

Expression Of Interest

Technical Advisory Service with Plan International Laos

Preparation of the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) for the Lasting Laos Project – Supporting Young Entrepreneurs and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in the Lao Tourism Value Chain to Adopt and Promote Sustainable Consumption and Production, Circular Economy and Decent Work Practices.

Working in over 50 developing countries globally, Plan strives for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We engage people and partners to:

- Empower children, young people and communities to make vital changes that tackle the root causes of discrimination against girls, exclusion and vulnerability.
- Drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels through our reach, experience and knowledge of the realities children face.
- Work with children and communities to prepare for and respond to crises and to overcome adversity.
- Support the safe and successful progression of children into adulthood.

Plan has been working in Laos since 2007, and is delivering programs in Bokeo, Oudomxay and Saravane Provinces. We support children and young people to access their rights through our programming in Public Health, Education, Youth Economic Empowerment and Adolescent Development. Our work includes community-based action, partner strengthening, and policy advocacy. Climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, Gender Equality and Safeguarding are integrated in all the work we do. Plan is committed to providing disaster response support in case of humanitarian disaster.

Plan International Laos' **Impact Area** around economic empowerment is titled **Skills and Opportunities for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (SOYEE)**. The overall goal is to foster an enabling environment where young people especially women have control over their aspirations and resources through decent work opportunities in the 21st century labour market. In Laos, we are looking forward to achieving this through enabling young women to develop and promote their businesses (**agribusiness, agri-entrepreneurs and enterprise development**), and support their growth and value creating through **impact investment funding**. We are also looking at supporting and enabling **sustainable tourism**.

Lasting Laos Project: The Government of Laos' development strategies, including the 9th Five-Year National Socio-economic Development Plan, Green Growth Strategy, and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Roadmap have all identified Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourism value chain as key to alleviate poverty and create jobs while accelerating green growth and circular economy practices. The tourism value chain is inherently wide ranging and includes MSMEs from many sectors, including tourism, hospitality, food, agri-food and textiles/handicrafts.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, international tourism arrivals in 2019 reached a peak of 4.79 million visitors, spending USD 934 million, contributing 10.4% to the Lao economy¹. The tourism sector is expected to rebound with the country reaching pre-COVID levels within the next 3-4 years followed by continued growth.

Based on the experience and findings of the ‘**SUSTOUR Laos**’ project implemented by Plan International in cooperation with LNCCI and MoIC, tourism provides an important income source for MSMEs, offers employment for women and young adults (YAs), and presents significant opportunities for innovation in SCP and circular economy practices. However, growth of tourism related sectors creates challenges, including: environmental protection; resource and energy use; waste management, particularly single use plastic (SUP) waste; carbon emissions; and poor labour standards. The SUSTOUR Laos project has identified first movers for SCP and circular economy practices and established a network of more than 250 MSMEs who have registered in the Travelife and Lasting Laos sustainability certification programs. However, MSMEs in Laos still struggle to understand concepts of SCP and circular economy or comply with international standards and access to finance, particularly the Green Financing Instrument (GFIs). Further investment in and technical assistance for MSMEs in the tourism value chain are needed and essential to the green growth of the Lao economy.

In November 2023, a large consultation workshop was held by the applicant and co-applicant with representatives from government agencies, private sector, Financial Service Providers (FSPs), academia, representatives of MSMEs and of civil society, to validate and finetune the concept, create stakeholder support and identify Associates for the Action.

Project Overall Objective: To contribute to Laos 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, National Green Growth Strategy, Sustainable Consumption and Production Roadmap and the European Union’s New Green Deal by supporting MSME’s and young entrepreneurs in the Lao tourism value chain to adopt and promote SCP and decent work practices.

Project Specific Objectives: 1) MSME’s throughout the Lao tourism supply chain adopt SCP, circular economy and decent work practices through the Lasting Laos sustainability certification program supported by an enabling policy environment; and 2) MSME’s and young entrepreneurs (YEs) are provided with technical support to access green financing instruments (GFIs) in order to produce and adopt and promote green products, services and solutions that demonstrate circular economy, low carbon and SCP practices for the Lao tourism value chain.

The Technical Advisory service is to ensure:

- Support to the Plan Laos team in the preparation for the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)
- Government and stakeholders understand the objectives and outcomes being pursued by the project
- All parties have an opportunity to provide feedback, and ensure that the MOU process progresses and any blockages and challenges are resolved with all parties
- That the MOU aligns with the project proposal and donor guidelines

¹ UNDP / Lao PDR Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (2021), Lao PDR’s Tourism COVID-19 Recovery Roadmap 2021-2025.

- Timely review of the MoU documents in English language, ensuring alignment with the intent of the project proposal
- Support to Plan Laos in facilitating consultation meetings and negotiations with relevant GoL departments at district, provincial and ministry levels.
- Timely advice to all parties to the MOU on particular aspects of the project that might include SCP, MSMEs, waste management practices and access to green products, to ensure understanding and cooperation
- Effective collaboration with both the Head of the SOYEE program and Senior Coordinator of Plan Laos for the effective communication and proactive resolution of issues to progress the MOU to completion

Reporting

Reports to the Head of SOYEE Program. On monthly basis, a brief monthly report (5 – 10 pages), timesheet and invoice are submitted, and at the end of the contract, the completion report (10-15 pages) is submitted to the Head of programme for her or his review and approval.

Requirements

This opportunity is open to suitable individuals, INGO/NGO's, or a private sector company.

Experience and skills required:

- A Master or equivalent degree in tourism, hospitality, commerce or related field
- A minimum of 7 years' experience working in economic development in Laos and/ or commercial development (previous experience in tourism and/or private sector focused development projects would be a significant advantage)
- Demonstrated successful negotiation of MOU's with government ministries
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in working with local partners, Lao government, and private sector organizations/stakeholders
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge of MSME development in Laos
- Knowledge of sustainable practices in the tourism sector, including various international standards and certification
- Knowledge and experience in the National Socio-economic Development Plan, Green Growth Strategy, and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Roadmap and relevant policies
- Demonstrated skills and experience in facilitating workshops
- Ability to negotiate effectively and communicate the project requirements and policies with project partners, government counterparts and other stakeholders
- Excellent command of English language (spoken and written) and ability to develop and edit high-quality project documents
- Lao language skills desirable
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Willingness to accompany Plan staff to MOU consultations in target provinces
- Excellent computer skills (including Word and Excel)

Timing of inputs

Whilst the technical inputs will be determined according to the MOU preparation timeline, it is anticipated the inputs will be required for up to 4 days per month for 6 months with an opportunity to extend to 8 months. The appointment will be a Service Contract and will begin in mid October 2024.

Application

Interested applicants are asked to explain clearly how they meet the skills and experience required, attach a current CV with 2 referees and fee structure.

The application should be submitted no later than 11th October 2024 to Laos.procurement@plan-international.org with CC to Maniphone.phoutphong@plan-international.org including all supporting documents with subject line **“Technical Advisor in the Lasting Laos Project”**

Any questions regarding the details for this ToR can be sent to Mr. Ounkeo Pathammavong, Head SOYEE Programme at ounkeo.pathammavong@plan-international.org

We strongly encourage equally qualified female candidates to apply!

All applications received after the time of the deadline will not be accepted without exception and only shortlisted applicants will be contacted. Shortlisted applicants may be requested to participate in an in-person or online interview process.