

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Position</b>	Ecosystem Management Officer, EMO (Lao National only)
<b>Number of Position/s</b>	1
<b>Location</b>	Central Office in Vientiane Capital with a maximum of 60% of time spent in the field visiting project provinces, districts and villages
<b>Supervisor</b>	Agriculture and Livelihood Specialist (ALS, Head of Division)
<b>Close coordination with</b>	Agriculture and Livestock Officer, Environmental Engineering Officer, District Climate Resilience Adaptation Officers (DCRO-Adaptation)
<b>Duration</b>	A one-year contract. Renewal subject to project requirements, budget, and annual performance review

### A. Background

The Community Livelihood Enhancement and Resilience (CLEAR) Project in Lao PDR is a World Bank–financed initiative launched in March 2024. It targets around 216,000 people living in remote upland areas of seven provinces, namely Huaphanh, Oudomxay, Phongsaly, Saravan, Savannakhet, Sekong and Xiengkhuang. CLEAR is implemented through the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), an agency under the Department of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction (DRDPR) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE). Activities are carried out in two cycles of 2 to 3 years. In each cycle, a ‘batch’ of approximately 225 villages receives grants for small-scale infrastructure and support for livelihood diversification, improved nutrition and climate resilience.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has agreed to contribute additional funds to improve climate adaptation in the second cycle of implementation between 2026 and 2028. This contribution will focus on approximately 80 villages in 6 districts that have been identified as being highly vulnerable to extreme weather, including floods and drought. A ‘landscape approach’ will be applied in these Districts to plan and implement measures that reduce climate-related risks for people living in clusters of villages with shared access to forest, streams and cultivation areas.

The SDC contribution is additional to the assistance funded by the World Bank. In the selected areas, supplementary funding will be available for three types of infrastructure promoting climate resilience:

- **Green infrastructure** designed to reduce erosion, stabilize soils and control drainage, thereby reducing the risk of landslides and flash floods.
- **Blue infrastructure** designed to ensure that rural communities have an adequate supply of water throughout the year for domestic and agricultural use, especially in the dry season.
- **Grey infrastructure** designed to reduce losses and improve productivity of farming systems threatened by extreme weather.

The SDC contribution also includes funding for two types of ecosystem management in the selected areas:

- **Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) at the landscape level:** this may include watershed conservation, community forest management, fish conservation areas, NTFP zoning and livestock grazing controls;
- **Integrated community-based water management (ICBWM) in selected villages :** this may include establishment of water management groups, introducing new water resources (e.g., groundwater) and new management techniques (e.g., drip irrigation).

Planning and monitoring of these activities will be underpinned by a geospatial decision support system (DSS) to be developed with the assistance of the UN Satellite Centre (UNOSAT), that will expedite climate risk mapping, multi-criteria decision-making and geotagging field observations.

The SDC contribution will be integrated into the existing plans and structure of the CLEAR project, with additional staff as follows:

- Two positions at the national level: Ecosystem Management Officer (EMO) and Environmental Engineering Officer (EEO)
- Six District Climate Resilience Officers (DCROs): 3 focused on Engineering, 3 on Adaptation
- Twenty Climate Resilience Young Graduates (CR-YGs) based in the selected Districts

## **B. Summary of Role**

Under the supervision of the Agriculture and Livestock Specialist, the EMO will ensure effective planning, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of EbA and ICBWM activities supported by SDC within selected village clusters, ensuring integration with other project components (climate-resilient infrastructure and livelihoods). An explanation of the types of activities covered by this role are given in a separate briefing note.

The EMO will act as an important link between project staff and external technical assistance organisations that provides advice and assistance in the planning and implementation of EbA (i.e., Green ETA), ICBWM (i.e., Blue ETA), and the development of a geospatial decision-support system.<sup>1</sup> The activities of these service providers for which the EMO is responsible will include the establishment of model sites in each target province and the training and supervision of DCROs (Adaptation) and Climate Resilience Young Graduates (CR-YGs).

Additionally, the EMO will play a key role in coordinating inputs from national technical assistance service providers (NTA) responsible for capacity building for Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and organising Climate Resilient Eco-Agriculture Technical Exchanges (CREATE).

## **C. Roles and Responsibilities**

### Technical and Management Functions

1. In coordination with the EEO, participate in and contribute to Climate Resilient Landscape Planning (CRLP) carried out in each of the targeted village clusters, a process that will be led by NTA service provider. The EMO will ensure the CRLP process leads to the identification of tentative EbA/ICBWM priorities for each cluster, making use of DSS tools developed by UNOSAT as they become available.
2. Based on the outcomes of the CRLP process, and with additional inputs from the ETA advisors, support the Head of Agriculture and Livelihoods Division to develop a costed annual workplan for both EbA and ICBWM activities for submission to the ED, World Bank and SDC for review and approval.
3. With the support of both Green and Blue ETA, develop technical and procedural guidelines in English for the implementation of EbA and ICBWM, to be submitted for approval to the ED. These guidelines to include eligibility and selection criteria, technical standards, governance arrangements, O&M responsibilities, and monitoring checklists tied to MEL indicators. Once approved, arrange for translation in Lao.
4. Under the overall supervision of the Head of Agriculture and Livelihood Division, and in coordination with other staff and advisers, ensure effective implementation of the approved guidelines and procedures for EbA and ICBWM by means of field visits, coaching and technical advice.
5. Technically supervise the work of DCROs (Adaptation, including review and approval of all workplans and reports.

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<sup>1</sup> Final decision on the division of responsibilities between the EEO and EMO for coordination with UNOSAT will be agreed by the ED based on qualifications and experience of the selected officers.

6. Provide specialist advice during planning and implementation in at least two of the following areas: a) land use planning and soil management, b) forest management and agroforestry, c) water management and irrigation.
7. Support the implementation of Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and its instruments in accordance with the project implementation manual (PIM);

#### Capacity Building Functions

8. Participate in all the technical and management trainings organized by the project at National and Sub-National level, as required by the ED and Agriculture and Livestock Specialist;
9. In cooperation with the ETA service providers, organize training and coaching on the principles and practices of EbA and ICBWM for the national management team, DCROs and CR-YGs.
10. Organise specific training, model/demo sites, expert visits and technical exchanges in order to build capacity as required by the approved work plans, in topics such as: soil conservation practices (e.g., contour planting and terrace maintenance); establishment of agroforestry nurseries; management of riparian zones; fodder production and controlled grazing; installation and maintenance of solar-powered drip irrigation; establishment of community-based natural resource management zones (e.g., fish, non-timber forest products (NTFPs)).

#### Coordination, Collaboration, Communications, and Team Work Functions

11. Coordinate inputs of the ETA service providers responsible for a) Ecosystem-based Adaptation and b) integrated community-based water management. To include preparation of ETA workplans, arranging and participating in technical meetings, field visits and training sessions, ensuring logistical and language support, documentation and dissemination of ETA outputs, monitoring and follow-up up agreed activities. See the respective ETA ToRs for details of the tasks to be completed.
12. Coordinate inputs of the NTA service providers responsible for a) capacity-building for CSA and b) CREATE. To include preparation of NTA workplans, arranging and participating in technical meetings, field visits and training sessions, review and dissemination of NTA outputs and reports. See the respective NTA ToRs for details of the tasks to be completed.
13. Collaborate with the EEO at the national level to ensure a) complementarity between plans for climate resilient infrastructure (‘green’ and ‘blue’) and those for EbA and ICBWM, and b) that plans are in place for the smooth and effective implementation of the supplementary block grants that will be made available for CSA-related grey infrastructure.
14. Collaborate with the District Agriculture and Livestock Officer to align work plans of district staff, and ensure consistent training and advisory support for all YGs and villagers.
15. Ensure documentation of success stories of EbA and ICBWM.

#### Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Functions

16. With support of the ETA advisers, and in cooperation with the CLEAR M&E Specialist, develop a MEL framework and tools for EbA and ICBWM and submit to the ED for approval, to include indicators agreed by SDC (ie. ARIs and TRIs).
17. Once approved, oversee the roll-out of new MEL and guide field staff in their use, ensuring timely and accurate collection of data and reporting. Make use of the geotagging monitoring tool developed by UNOSAT and advise/assist field staff in doing the same.
18. Prepare monthly reports covering EbA and ICWBM for submission to the ALS Head of Division and ED, including technical assistance inputs (both ETA and NTA), and assist with preparing and compiling the semi-annual and annual report.

#### Other related Tasks

19. Within scope of responsibility, promote and explain project principles, processes and achievements to GoL representatives, donors, concerned parties and NGOs;
20. Carry out other tasks as advised by the Agriculture and Livelihood Specialist, or the ED and as per project requirements.

## **D. Position Requirements**

### Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced degree in natural resource management, forestry, environmental sciences, climate change adaptation, or a related field.
- At least 10 years of professional experience in ecosystem management, climate change adaptation, or community-based natural resource projects.
- Demonstrated experience with EbA approaches (e.g., reforestation, agroforestry, watershed management, NTFP) in Lao PDR.
- Strong skills in participatory planning, coordination with government institutions, and capacity-building.
- Demonstrated experience designing and running MEL for natural resource or adaptation programs
- Experience working with local communities
- Excellent written and spoken Lao and English; knowledge of ethnic languages is an asset.

### Personal Attributes

- Sound knowledge of village level planning through the community-led or community-driven development approach, business plan preparation and self-monitoring tools and mechanisms;
- Proven experience working in remote / rural areas with diverse ethnic minority groups and the poor.
- A team builder, open to new and improved ideas, flexible in working accross rural and urban areas and with ultra-poor and ethnic minority communities;
- Ability to work independently, within the framework of project requirements;
- Practical, problem-solving skills and sensitivity to gender and & social inclusion (GESI), including ethnic issues in rural areas;
- Strong communication and social skills;
- Willingness to travel to villages, districts and provinces for extended periods.