

Summary of the most important SDG topics in Laos, from the independent NGOs for the HLPF

In Laos economic growth continues has fallen during the corona crisis and youth unemployment still rises. As confirmed by the UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, the current government policies exacerbate poverty with insufficient access for economic, social and cultural rights from lack of access to clean drinking water.

Agricultural production decreases drastically. The relocations are carried out because of the many large projects including the special economy zones or because foreign investors grab lands.

Women in Laos have equal rights before the law on paper not in daily living. Also Problems arise in divorce and forced prostitution must be confronted. The main problem in Laos is the lack of separation of powers and the still widespread corruption.

The human rights activists have also been arrested in recent years or disappear for criticizing the government or the authorities. Sombath Somphone disappeared in 2012 and Od Xayavong in 2019.

Laos is increasingly dependent on Vietnam and China. This makes it more and more difficult to govern the country independently in Laos.

Recommendations:

- Support for the local economy instead of large-scale projects by foreign investors.
- The promotion of traditional agriculture and the dismantling of monocultures.
- Combating forced prostitution through international cooperation under the protection of the UN.
- Separation of powers as well as more freedom of the press and freedom of expression.
- Change of the dependence on Vietnam and China to a more equal partnership between the countries.