

Terms of Reference

National Consultant – Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Centre for the

“Climate Change Adaptation in the Uplands through Innovative Practices Project in Bokeo Province”

Plan International in Laos

1. ABOUT PLAN INTERNATIONAL

We strive to advance children’s rights and equality for girls all over the world. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children’s rights from birth until they reach adulthood and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 80 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 75 countries.

Plan International in Laos (PIL) has been working in Laos since 2007, and is delivering programs in 10 provinces in Laos, including Bokeo, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang and Saravane Provinces. We support children and youth to access their rights through our Public Health, Education, Livelihoods and Adolescent Programs. In all contexts, together with partners, we strive for lasting impact in norms, attitudes and behaviours, social and economic safety nets, and policy framework in budgets.

The Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE) program of PIL aims to support improvement of economic skills, entrepreneurial spirit, opportunities and employment conditions for young people, especially young women. The YEE program has several projects which use a ‘livelihoods development’ entry point to enabling youth in rural areas to both have productive and rewarding livelihoods, through access to employment and skill training in their local areas.

Plan International Lao PDR (Plan Laos) is seeking an experienced development practitioner to support the effective delivery of project interventions under the Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Center initiative. The consultant will work closely with local partners to implement key activities, including: (i) introducing and facilitating the adoption of participatory extension approaches to promote improved and sustainable agricultural practices; (ii) guiding the application of Value Chain Development approaches to enable farmers to market their products more effectively and competitively; and (iii) strengthening farmer groups to develop and operate in a functional, inclusive, and sustainable manner. This role aims to build local capacity, foster innovation, and empower communities to improve agricultural productivity, market access, and resilience.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The main objective of the project will be to contribute to increasing rural livelihood opportunities, especially for young women and youth, by supporting improved farming and entrepreneurship opportunities, as well as promoting climate adaptation methods to households in 16 upland communities of Bokeo Province. This project will target 10 villages in Pha Oudom District, and 6 villages in Paktha District which are experiencing the negative effects of drought and need to improve their coping strategies focusing on food security and enhanced income generating approaches. Piloting and introducing innovations as well as their subsequent scale-up will be the general approach of the project, with a focus on addressing the challenges young people face in engaging in agricultural markets, adoption of new technologies in farming and availing entrepreneurship opportunities. An additional focus will be placed on documentation and a ‘learning cycle’ to better inform stakeholders and policymakers of the impacts of innovative initiatives, as well as resilience and coping strategies/methods that can improve the situation of upland farmers, entrepreneurs, and households.

3. PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE AND LEARNING CENTRE

A Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Centre (CILC) has been established and constructed in each district, with one located in Pha Oudom and Pakthac Districts in Bokeo Province. Each CILC will be managed through a Community Management Board structure, comprising representatives from DAFO (District Agriculture and Forestry Office), the district government, MHP (Maeying Huamjai Phatana) and Plan International Laos, who will provide technical and managerial advisory support. Community representative positions will be elected from project villages, with a strong emphasis on encouraging women to actively participate and vote. This ensures that women's voices are heard, their perspectives are represented, and their roles in decision-making are strengthened.

The Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Center serves as a dynamic hub for practical training and knowledge exchange in sustainable agriculture and aquaculture. The center offers hands-on learning opportunities in diverse areas, including poultry, cattle, fish farming, snail and frog raising, vegetable production, hydroponic vegetable cultivation, chilli farming, fruit tree cultivation, and semi-processed agricultural product development. By combining traditional wisdom with modern farming techniques, the center empowers local farmers and community participants to adopt innovative and resource-efficient practices for both personal and commercial use. This holistic approach aims to maximize productivity, conserve natural resources, promote entrepreneurship, and drive sustainable rural development, fostering resilient and self-sufficient communities.

The national consultant will assess the current status of the Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Centre (CILC) and identify key factors influencing its effectiveness as a dynamic hub for practical training and knowledge exchange in sustainable agriculture and aquaculture. Similarly, the consultant will evaluate the existing practices and conditions of the CILCs in the two target districts. This comprehensive assessment will enable the implementation of targeted activities to introduce and demonstrate innovative sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices, ultimately enhancing the centers' capacity to generate income and ensure long-term sustainability.

4. CONSULTANT DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES

The consultant will work closely with the MHP Team and Plan Laos in conducting all inputs. He/she will report directly to the Deputy Head of YEE or CCA project manager. He/She will key activities that he/she will conduct are:

1. Training Programs

CILC will provide hands-on training to farmers, agro-enterprise, and community members, focusing on sustainable agricultural and aquaculture practices:

- **Livestock and Aquaculture:** Training in sustainable farming of poultry, cattle, fish, snails, frogs, and crickets, including pond and tank management, feed optimization, and water quality control.
- **Horticulture:** Practical instruction on conventional vegetable farming and modern hydroponic systems for efficient, year-round vegetable cultivation.
- **Arboriculture:** Techniques for fruit tree cultivation, orchard management, and production of fruit seedlings for sale and community distribution.
- **Specialized Production:** Targeted training on profitable, commercial-scale cultivation of chilli and beans, including best practices for planting, harvesting, and processing for market competitiveness.
- **Develop a minimum of 10 guidelines or manuals** focused on the sustainable agricultural and aquaculture practices outlined above.

2. Consultancy Services

Tailored advisory services to support farmers, agro-enterprise startups, and smallholders with customized solutions, including:

- Farm planning and productivity improvement strategies.
- Sustainable agricultural technologies and climate-smart practices.
- Business development support, including value chain assessment and market access strategies.

- Troubleshooting technical and operational challenges for aquaculture and farming enterprises.
3. **Product Sales**
CILC will serve as both a production hub and marketplace, offering high-quality products to generate revenue and support center sustainability:
- **Aquaculture Products:** Fresh and poultry, cattle, live fish, snails, frogs, and crickets.
 - **Horticulture Products:** Fresh vegetables (conventionally grown and hydroponic).
 - **Processed and Specialty Crops:** Fresh and processed chilli products, including chilli paste and dried chillies.
 - **Seeds and Seedlings:** Bean seeds and high-quality fruit tree seedlings.
 - **Fruit Harvest:** Fresh seasonal fruits produced from onsite orchards.
4. **Community Engagement**
CILC will actively engage with local schools, youth, and marginalized groups to promote sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices:
- **Workshops and Awareness Programs:** Interactive sessions for schools and local communities on sustainability, resource management, and innovative farming techniques.
 - **Youth Empowerment Programs:** Targeted hands-on training for young people, prioritizing women with tailored mentorship and support to build confidence and practical skills.
 - **Demonstration Farms:** Showcasing scalable and replicable sustainable farming and aquaculture models to inspire adoption within the community.

Reports should be as (a) PowerPoint for de-briefing to the project team; and (b) short written text. The consultant should include pictures to demonstrate various points made, +/-

5 ETHICS AND CHILD PROTECTION

Plan International is committed to ensuring that the rights of those participating in data collection or analysis are respected and protected, in accordance with [Ethical MERL Framework](#) and our [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#), which covers the age group of children and young people from age 0 – 24 years old. All applicants should include details in their proposal on how they will ensure ethics and child protection in the data collection process. Specifically, the consultant(s) shall explain how appropriate, safe, non-discriminatory participation of all stakeholders will be ensured and how special attention will be paid to the needs of children and other vulnerable groups. The consultant(s) shall also explain how confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be guaranteed. All consultants and associates contracted under this assignment are also required adhere to Plan International’s policy for safeguarding children and young people.

6 PROVISIONAL TIMELINE

The duration of the assignment is **January – 31 December 2025**

A provisional breakdown of time inputs is detailed below:

No	Activities	Outputs	Responsible	Duration
1	Briefing discussion with Plan Lao and Development consultant		Consultant Plan Laos	0.5 day
2	Production of Draft Inception Report including methodology, work plan, staffing, and methodology. (3-4 pages)	Draft Inception report submitted for approval to Plan Laos (Lao)	Consultant	1 day
3	Consultant to revise and finalise inception report on the basis of comments received by Plan	Final inception report agreed between consultant and project staff. (Lao)	Consultant	0.5 day

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft lesson place and presentations for discussion with other members of the technical support team and Plan Draft simple reference sheets (1-2 p) to complement guidelines for (a) Raising livestock and Aquaculture practices; (b) supporting Horticulture (c) Specialized Production; (d) mobilising and ongoing activities in 2 centres; (e) support for farmers and young entrepreneurs 	Lesson Plan and presentations.	Consultant	3 day 5 day + 4 d travel (@0.5)
5	<u>Field – 2 Centres</u> Review status of activities in 2 learning centres in 2 districts and build capacity of MHP/Plan and partner (DAFO)	Status report (5-6 p) + PPT for debrief		7 day 2 day
	<u>Field – 2 Centres and community</u> Review status of activities in 2 learning centres in 2 districts and build capacity of MHP/Plan and partner (DAFO)	Status report (2-3 p) + PPT for de-brief		4 d 1 d
6	<u>Orientation Workshop</u> In consultation with tech support Team/Plan and MHP	Workshop ppt (1 p)		4 d 1 d
7	Consultation/supervision with MHP/Plan (remote)	notes		6 d
8	Finalise the guidelines	Minimum 10 guidelines		3 d
Total Consultant Work/Days				40 days

7 REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The national consultant must have the following qualifications, skills and experience:

- Substantial and varied field experience in sustainable agriculture, capacity-building, or agricultural innovation projects.
- Proven experience in developing training curricula, conducting workshops, and field demonstrations.
- Strong familiarity with operation of GoL agencies in order to align activities well with these.
- Experience in leading teams and staff development
- Effective communicator and able to ensure technical messages are expressed in ways accessible to staff and farmers
- Able to operate and organise activities and engage efficiently with in GoL systems
- Lao spoken and written language
- Ability to work quickly and efficiently with minimal supervision.

Other requirements:

- The financial proposal shall include all costs relevant to government (VAT, Tax...).
- Plan Laos does not pay consultants any in-field meal allowances or DSA. These costs should be incorporated into the enumerator fees and/or the costs for data collection.
- Plan Laos will cover in-country accommodation and transportation in line with Plan's policies. These in-country costs should not be included in your application.
- Travel days to be costed at half the daily consultants' rate.

- Travel requirements to comply with contract requirements, including reimbursement for any out-of-country and in-country expenses and accommodation as agreed in contract.
- The consultant must meet Plan Laos professional indemnity and public liability insurance requirements and must agree and sign to Plan International code of conduct; children and youth safeguarding policy; gender and inclusion policy; and other relevant documents.
- Approval of the final report by the Project Manager.

8. CONTACT

Please send your application to Laos.procurement@plan-international.org and Maniphone.phoutphong@plan-international.org. Include the text '**National Consultant – Community Innovative Agriculture and Learning Centre**' in the subject line. kindly include support documents as outlined. Any questions regarding the details for this ToR can be sent to **Mr. Kongsay Yangluexay**, Deputy Head of Youth Economic Empowerment Program at Kongsay.Yangluexay@plan-international.org

9. APPLICATIONS

Applicants are encouraged to email your application to the contacts listed above **no later than 15 Jan 2025**, with the following information:

1. A brief cover letter demonstrating you meet the competencies above and describing your proposed methodology.
2. Detailed budget, including daily fee rates, should not include in-country work travel or accommodation as this will be arranged for and paid by Plan at standard rates, however it should include per diems in daily fee. Consultants not requiring certain costs (such as accommodation in Vientiane) should indicate this in their application. If any international travel requirements should be included in the consultant rate but shown separately.
3. Proposed timeline and confirmation of your ability to work in the dates provided and meet the required deadlines.
4. A copy of your CV, and CV of team members.

Proposals will be assessed on demonstrated experience of the applicants with respect to the selection criteria, and budget proposal.

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.