

PRESS RELEASE

ENHANCED DISCLOSURE OF LAND INFORMATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ONLINE AND UPON CITIZEN REQUESTS

Ha Noi, 12 March 2024 - The online disclosure by provincial and district governments of district-level land use plans and provincial land pricing frameworks significantly improved in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022.

These were the results of the 2023 review conducted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Viet Nam, Real-Time Analytics (RTA) and the Center for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW) presented on 12 March 2024 in Ha Noi.

The review is part of a series of annual, evidence-based studies on **the disclosure of land information by local authorities in Viet Nam** from 2021 to the present. The review seeks to measure adherence to Viet Nam's laws on land and access to information, which specify responsibilities, processes, forms, and deadlines for disclosing information on provincial land pricing frameworks, district-level land use master plans and annual plans, as well as an obligation to provide these types of information at the request of citizens.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Embassy of Ireland jointly funded this study through UNDP in Viet Nam's Provincial Public Administration and Governance Performance Index (PAPI) research program.

“The transparent disclosure of land information is crucial in mitigating the risks of land-related complaints and conflicts,” said UNDP Resident Representative **Ramla Khalidi**. *“We trust that our annual review, now in its third year, provides local government leaders with a tool to track their performance in implementing laws regarding land information disclosure to the public. This becomes particularly important as we approach the enforcement of the 2024 Land Law from January next year.”*

The transparency of land use plans and land pricing frameworks on the web portals of provincial and district governments has shown significant improvement following three rounds of review

Regarding **the disclosure of provincial land pricing frameworks**, as of 6 October 2023, 73% of provinces and municipalities have disclosed land pricing frameworks on their web portals, an increase of 8.1% compared to the results of the 2022 review and a 31.1% increase compared to the results of the 2021 review.

Regarding **the disclosure of district-level land use master plans**, by 6 October 2023, out of a total of 705 district units nationwide, 65.4% have disclosed district-level land use master plans for the period 2021-2030, an increase of 16.5% compared to 2022. In terms of completeness, among the district-level People's Committees that have disclosed information, 54.2% have fully posted the 03 required documents, including approval decisions, general explanatory reports, and maps of land use plans.

Regarding **the disclosure of district-level annual land use plans**, as of 6 October 2023, out of 705 district-level People's Committees, 65.2% have disclosed the 2023 land use plans on their web portals, an increase of 17.3% compared to 2021 and an increase of 10% compared to 2022. However, only 22.8% managed to issue the land use plans on time, and only 7% disclosed the information on time.

The proportion of district-level government agencies that did not respond to citizens' requests for information remained high

By the end of 2023, 23.7 % of the requested agencies had provided the information, 1.1% rejected the request, 5.3% responded but did not provide information, and 67.9% did not respond. This result shows that the proportion of state agencies that do not respond to citizens' requests for information on district-level land use plans remains high. It should be noted that 11 out of the 561 request letters were returned to senders by the post office because the security guards of these 11 district People's Committees refused to receive the mail due to the absence of a specific recipient's name. All the letters were addressed to the Office of the District People's Committee/Council based on Point g, Clause 2, Article 9 of the Law on Access to Information.

To promote the disclosure of land information by state agencies, the Research Group continues to recommend relevant agencies at provincial and district levels to fully implement the disclosure of land information both online on the agencies' web portals and at their headquarters.

On behalf of the Research Team, Mr. Le Dang Trung, RTA's Director, shared: *"The publication of three reviews tracking local governments' land information disclosure has helped improve performance by these authorities. This demonstrates the importance of local governments' vertical accountability towards citizens. We hope that the Government will soon include the procedure for information provision at the request of citizens in the current set of administrative procedures of all sectors and fields, including land administration, and issue specific guidance documents to further improve information disclosure."*

The third review was conducted from October 2023 to February 2024, involving an examination of the official web portal of 63 provinces/municipalities and 705 districts nationwide. The evaluation of land information disclosure by provincial and district governments is based on five criteria, namely (i) Information disclosure, (ii) the ability to search for information, (iii) the timeliness of the information, (iv) the completeness of the information (for district-level land-use master plans and annual plans), and (v) information usability (easy to read, understand, and can be read by common software).

SOME GOOD PRACTICES

18 provinces and cities, including Bac Kan, Dien Bien, Son La, Bac Giang, Ninh Binh, Thanh Hoa, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Ngai, Binh Duong, Tra Vinh, Dong Thap, An Giang, Kien Giang, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau and Hai Phong have published land pricing frameworks for the period of 2020-2024 during the three rounds of review. At the same time, the People's Committees of these provinces and cities have also developed their own land information sections that allow quick and convenient information lookup.

100% of districts in Binh Thuan province have disclosed both district-level land use master plans for 2021-2030 and district-level annual land use plans in 2023 on their web portals.

100% of districts in Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Dong Nai, Ha Nam, and Kon Tum provinces have disclosed district-level land use master plans for 2021-2030.

Similarly, Dong Thap, Tra Vinh, Tay Ninh, Binh Phuoc, Ninh Thuan, and Phu Yen provinces have 100% of districts disclosed the 2023 district-level land use plans on their web portals.

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To download the seminar documents, please visit the link: https://bit.ly/landinfo_2023 or scan the above QR Code.