precarious living conditions, social conflict, and a profound loss of their cultural identity.^{xxix}

16. The government's approach to development has prioritised state and private interests over the welfare of its people, particularly Indigenous communities. This disregard for community concerns and failure to uphold international commitments to human rights demonstrates systemic neglect that needs urgent addressing.

Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy Dam Collapse

17. The tragic **2018 Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy dam collapse** in the Attapeu Province is an example of the consequences of neglecting community rights. The collapse of the auxiliary dam (Saddle D) of the Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy hydroelectric project on 23 July 2018 resulted in the deaths of 71 people, the displacement of thousands more, and the destruction of 1,700 hectares of agricultural land, as well as homes and public infrastructure. Despite receiving \$91.2 million in disaster relief from the dam operators, PNPC (Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy Power Company), only a fraction of the funds reached the affected people—71% of the compensation was pocketed by the government.^{xxx} In February 2022, Manushya petitioned the UN Working Group on business and human rights, and relevant mandates to seek justice and compensation for more than 7000 survivors. Following this, the UN issued a Joint Communication from Special Procedures in July 2022, urging the Lao government and 22 implicated companies to address the ongoing hardships faced by these communities.^{xxxi} The Lao government, however, has refused to take responsibility, insisting that it has fulfilled its commitments by providing re-housing and compensation. Yet, the reality for many survivors is that they continue to live in unsanitary temporary shelters, with limited access to basic necessities like clean water and sanitation. The government's failure to provide adequate compensation, coupled with its mismanagement of relief funds, has left many families in dire conditions. In November 2023, Manushya and its partners engaged with the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) to reveal the fraudulent actions of Lao authorities regarding compensation that was supposed to benefit affected communities.^{xxxii} As a result, in January 2024, the governor of Attapeu Province reported that \$4.2 million allocated for victims was missing, further exposing corruption and deepening the plight of the affected communities.^{xxxiii}

Luang Prabang Dam^{xxxiv}

18. Laos, in its reckless race to become the "Battery of Southeast Asia," is clearly ready to sell its soul—and its cultural heritage—for a quick profit. The Luang Prabang Dam, located just 25 kilometers from the historic UNESCO-listed city, couldn't be a better example of this. Spearheaded by Thai powerhouse CH Karnchang (Yes, the same company that has already caused significant damage with the Xayaburi Dam), this project is in partnership with the state-owned Luang Prabang Power and Vietnam's



PetroVietnam Power. A charming transnational setup where, as usual, the environmental and cultural fallout lands squarely on Laos.^{xxxv} This dam threatens to turn Luang Prabang into a lakeside town, erasing its unique riverside character and displacing over 500 families—but, *as long as the electricity flows to Thailand, who cares about a few lives and local traditions?* Laos gets crumbs, while its own people bear the weight of this hydropower scam. To make things even better, the dam sits right on an active fault line, with a very real risk of catastrophe—but it seems the government prefers to keep its eyes closed. While the Lao government preaches economic growth through foreign investment in hydropower, they’re actually signing a deal to sacrifice the environment and heritage for fast cash. UNESCO warned in July 2021, through Decision 40 COM 7: massive reservoirs in or around World Heritage sites simply don’t work if you care at all about preserving Outstanding Universal Value. In 2020, NGOs rang the alarm on the Luang Prabang project, prompting UNESCO to demand a heritage impact assessment (HIA). In an impressive bureaucratic buffoonery, the Lao government managed to produce a report by November 2021— quickly sent to the recycling bin by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and IUCN, who clearly weren’t buying their “transparency”. More seriously, the technical review by ICOMOS and IUCN concluded that the HIA was insufficient to prove the absence of negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value and requested the Lao government to rectify this with additional considerations. After a monitoring mission to the dam site in April 2022, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS advised Laos to reconsider the project’s location. They recommended relocating it, as well as any similar future projects, to areas where World Heritage properties, their values, and surrounding environmental settings would not be at risk. Despite those clear recommendations to halt construction until a real impact assessment could be conducted, bulldozers and cranes are already hard at work. Traditional ceremonies once held on a historic sandbank have “generously” been relocated to an artificial island, because nothing says “respect for culture” like performing rituals on a slab of concrete. Meanwhile, the fragile Mekong ecosystem bears the brunt, with downstream countries like Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam suffering too.¹

¹ International Crisis Group, *Dammed in the Mekong: Averting an Environmental Catastrophe*, (7 October 2024), available at: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/cambodia-thailand-china/343-dammed-mekong-averting-environmental-catastrophe>; International Rivers, *Sites of Struggle and Sacrifice: Mapping Destructive Dam Projects along the Mekong River*, (25 June, 2024), available at: <https://www.internationalrivers.org/news/sites-of-struggle-sacrifice-mapping-destructive-dam-projects-along-the-mekong-river/>; RFA, *Planned dam sparks concerns that Luang Prabang could lose World Heritage status*, (3 February 2024), available at: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/laos/world-heritiage-status-02022024170302.html>; Nikkei Asia, *Laos tourist jewel at risk of losing UNESCO status*, (14 January 2024), available at: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Travel-Leisure/Laos-tourist-jewel-at-risk-of-losing-UNESCO-status>; Manushya Foundation, *Money over Lives, Lies over the Truth: The State of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Laos*, Joint Civil Society CESCR Report to inform the List of Issues to be considered by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), during the Pre-Sessional Working Group for its 73th Session, (22 November 2023), available at: https://www.manushyafoundation.org/_files/ugd/a0db76_10e7cee9e3ae4069b1f3708cfc88677a.pdf; Manushya Foundation, *As Laos is building dams, local communities are sacrificed in the process*, (18 April 2023), available at:



19. Why prioritize citizens and neighbors when the Lao government can pile up empty promises? Recommendations 115.52, 115.150, 115.151, and 115.152, addressing environmental protection, fair relocation standards, and preventing forced displacement, are routinely ignored. For instance, recommendation 115.52 emphasizes revising economic strategies to protect the environment and assess foreign investments, yet profit consistently outweighs these values. Recommendations on fair compensation and resettlement (115.150–115.152) are similarly sidelined, with projects like the Luang Prabang Dam symbolizing a disregard for cultural heritage and livelihoods in favor of profit-driven “green” energy initiatives. Adding to the irony, the government dismissed a proposal to create a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, opting instead for vague promises of “strengthening existing laws” while continuing to shirk meaningful accountability.² *Sound familiar?* This is the same tune they played during the last CEDAW session in October 2024, when Laos halfheartedly explained why they hadn’t established a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) compliant with the Paris Principles—citing vague “obstacles” they had troubles to clarify when asked.³ Naturally, the Lao government can't own up to the fact that these so-called institutions are mere extensions of the government.

Recommendations to the Lao government

- a) Undertake comprehensive legislative and policy measures to formally recognise and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. This includes affirming their right to self-determination, as well as their rights to land and natural resources.
- b) Ensure that Indigenous communities are actively involved in decision-making processes related to business activities on their lands. This includes adopting protocols for obtaining Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) from these communities, ensuring their voices are not only heard but respected in all relevant negotiations and agreements.

<https://www.manushyafoundation.org/post/as-laos-is-building-dams-local-communities-are-sacrificed-in-the-process>; Manushya Foundation, *Do you know Laos aims to become the "battery of Asia"?*, (27 February 2023), available at: <https://www.manushyafoundation.org/post/do-you-know-laos-aims-to-become-the-battery-of-asia>; Manushya Foundation, *NEWS RELEASE: Responsible governments and implicated companies must ensure safety and effective access to information of communities living near the Nam Theun 1 dam in Laos*, (23 August, 2022), available at: <https://www.manushyafoundation.org/23-aug-news-release-on-nam-theun-dam-1>; UNESCO, *Report on the joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS mission to the Town of Luang Prabang (Lao PDR), 4 - 9 April 2022*, (2022), available at: <https://www.unesco.org/reportheritagecentre/icomos-mission-to-the-town-of-luang-prabang-lao-pdr-4-9-april-2022> - UNESCO Bibliothèque Numérique

- 2 *United Nations Human Rights Council, UPR of Lao People's Democratic Republic (3rd Cycle - 35th Session) Thematic list of recommendations*, (2024), available at: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ohchr.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Flib-docs%2FHRBodies%2FUPR%2FDocuments%2FSession35%2FLA%2FThematic-List-Recommendations.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>
- 3 CEDAW, *Summary record of the 2091st meeting*, (14 October, 2024), available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2FC%2FSR.2091&Lang=en



- c) In line with the 2020 UPR Recommendation made by Germany to Laos, ensure that the adoption and enforcement of the Land Law of 2019 are in line with international human rights law and standards, particularly in relation to economic, social, and cultural rights.
- d) Implement strict transparency measures in the approval and execution of development projects. Ensuring accessible information will help hold the government accountable and mitigate corruption.
- e) Enact robust legislation to regulate business activities, including mandatory human rights due diligence (mHRDD), ensuring corporate accountability and preventing human rights violations and environmental degradation, particularly in Special Economic Zones and development projects.
- f) All business enterprises, regardless of their size, should conduct HREDD, although its complexity might vary. State-owned enterprises must not be excluded from the application of mHREDD legislation.
- g) Amend the Land Law No. 70 and the Law on Resettlement and Vocation to ensure that they benefit local communities rather than favouring state and private interests.
- h) Highlight and support successful instances where Indigenous communities have been meaningfully involved in decision-making processes. Sharing best practices and ensuring that FPIC protocols are followed will strengthen trust and cooperation between Indigenous Peoples and governmental bodies.

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) & Ethnic Groups in Laos

20. In the last chapter, we've already covered the discrimination faced by indigenous peoples. But of course, that's not the only issue—if it were, things would be way too easy. The Lao government wouldn't stop at just one violation, would they? Laos has established a complex legal framework concerning IPs through various initiatives and plans. The **People's Provincial Assemblies (PPAs)**, created in 2016, facilitate political representation for Indigenous groups, including women, although women remain underrepresented in senior government roles. The **9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) 2021-2025** emphasises poverty reduction and equitable access to education and healthcare for all ethnic groups. Additionally, the **Department of Ethnic and Religious Affairs (DOERA)** has initiated workshops to promote participation and rights for Indigenous communities. While the government has made commitments to develop social protection systems, implementation remains limited due to the usual resource constraints and ongoing cultural prioritisation of the Lao-Tai Buddhist majority.^{xxxvi} In this chapter, we highlight the Lao government's failure to implement several supported recommendations for IP, despite the establishment of legal frameworks and plans aimed at improving their situation. Notably, issues persist with the ineffective execution of commitments outlined in recommendations 115.48, 115.121, 115.188, 115.204, 115.205, 115.171, 115.206, 115.18, and 115.81.^{xxxvii}



Economic & Social Rights

21. Since 2020, the situation of Indigenous Peoples in Laos has been closely tied to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting and intensifying existing challenges while exposing structural vulnerabilities that impact their rights and well-being. The government's claims of effective COVID crisis management are not just exaggerated; they're a bitter joke. Official death tolls are a disgrace to the deceased when compared to the real numbers, exposing a catastrophic failure in both reporting and crisis response.^{xxxviii} Meanwhile, Laos clings desperately to high-risk Chinese loans, ignoring debt relief opportunities while sinking deeper into financial despair. With almost half a million jobs lost and Indigenous communities reeling, it's painfully obvious that the government is an expert at pretending everything is fine while the reality begs to differ.^{xxxix}
22. The pandemic's toll has hit Indigenous groups particularly hard, pushing unemployment rates among them to a staggering 76.9%, while the Lao-Tai majority sits at 62.8%. For these marginalized communities, day labour is often the only lifeline, and the government's failure to support them during lockdown is nothing short of criminal. Resettled Indigenous groups, stripped of their natural resources by state-sanctioned concessions, now face even more vulnerabilities. For single-headed households and those with disabilities, the situation is obviously catastrophic. Food insecurity isn't just about COVID-19; it's a long-standing issue made worse by climate change. While our leaders talk endlessly about development, people are left to struggle on their own, facing the double threats of a pandemic and climate disasters. When asked what they need to rebuild, a staggering three-quarters of respondents cited financial support, but that's likely the last thing on the government's agenda.^{xl}
23. Ethnic minority groups are also trapped in remote areas, with access to essential services like education and healthcare practically nonexistent. When schools or clinics do exist, they are often understaffed and poorly equipped.^{xli} Disparities in healthcare persist. For example, Hmong-Mien children are less likely to receive hepatitis B vaccinations compared to Lao-Tai children. This disparity is driven by geographic isolation, economic hardship, and cultural barriers, complicating vaccine distribution and access to care.^{xlii} This neglect leaves ethnic communities grappling with alarmingly low enrollment rates and high illiteracy, particularly among women. The government's insistence on teaching in Lao language adds insult to injury, turning education into a barrier for these children. While officials may tout progress, the stark reality is that Indigenous children are left behind in an already inequitable system, a situation only worsened by the socioeconomic fallout of COVID-19. Among the most vulnerable are children with disabilities from the Mon-Khmer ethnic group, facing the highest dropout rates in a system that clearly prioritises neglect over support.^{xliii}



Indigenous Women

24. In 2023, while Lao girls were outperforming boys in foundational skills, higher education remained a boys' club, keeping outdated stereotypes alive. Economic challenges are mounting; with inflation at 26%, middle school graduation rates dropped sharply from 83,000 to 68,800. Girls often must drop out to help their families, and even those who graduate face job discrimination in a shrinking market. Rural and indigenous girls struggle even more with limited resources and early marriages—all while the President suggests that students focus on lofty educational ideals rather than the practical realities of job opportunities. This disconnect shows a lack of understanding of what students actually need; they're not looking for abstract values but rather concrete pathways to stable jobs.^{xiv}
25. In 2024, approximately 28% of adults rated the quality of healthcare facilities as poor, with dissatisfaction in equipment (35%), waiting times (24%), provider knowledge (23%), and provider respect (23%). Additionally, 12% of adults reported experiencing discrimination during treatment, with higher rates among young women. Mon-Khmer women, in particular, reported higher rates of unmet need for care compared to Lao-Tai women. While access to maternal health services has improved, significant disparities persist. For instance, between 2006 and 2017, there was a 42.7% increase in the coverage of at least one antenatal care visit from skilled personnel. However, the increase was most substantial among the least favoured subgroups: Hmong women (37.1%), rural women (36.1%), and poor women (31.1%). Institutional delivery rates also saw improvement. Nonetheless, substantial gaps remain, particularly between the poorest and richest women, with the Hmong experiencing lower coverage compared to Lao women. Moreover, ethnic minority women face additional barriers, including discrimination by healthcare providers and cultural challenges, which further hinder their access to care.^{xlv}
26. Socio-economic struggles, combined with a deep and valid distrust of authorities, have left many indigenous women vulnerable to dangerous situations:^{xlvi} In 2021, indigenous women faced heightened risks of being drawn into sex work and trafficking, especially as the closure of the Laos-Thai border created a demand for commercial sex near borders and casinos.^{xlvii} Meanwhile, COVID-19 hit women the hardest, forcing them to manage more responsibilities at home while enduring rising rates of domestic violence. A December 2021 survey in Bokeo province showed that Khmu women felt gender disparities worsening since the pandemic began. Reports indicate increased household arguments and violence during lockdown, but the government's response seems more about awareness campaigns than real support. With nearly 83,000 people reached by mental health initiatives, one must wonder if this is just a band-aid on a wide-open wound?^{xlviii}



Violence against Hmong Women

27. Article 8 of the Lao Constitution may prohibit discrimination against ethnic groups, but that hasn't stopped the relentless persecution of the Hmong ethnic minority. Labeled as anti-government due to their past involvement in the "CIA's Secret War," the authorities exploit this historical connection to justify brutal crackdowns, including bombings, torture, and extrajudicial killings. The narrative suggests that the Hmong's alliances with the CIA during the Vietnam War make them perpetual targets, leading to ongoing violence and repression against communities like the ChaoFa Hmong. Hiding in the Phou Bia jungle, they face military raids that strip them of food, shelter, and safe water. Despite UN experts raising alarms in 2020 and 2021, the government appears to excel in ignoring their concerns, as if human rights abuses are merely a side note in their pursuit of control.^{xlx}

28. The case of **Zoua Her (18), Kia Vang (17), and Moua Vang (15)**, alongside elderly **Vacher Her (80)**, starkly illustrates the Lao government's brutality. On March 10, 2020, they embarked on a risky escape from their jungle refuge, desperate for a better life in Thailand. Fearing torture, Mr. Naoleng Her courageously sent his family on this perilous journey. Just two days later, they disappeared, with the government seemingly eager to erase their existence. Then came the chilling revelation: a video showed their vehicle off a cliff, with two bodies inside, unmistakably tortured. Witnesses insisted the driver and his father were likely already dead when their car was shoved over the edge —not exactly a coincidence. This report highlights an astonishing trend: activists and human rights defenders seem to have particularly poor driving skills. Perhaps it's time for the Lao government to sponsor some driving lessons for them. Meanwhile, the Lao government struts about, flaunting its utter disregard for human life while feigning an interest in maintaining order. Despite the UNPO's calls for investigation, the authorities prefer to practise their skills in evasion over accountability, showcasing their mastery in the art of indifference.¹

Recommendations to the Lao government

- a) Enhance participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes, guaranteeing their Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), ensuring their voices are not only heard but also acted upon in policies affecting their lives.
- b) Take decisive action to address discrimination, violence, and other human rights violations faced by Indigenous Peoples. This includes implementing policies and programs aimed at preventing such violations and promoting equality.
- c) Provide effective remedies for Indigenous communities affected by human rights violations, the government should establish accessible and responsive mechanisms for justice. This includes creating dedicated channels for complaints and grievances, ensuring that Indigenous Peoples can seek redress without fear of retaliation or discrimination.



- d) Allocate resources to improve infrastructure and access to basic services in remote areas, particularly focusing on education and healthcare to uplift marginalised Indigenous groups.
- e) Actively promote awareness campaigns that highlight the contributions and rights of Indigenous Peoples, aiming to dismantle stereotypes and foster greater societal understanding.



Annex 1: Assessment of implementation of UPR recommendations received during the 3rd UPR Cycle of Laos, particularly in relation to Women, Business and Human Rights, and Indigenous Peoples.

Theme: Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery			
<p>115.119 Intensify efforts to combat human trafficking, especially of women and children, including by enhancing the work of the national steering committee on anti- human trafficking (Georgia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) SDGs: - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>
<p>115.121 Take steps against trafficking in persons and related labour and sexual exploitation, with special emphasis on child victims, women and members of ethnic minorities (Czechia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Violence against women - Children: protection against exploitation SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children in vulnerable situations (abused, living on the street, institutionalized, indigenous, migrant children etc.) - Women & girls - Minorities/ racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious or descent-based groups 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2, 19</p>

<p>115.122 Continue to enhance measures and programmes to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children (Philippines); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Violence against women - Children: protection against exploitation <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Partially implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>
<p>115.123 Increase further efforts to combat trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, including by improving law enforcement practices with a view to bringing to justice and punishing the perpetrators, as well as by providing victims of trafficking with protection and rehabilitation (Belarus); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Administration of justice & fair trial - Children: protection against exploitation - Access to justice & remedy <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Partially implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>



<p>115.125 Take all the necessary measures to put an end to child trafficking, including for the purposes of labour and sexual exploitation, as well as to all harmful practices against women and girls, including child, early and forced marriage (Italy); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Violence against women - Children: protection against exploitation <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>
<p>115.126 Intensify efforts to enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation to combat trafficking in persons (Qatar); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Inter-State cooperation and assistance <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS - 17 - PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	<p>Status: Not implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>
<p>115.127 Strengthen efforts to eliminate human trafficking by enhancing awareness-raising campaigns for vulnerable groups in remote areas (Indonesia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable persons/groups 	<p>Status: Partially implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2, 19.</p>



<p>115.128 Take preventive and awareness-raising measures in order to further develop the fight against human trafficking (Azerbaijan);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<p>Status: Partially implemented (lack of honest effort)</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 1-2</p>
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Theme: Administration of justice & fair trial			
<p>115.85 Strengthen the independence of the judiciary, and ensure full and effective access to judicial remedies to vulnerable people and minorities (Italy);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration of justice & fair trial - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising - Access to justice & remedy <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable persons/groups - Judges, lawyers and prosecutors - Minorities/ racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious or descent-based groups 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 3-6</p>
<p>115.86 Take effective measures to safeguard the independence and impartiality of the judiciary (Czechia);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration of justice & fair trial <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judges, lawyers and prosecutors 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 3-6</p>
<p>115.88 Strengthen justice sector organizations and build the capacity of law students and legal professionals (Syrian Arab Republic);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration of justice & fair trial <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judges, lawyers and prosecutors 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 3-6</p>



Theme: Right to education			
<p>115.177 Continue efforts to promote and protect the rights of children to education (Brunei Darussalam); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<p>- Right to education SDGs: - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION Affected persons: - Children</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.184 Continue efforts to provide quality education for all (Malaysia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<p>- Right to education SDGs: - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.187 Make further efforts towards addressing disparities in the education of girls (New Zealand); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<p>- Right to education - Equality & non-discrimination SDGs: - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION Affected persons: - Women & girls</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.188 Continue to take concrete action to address disparities in access to education, especially among rural ethnic groups, as a means to combat poverty, early marriage and human trafficking (Norway); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<p>- Right to education - Human rights & poverty - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery SDGs: - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Minorities/ racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious or descent-based groups</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraphs 16-17</p>



Theme: Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising			
<p>115.37 Further strengthen the capacities of public officials on human rights, including through collaboration with other States (Indonesia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising - Inter-State cooperation and assistance <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public officials 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.38 Take further measures to raise awareness and understanding of human rights in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Japan); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.41 Continue with efforts to provide further training and information on human rights standards to government officials and judges, as well as human rights education to businesses, students and the general public (Thailand); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judges, lawyers and prosecutors 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.42 Further continue its awareness-raising and training activities on human rights for State officials and the general public to raise legal awareness across the country (Turkmenistan); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public officials 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>



<p>115.201 Continue measures of promoting and protecting the rights of women and children, including awareness - raising and training (Bhutan); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising - Children: definition; general principles; protection - Discrimination against women <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>Theme: Discrimination against women</p>			
<p>115.200 Ensure that all girls and women, especially those living in rural and remote areas, have access to education, eliminate discriminatory stereotypes keeping girls from attending school and build awareness among parents and local authorities on the importance of education for women (Algeria); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discrimination against women - Human rights education, trainings & awareness raising - Right to education <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>



Theme: Participation of women in political & public life			
<p>115.192 Continue its exerted effort to empower women for more participation in all levels of decision - making (Myanmar); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of women in political & public life - Advancement of women SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.193 Continue its efforts to empower women in decision - making roles at all levels (Pakistan); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participation of women in political & public life - Advancement of women SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraph 6</p>



<p>115.194 Continue to implement measures to improve the political participation of women (Philippines); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Participation of women in political & public life SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.195 Continue consolidating national mechanisms that enable greater participation of and equality for women, as well as promotion and protection of the rights and well-being of women and girls (Dominican Republic); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Participation of women in political & public life - Discrimination against women SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
<p>115.197 Enhance endeavours to increase women’s participation in public affairs and economic development (Cambodia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Participation of women in political & public life - Discrimination against women SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>



<p>115.198 Take measures to increase the representation of women in politics, particularly applying the 25 per cent quota for the representation of women at all levels of government (Canada); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Participation of women in political & public life SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Women & girls</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraph 6</p>
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<p>Theme: Cooperation & consultation with civil society</p>			
<p>115.115 Facilitate a supportive environment to better enable civil society organizations to operate (Australia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Cooperation & consultation with civil society SDGs: - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Civil society</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraphs 7-12</p>
<p>115.152 Manage all infrastructure projects, including dams and their safety, to the best of its ability to avoid forced displacement, include the communities concerned in the decision-making process and, in the event of inevitable displacement, guarantee effective compensation and relocation programmes in accordance with international standards (Switzerland); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>- Cooperation & consultation with civil society - Right to development - Access to justice & remedy SDGs: - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>	<p>Status: Not implemented Source: paragraphs 7-12</p>



Theme: Legal & institutional reform			
<p>115.153 Ensure that the adoption and enforcement of laws, including the land law of 2019, and implementation of policies in land management and use, are consultative, transparent and fully compliant with international human rights law and standards (Germany);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal & institutional reform - Constitutional & legislative framework - Scope of international obligations - Right to an adequate standard of living <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 7-12</p>
Theme: Right to development			
<p>115.148 Continue measures towards inclusive socioeconomic development through investment in the health and education sectors , including in the rural areas (Nepal);</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Right to development - Right to health - Right to education <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persons living in rural areas 	<p>Status: Partially implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 16, 18</p>



Theme: Children: protection against exploitation			
<p>115.204 Adopt a comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination against children in marginalized or vulnerable situations (Timor-Leste); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children: protection against exploitation - Equality & non-discrimination <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children in vulnerable situations (abused, living on the street, institutionalized, indigenous, migrant children etc.) 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 21</p>
<p>115.205 Take measures to further develop a comprehensive national policy and strategy for child protection with the aim of eliminating discrimination against children in marginalized or vulnerable situations, including girls (Bulgaria); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children: protection against exploitation - Legal & institutional reform <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children in vulnerable situations (abused, living on the street, institutionalized, indigenous, migrant children etc.) 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 21</p>



Theme: Budget & resources (for human rights implementation)			
<p>115.171 Scale up the investment in and improve the availability and quality of services in rural and remote areas, in particular access to education and health, including sexual and reproductive health, addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women, girls and members of ethnic minorities (Portugal); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget & resources (for human rights implementation) - Right to health - Sexual & reproductive health and rights - Right to education <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persons living in rural areas - Vulnerable persons/groups - Women & girls - Minorities/ racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious or descent-based groups 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 19</p>
Theme: Children: definition; general principles; protection			
<p>115.206 Foster efforts to strengthen child protection and protect children against violence (Tunisia); Source of Position: A/HRC/44/6/Add.1 - Para.5</p>	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children: definition; general principles; protection <p>SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children 	<p>Status: Not implemented</p> <p>Source: paragraphs 17, 19, 21</p>



Endnotes

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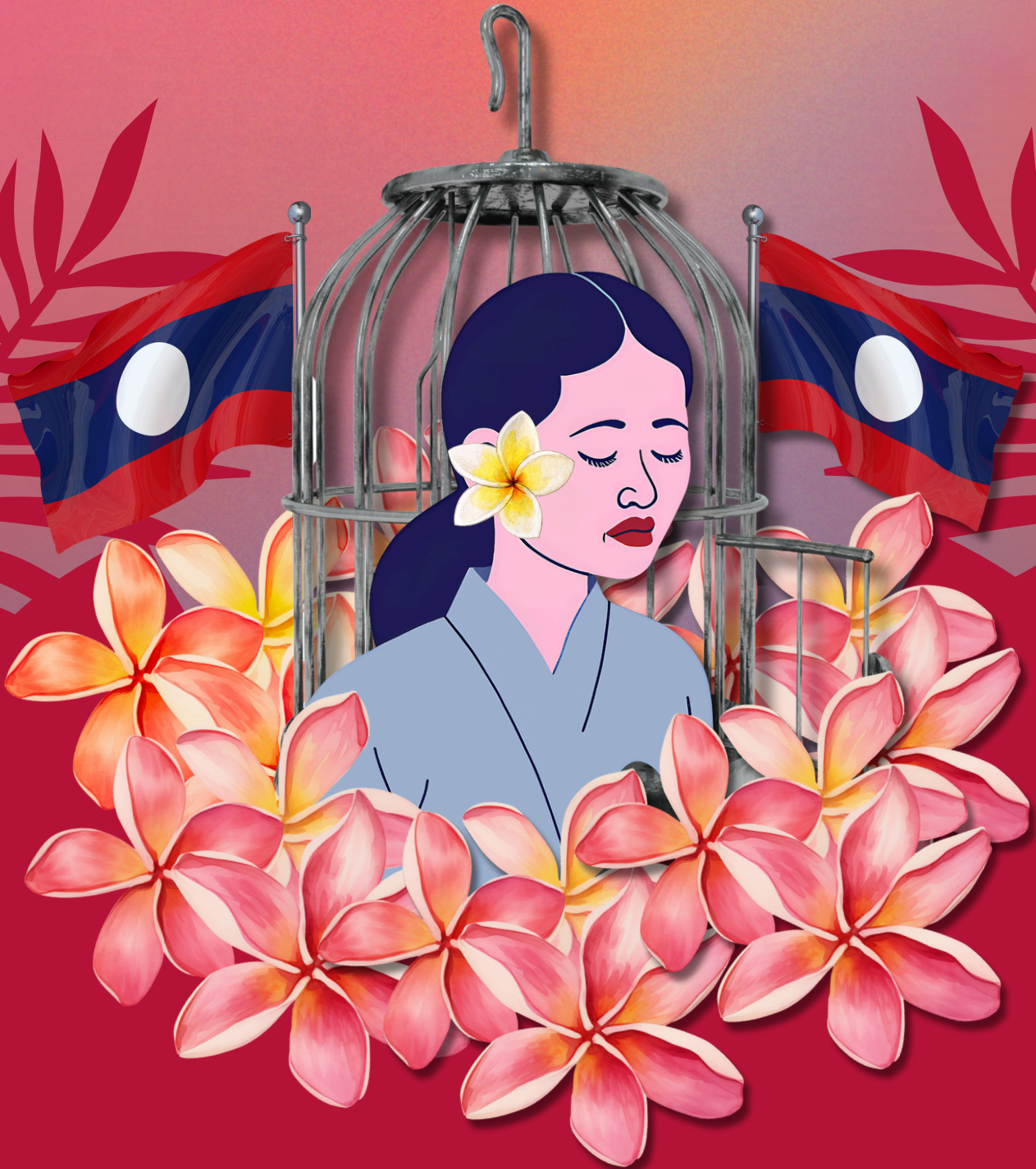
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