Sub-Regional Experts Meeting in Asia on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Safeguarding and Inventory-Making Methodologies  
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Country paper of the Lao PDR

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Background

Lao people’s, Lao nationality, is a nation that has long civilization and prosperity in its history and socio-culture in the world. The evident unveiled the traditional archaeological, architecture, artistic, archaeological ruins and other ruins that always indicate the patient of hard working and creating of Lao elder generation. The closely relationship between material traditional and mind traditional and the planning of livelihood of ethnic people which expressed on their language, archaeology, artistic, acting tradition, mass artistic and musical indicated their transparency of feeling. Lovely assistance, helping of each other of Lao ethnic people is always expressed the friendly relationship to foreigners. Valued and highest mind is the common traditional of the elder generation of Lao National.

After the foundation of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic on 2 December 1975, the Party and Government of Laos always focus on the work of innovation of traditional, conservation, restoration and promotion of the beautiful traditional heritage of the nation comprehensively.

The law on the preservation of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage aims at preservation of the valued traditional of the country. It also contributes to promote and develop the innovation, skill, talent and knowledge of the Lao ethnic people on invention. In addition, it also constructs and produces to get more rich and severalty of traditional, and it raises the sense of peace of the nation. Commonly fighting against the weakness event of the society, increasing the governance and socio-traditional management to insert in the regulation and aiming at building the society to have equalization, peaceful and civilization in all fields.

Objective of this Law

The Law on the National Heritage defined the principles, regulation and management measurement, using, conservation, preservation, revival, restoration for the national heritage. Defining rights, function and responsibility on organizing the State, Society and Person in order to preservation the valued traditional, historical and natural of the national heritage. It aims at educate the population to love the country, love their national valued tradition to become basis minding and core factor in order to ensure the sustainable of the Lao Nation forever.

Policy of Lao PDR Government

The government control commonly, equalization through out the country on the national heritage by transferring the power and usage to their sectors and local authorities. The socio-
economic development must go along with conservation and preservation for the national heritage. The government promotes and creates conditions for individual, internal and external organizations to contribute for preservation the national heritage for sustainable.

The government enhances conducting research, inventory, distribute the valued of national, mass and advance characteristic of the national heritage. Together with this, it also defeats and solves the obstacles to the progress of all Lao ethnic people and stepping of the country. The government acknowledge the rights on the national heritage of the organizing the state and individual which properly registered by the law.

**The Meaning of the cultural heritage**

It means that it is a high value on tangible and intangible heritage, immovable and movable assets of the cultural, historical, science or technology of the national resource and inherits form each eras.

**Tangible cultural heritage:** is a physical heritage, it is a valued asset on the tradition that included the movable and immovable assets which is the unique mainly artifacts, handicraft, weaving, painting, production tools, consumption and using products as: Sticky rice, Par Dek…., the traditional musical instrument as: Khen. It is a wind instrument, which comprises a double row of Bamboo-like reeds, fitted in a hardwood sound box, palm leaf manuscripts, archaeological site as stone Jars in the Plain of Jar, Khmer Temple of Wat Phou, is the World Heritage Site, ancient cities as Souvannakhomkham city, and etc.

**Intangible cultural heritage:** it is a invisible physical heritage which is the valued asset on the traditional as: Knowledge, skill, philosophy of the mass, believable, valued custom which is expressed on the livelihood planning, society politeness, language, literature, digital, folk tale, legend, tale, proverbs and poetry, folk music sound, folk dance. The national folk dance is the Lamvong, a circle dance in which people dance circles around each other so that ultimately there are three circles: a circle dance by the individual, another one by the couple, and a third danced by the whole party. Text book such as: traditional medicine text book, and other which are all transfer from previous generation to current generation.

**Conservation and Preservation of the National Intangible Heritage:**
- Conservation and preservation of the national intangible heritage must go along with the promotion, distribute and using in broad range within and outside of the country.
- Research, inventory must ensure the national, mass and advance characteristic.
- Other national resident, foreigners included such individual organization, international organization that will conduct research and analysis the cultural heritage have to ensure the properly of the original condition and must be allowed by the Ministry of Information and Culture.
- Rewrite, copy of research, copy of idea of other people on cultural heritage to become ownership or publication without permission from original ownership must be prohibited.

**Cultural Heritage Management Organization**

Lao Government use center controlling of the heritage and unity throughout the country. The Ministry of Information and Culture was assigned to be a center organization on management
in conjunction with sectors and local authorities. The Lao government divides the management of the cultural heritage into 4 main levels as:

1. At center level is the Ministry of Information and Culture.
2. At the Provincial level is the Division of the Information and Culture of each provinces, Capital city and Special Zone.
3. At the District level is the District Information and Culture Office and Main City.
4. Village authorities.

There is special organization that managed the cultural heritage which was accepted being the world or regional heritage such as: the National Heritage Committee, the Local Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Office, which they have the different regulations for organization and operation.

Roles and Functions of the Ministry of Information and Culture

On the management of the cultural heritage the rights and function of the Ministry of Information and Culture are describe as below:

1. Research, building the policies structure, strategy plan, issuing the agreement on the national cultural heritage.
2. Survey, data collection, analysis, excavation the national heritage of each type.
3. Distribution, education on the policies and guideline, law and regulation on the national heritage.
4. Supervision, promotion the region and world heritage Division on implementation the law, planning, project on the national heritage.
5. Supervision, promotion the region and world heritage office on implementation the law, planning, project on the national heritage.
6. Registering and allowing the national heritage that exist in their ownership.
7. Recruitment the officer on the national heritage.
8. Being the Central Organization and coordination with other concerned sector in management and implementation the national heritage.
9. Cooperation and creation of relation with foreign country and international organization on the national heritage work.
10. Report and assessment the implementation the work on the national heritage for the government and Prime Minister.
11. Implement its rights and other functions that mention in the law.

Roles and Functions of the Provincial Information and Culture Division

On the management of the national heritage, the rights and function of the Information and Culture Division of the province, capital city and special zone are described below:

1. Implement and distribution of the law, planning, project of the Ministry to become their principles, planning, and project.
2. Survey and collecting data on the national heritage in their own responsible area.
3. Promotion, Education the policies and guideline, regulation and law on the national heritage.
4. Registering and allowing on the national heritages those are in their own responsibility.
5. Supervision and enhance the district information and culture offices on implementation the management of the national heritage.
6. Coordination with the concerned authorities in management and implementation the work on national heritage.
7. Report and assessment the implementation the work on the national heritages and report to the line ministries.
8. Implementation the other rights and functions that included in the law.

Roles and Functions of the District Information and Culture Office

On the management of the national heritage, the roles and functions of the district information and culture office are described below:

1. Implementation the law, planning and project on the cultural heritage.
2. Surveying and collecting data, registering the national heritage in their own responsibility area.
3. Promotion, education the policies and guideline, law on the national heritage.
4. Allowing on the national heritage in their own responsibility area.
5. Coordination with the concern agencies in management and implementation the work on national heritage.
6. Conclusion and assessment the implementation the work on the national heritage and report to the above organization.
7. Implementation the other rights and functions that included in the law.

Roles and functions of the village authorities

1. Implementation the national heritage works on the management, conservation, preservation, restoration and usage the national heritage that belongs to their own responsibility.
2. Surveying and registering the national heritages which belong to their own responsibility in order to report to the above organization.
3. Conclusion and report on the implementation the work on national heritage to the above organization.

Roles and Function of other concerned organization

In the management the national traditional heritage, other concerned agencies at the central and local levels have rights and functions to coordinate with the Information and Culture Sector following to their role and responsibilities.

The Cultural Heritage Fund

In order to preservation, conservation, revival and restoration the heritage for sustainable and development, it needs to create the national heritage fund in which this fund is raised by:

1. The government budget.
2. Assistance from foreign countries and international organizations.
3. Contribution of individual and organizations both from internal and external.
4. Share of income in the properly proportion from the using of the valued heritage such as: seeing service, promotion, heritage research and analysis, tourism entrepreneurship, fine from the violator and other.
5. Fee from other task that impact to the cultural heritage.
6. Income from operation some activities on heritage and other.
Intangible Culture Management

The objective of Intangible Culture Preservation
In Response of Lao Government policy, the Intangible Culture Preservation aim to:
Research and disseminate the tradition and culture. The objective and purpose of the research will be registration by the all village names, districts, provinces, minorities, the people beliefs, languages, folk tales, folk song and music, performances etc... In addition the necessary equipment and materials of people daily life will be also researched such as trap for catching animals, weapons, ceramic etc..

Methodology.
The research will be focused from villages to villages by recording the details of database. After the having got the database, all the fields of research will we analyzed and will we select some traditions for preservation and dissemination.

Culture Marketing Development
Together with culture preservation, there are so many challenges facing to the socio-development, this is due to the developing of culture marketing. In order to preserve the national culture we have to prevent all of illegal magazines, film and video etc...

Management Activities
These activities aim to avoid the decadence, the pornographic materials, prostitution, illegal gambling and drug abuse. We definitively wipe out all of those assets from people life.

Management areas
The government will authorize an all VCD or cassettes tapes production, or public shops of VCD.
- Only authorized VCD can be sold.
- The government organization will be responsible for publication and all copies.
- All VCD and printing material shops will be under official permission.
All of the decadence and pornographic materials are forbidden

Some of Methodology Management
First of all we have to learn all culture activities in each province in order to have security in our location. To collaborate strongly with local organizations concerned such as mass organizations to follow up all culture activities in the remote areas. To relate with all organizations concerned to apply those who are in breach of culture regulations.

Lao Art Festival Management
Lao Art Festival Management are organized in the whole year among Lao people so the culture and Information Services are responsible for those events. If the Art Festival Celebration is on National Level, the Ministry of Information and Culture will be the main responsibility.
Standard of Culture Family
The Culture Family is consist in equality, democracy, peace, happiness and prosperity. This family knows the better way how to educate the children and has followed the standard followings:
- Have good location with good career.
- Have good relations among familial members.
- Educate the children in good way.
- Live peacefully.
- Participate to all important public affairs of Culture Family