



Terms of Reference

Consultant for Value Chains development

Survey and advice on the Macadamia value chains development opportunities in BounNeua district, Phongsaly province

1. Background

The CCL (Comité de Coopération avec le Laos) has been involved in implementing rural development programs in Laos for almost 40 years. Currently, CCL works in 4 provinces of Laos. In Phongsaly the CCL is currently implementing a project aiming at strengthening local communities' resilience towards climate change impacts and economic shocks. The projects follow an integrated and participatory approach.

The mission is integrated in GREEN project: Generating an inclusive Resilience and Environment Enhancement - GREEN (CCL, funded by AFD & BfW, 2023-2026)

The specific objectives of the Generating inclusive Resilience and Environment Enhancement Project (GREEN project - Phongsaly and Boun Neua districts) are:

1. The natural resources of Phongsaly province are preserved and sustainably managed to favor a sustainable, inclusive, and localized economic development.
2. The local stakeholders of Phongsaly province are strengthened, locally acknowledged, and participate in the sustainable and inclusive development of the territory;
3. The local stakeholders of Phongsaly province are strengthened, locally acknowledged, and participate in the sustainable and inclusive development of the territory.

In 2013 CCL supported the creation of the non-profit association COSKA. Since then, a close partnership has been effective between both organizations. COSKA is partner to CCL for the implementation of both projects.

2. Context

Climate Change impacts are expected to worsen in rural areas such as in Phongsaly Province in the upcoming years. The local population needs to be prepared by reducing their vulnerability in terms of both i/ their fragility to climate change negative impacts, and ii/their resilience to the economic shocks. An internal pre-assessment on climate risk and communities' vulnerability showed that one of the main vulnerability gaps is related to their income management and sources of incomes. Indeed, an improved management of their sources of incomes as well as a better planification of their investments and the constitution of adapted value chain development plannings could allow the households to better adapt their economy to future climate change impacts.

According to our baseline survey and the PCRVA (Participatory Climate Risks and Vulnerability Assessment) activity that we already conducted, we can already determine the main sources of incomes of each targeted village and the main climate change impact they face.

100% of the villages targeted rely on farming incomes (Cattle/Buffalo (9), Job's tears (13), Sugarcane (18), Rubber (11), Tea (13)). 19 villages out of 40 rely on contract farming for this main source of income (Sugarcane, Rubber).

The development of these value chains (sugarcane and rubber), led to deforestation and even though the villages incomes increased, they are still exposed to climate change issues such as drought, water scarcity, forest fires, pest and diseases, or herbicides and pesticides contamination.

GREEN project, in collaboration with the local authorities, aims to support the development of 3 main value chains adapted to climate change issues and economic needs of the villagers. To do so, the objective is to create a joint committee that will support the development of economic micro project at village level. This joint committee will be composed of 10 people/district, including 4 farmers' representatives, 4 representatives of the District Departments and 2 representatives of the project team, will then select economic project.

15 villages will be prioritized by the joint economic project committee on the basis of several criteria, including i) the existence of the prioritized sectors; ii) the leadership of village authorities; iii) good social cohesion in the village; iv) potential opportunities for developing an economic project linked to these sectors (identification of potential outlets; accessibility of the village; etc.). Project-set-up training sessions will be organized in each of these 15 villages. The aim is to present the basics for setting up a project. The joint committee will then select 10 priority projects and locally promising projects that will be funded by GREEN project. Other projects will be encouraged to find other sources of funds (ex: from Village Saving and Loan Associations).

Close technical support will be provided by project technicians as well as technicians from local authorities. Internal expertise of CCL (in tea, agroforestry) or external (in animal husbandry, fish farming) will be mobilized to train and support the implementation of these initiatives. Exchange visits between the supported initiatives will later be organized.

The activities related to value chain development will be implemented by GREEN but also supported with technicians from COSKA (project partner). COSKA has built a specific expertise in women's empowerment in supporting the creation of Women Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) from 2018 to 2022 in Phongsaly province. However, COSKA staff still needs get support to develop technical knowledge to implement this activity. This would indirectly improve the ability of the households to face climate change impacts.

After several discussions with both provincial and district office of BounNeau and Phongsaly, about the potential value chain to develop in these areas, the idea of developing macadamia, livestock (buffalo, cattle, poultry, pig), tea or fish was raised.

Before to start any value chain development strategy it is very important to analyse the opportunities and the added value of their development.

The consultancy aims to develop a value chain study of Macadamia. There are not many farmers producing already this product, but the objective of the government aims to replace the sugarcane monoculture by a more sustainable source of income. They have been inspired by the northern Vietnamese farmers that produce macadamia and can sell it at international level.

The lack of local structures to support marketing and export is also one of the major obstacles to the sustainable development of the sector. Most producer families rely on a few local traders to sell their products. Usually, these traders make contracts with Chinese companies that try to pay

very low prices to get more incomes when they sell it somewhere else. Without sustained demand, sales opportunities for farmers could be drastically reduced.

This study would permit to have an overview of the national and international market. It should explore several market opportunities that would allow the local farmers to sell their products at better price. Among them, the European Union market is one of the targets. More and more ethical/ responsible consumers care about environmental issues, sustainability, traceability, authenticity, naturalness. It is the reason why it will be also good to identify the opportunities in organic market as well as the fair-trade market.

Concerning the selling price of the product, a lot of parameters and criteria need to be improved and refined before defining price. It is expected that the study will provide inputs that can contribute to the definition of the range of the selling prices.

Retail and consumers prices will be defined according to several criteria including, the price at farmer-gate, intermediary costs including processing, transport, packaging, taxes fees, import/ export taxes, gross margin cost.

On CCL side we will provide a technical advice on how to improve the sustainable production of this value chain through agroecological systems. We already started to implement these systems with local farmers interested in growing macadamia.

The main implementing partners of the program are:

- ✓ Cooperation for Development and Support to Local Knowledge Association, Phongsaly (COSKA)
- ✓ Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Phongsaly (PAFO) and DAFO
- ✓ Lao Women Union and Lao Youth Union

3. Scope of the consultancy

The scope of the consultancy is integrated within one of the specific objectives of the project, to provide support to villagers and local authorities in the development of local economy and more especially sustainable and climate change adapted value chain development.

After discussing with local authorities and villagers we noticed that a Macadamia value chain might be worth developing in these districts. Before involving any micro-project fund into these activities, it would be interesting to study market opportunities.

4. Objectives & outputs of the consultancy

4.1- Overall objective of the consultancy:

Assess market opportunities and key involved parties (from producers to consumers) for the BounNeua district Macadamia value chain, in Laos, China, and in other promising consumer countries.

4.2. Target groups and specific objectives of the consultancy

4.2.1. Target groups

The study target groups are 1) the high-value consumers shown in recent studies, such as: USA, China, Australia, Japan and Germany, but also at local level (Lao PDR): 2) the wholesalers and the retailers and 3) the producers.

4.2.2. Specific objectives

Specific objective 1: Conduct an analysis of the raw and processed macadamia market for the consumers market target group

Output 1: Analysis of the consumer market for the raw and processed macadamia products, including a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of the different markets

Output 2: Analyse the market opportunities offered by China, Lao PDR and other western countries to make a selection of 3 countries to prioritize

- Assess market trends and segments opportunities for raw and processed macadamia smallholder farmers products (Import volumes/ annual sells in China Lao PDR and other western selected countries).
- Assess the selling price range (retail and wholesale prices) for these products in the China market- Lao PDR market and western markets if possible.
- Analyse and list the main competitors in different segments.
- Overall macadamia consumer habits (weekly/annual consumption).
- Main consumers trends regarding label/certification criteria (degree of importance given to organic production; fair-trade production, smallholder farmer production, eco-responsible/sustainable production, agroecological production...).
- Consumers buying channel trends.
- Assess types of information the consumers would like to have about the products

Specific objective 2: Understand the expectations and needs of wholesalers and retailers regarding the development and promotion of macadamia products in the market.

Output 3: Analysis of the wholesaler and retailers' expectations and objectives in the development of the macadamia market

- Identify main wholesalers and retailers for these products market.
- Main macadamia products sourcing location in Lao PDR
- Part of Lao macadamia production in total sells of Lao PDR if possible.
- Assess interest of wholesalers and retailers in raw vs. processed macadamia products;
- Assess how retailers would present the products and what information would they need to promote the products for marketing (ex: organic product, ethnic groups production, healthy product).
- Assess the wholesaler/retailer requirements regarding product certification (i.e. absolute need to have an organic certification, certificate of origin, etc.)
- Assess the importance given to the possibility to track back the production.

Specific objective 3: Understand motivations and expectations of macadamia producers in Boun Neua District for the value chain development and their engagement

Output 4: Analyse and list the macadamia producers and their expectation from the macadamia value chain in addition to the support needed

- Assess their interest and requirements to be motivated to develop this value chain
- Assess and analyse consumer/retailer knowledge of the macadamia production and the way to process it
- Assess and analyse consumers'/retailers'/producers' opinion on price ranges for the proposed products
- Assess the number of villagers within the project targeted villages that would be open to change their income generation crop to macadamia

4.3. Expected deliverables of the consultancy and Methodology

Deliverables:

Deliverables	
1	Methodology description report
2	Submit a complete report about the assessment's findings with recommendations about the most promising markets and strategies for Boun Neua farmers economic benefits
3	Presentation at the value chain development workshop at provincial level

In consultation with the CCL, the partner will be responsible for designing the methodology.

The final report should cover, but not be limited to:

- Cover page;
 - Summary of the study and the main results;
 - Introduction and context;
 - Summary of the methodology, including general limitations;
 - Results, analysis and discussion
 - Conclusion and recommendations;
 - References;
 - Annexes.
1. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the results of the study
 2. Working record

All the deliverables should be in English and Lao.

Methodology:

The methodology of the study will be defined in a common agreement between CCL and its partner. Among the tools to be set up, there are:

- Survey pool groups and sample size of each group;
- Questionnaire for semi-directive interviews;

- Analysis methods;
- Reporting method;
- Documentation method

The methodology will include a documentation review phase (official documents, studies, internet researches). The main documents that will be provided by CCL:

- Project documents, including proposal and logical framework;
- Baseline surveys and results;
- Annual reports;
- Update about the actual activities related to value chain development

5. Expected dates and work of the consultancy

Start date: August 2025

Expected duration: 2 months (August-September 2025)

The objective is to roll out the study between August and September 2025. Expected number of working days and timeframe is estimated in table below. A roughly number of **20 full day is expected**. The period for the realisation of the study could be extended based on project' needs and common agreement between CCL and the partner. If applicable, ToRs will be updated.

Study Methodology preparation	2 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office work - Field preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.5 days - 0.5 day
Field study	6 days
Traveling days	1 to 2 days
Draft report	7 days
Final report	3 days

The consultant will receive the assistance of our Project Coordinator, Project Advisor and Technical Assistant in Agriculture to conduct the field activities and to understand better the socio-economic environment of the project. The CCL team will be providing comments on the reports to identify areas of improvement.

If the consultant needs another specialist assistant, it needs to be justified and it will be discussed.

The DSA and accommodation costs are not covered by the project and should be included in the daily rate proposed by the consultant. Traveling costs (train, taxi, plane, bus) to come in BounNeua district will be covered by the project budget.

6. Selection process

The CCL is looking for one consultant, national (Lao PDR) or international.

The application file should include:

- a Curriculum Vitae
- a technical proposal which includes the description of the method followed to complete each step of the consultancy.
- A financial proposal which details the consultancy fees (related to the number of working days required and every expense expected to be made to reach the objectives of the consultancy). The financial proposal should detail the expected costs for each step of the consultancy.
- Any other documents developed by the applicant and that could be relevant to the topic of the consultancy (ex: previous similar activity drafted, former works and results obtained on related fields, publications...)

The following skills will be assets:

- Mandatory: background or knowledge in value chain development/study in Lao context
- Experience in developing value chains for smallholder farmers in rural and undeveloped areas or rural sociology / rural economy and family farming.
- Mandatory: knowledge in Lao agriculture investors.
- Mandatory: knowledge about the Mondial market trends for raw and processed agricultural products
- Mandatory: good writing skills and proficient in English (and/or French)
- Women are encouraged to apply.

For any question about this call for proposition, please contact, before the 30th of July 2025:

Mr Robert WILLIAMSON, robert.williamson@ccl-laos.org.

Candidates should send their application file per email by 30th of July 2025 to:

- CCL Director, Mrs. Manivone VORACHAK, manirachak@gmail.com
- Project advisors: Mr Robert WILLIAMSON, robert.williamson@ccl-laos.org
- Project Coordinator: Mr Pasert KHOUNSOMHUENG, sertk14@gmail.com

The consultant selected will be offered a consultancy contract signed with CCL.