

Terms of reference for the final evaluation of the project:
Sustainable Management in the Northern Upland Territory
Tea, Terroir and Territory, phase 2

1. Introduction

1.1. Project summary

The P3T2 project promotes sustainable natural resource management practices by placing farming families from ethnic minorities at the heart of decision-making processes and bodies, while providing them with innovative and tailored management tools. The technical and human resources mobilized by the project support these families in developing their initiatives to improve sustainable livelihoods. Forest preservation, biodiversity conservation, and the promotion of forest products form the cornerstone of the project. Nyot Ou forest tea, with its unique terroir, offers an opportunity to increase the incomes of ethnic communities while contributing to the sustainable development of the region.

The Nyot Ou Tea Cooperative facilitates tea marketing and strengthens synergies among producers to maintain and develop an environmentally friendly organic production, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the sector.

Women and young people are considered key actors in the transformation of the tea sector. The project aims to increase their involvement in defining strategic choices within their communities.

1.2. Main issues/challenges tackled by the project

Sustainable management of natural resources, agroecology, biodiversity, participation of women and young people in decision-making bodies, sustainable agriculture, recognition of farmer land rights and customary practices; support for local development, and support for local civil society.

1.3. Project objectives

Overall objective: Contribute to the sustainable development of northern upland ethnic communities

Specific objectives: **OS1.** The sustainable livelihoods of households have been improved; **OS2.** The Nyot Ou Tea cooperative has been strengthened and is contributing to the sustainable development of the tea sector in the district; **OS3.** Civil society and the local government (district and province) are committed to sustainable and inclusive regional development.

1.4. Project partners

CSO: Cooperation for Development and Support to Local Knowledge Association (COSKA) & Nyot Ou Tea Cooperative (NOTC)

Local authorities: Provincial and District offices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao Women Union.

1.5. Target beneficiaries

2170 families including 4,952 women from the Mien and Sino-Tibetan ethnic groups;

1 tea cooperative composed of at least two (02) employees at the end of the project and at least linked to six (04) village processing units each grouping overall 73 producers.

At least **50 officials from Provincial and District Departments** of Agriculture and Forestry, Departments of Natural Resources and Environment and the Lao Women's Union,

At least **1,500 high school students** & 20 teachers are benefiting from environmental awareness campaigns.

Indirect beneficiaries: The 30,000 inhabitants of Nyot Ou district.

1.6. Main impacts targeted

By the end of the project, 50% of women reported that their needs have been reflected in their family and villages' decisions and that they improve their self-confidence.

Percentage of households reporting that they are able to cope with a shock (drought, price increase, illness) without resorting to the sale of essential assets, compared between the baseline and the endline

The economic and social performance indicators of the Nyot Ou Cooperative are satisfactory (organizational motivation, objectives and representativeness; economic development; management capacity; socio-economic impacts on the environment; external relations and networks).

By the end of each project's year, the biodiversity friendly production of the Nyot Ou Tea Cooperative is increased at least 30%.

A working group on land rights and governance issues is active in the district and brings together government and non-governmental stakeholders.

At least 15,000 hectares of community forests are benefiting from biodiversity and forest cover conservation activities.

1.7. Project history and relations between the CCL and the partners involved

CCL has been supporting upland smallholder families in Nyot Ou district since 2008 to improve their food and nutrition security, following the request made by the Deputy District Governor and the District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO) and the conclusions of the agrarian diagnoses carried out. Afterwards, the PRESAN project implemented between January 2017 and December 2019 with the support of the AFD and the European Union made it possible to support ten new isolated villages in the Nyot Ou district affected by severe rates of malnutrition among children under 5 years old. Added to the 39 villages supported between 2008 and 2014, the CCL has supported approximately 4,000 households out of the 78 villages in the district. While the successive actions have led to a marked improvement in the living conditions of the families, the situation remains fragile for most of them. The collection of non-timber forest products, in particular wild tea, constitutes the share of income essential to maintaining their food security. This action therefore aims to sustain the results obtained through the implementation of essential activities on the sustainable management of natural resources, and by improving the structuring of the tea sector, the main opportunity to increase agricultural income in the long term without accentuate negative externalities on the environment.

The local association COSKA is involved in the project as a partner from the phase 2. COSKA contributes its expertise in community-based approaches focused on gender equality. COSKA is a local association officially recognized in June 2021 but has been operating in Laos in partnership with CCL since 2014. The association is now well established in Phongsaly province with a local team.

The Nyot Ou Tea Cooperative is also a beneficiary and partner of the project. The cooperative contributes to the activities related to providing advice and support to tea producers. The management committee is involved in the strategy, implementation, and monitoring of the project activities.

2. Objective of the consultancy

2.1. Overall objective

The general objective of the consultancy is to provide an independent and in-depth analysis of the P3T2 project. According to evaluation criteria, The project will:

- Give an overview of the project's achievements and constraints against the logical framework, including an assessment of the implementation of Phase 1 recommendations in Phase 2.
- Contribute to the development of a framework to assess the economic and social performance indicators of the cooperative in the long run, using a participatory approach.
- Serve as a strategic tool for CCL by providing a strong set of concrete and actionable recommendations for the design and implementation of the CCL program which will be implemented in Phongsaly (mainly Nyot Ou) and Oudomxay from 2026 to 2029.

2.2. Specific objectives

- a. **Assess the current performance of the project** against the criteria and key questions defined below;
- b. **Assess achievements against the project's logical framework;**
- c. **Make recommendations** to improve CCL Action's next development program;

3. Methodology

The consultant will propose a detailed methodology and approach of the study to meet the evaluation objectives and questions. The methodology should be designed to provide both a global overview for accountability and a deep analysis for future planning.

It must include:

- A thorough desk review of existing project documents to provide an initial global overview. The main documents will be provided by the CCL: project documents, including proposal and logical framework; baseline surveys and results; annual reports; description of key approaches; draft design of the new program.
- A more detailed, qualitative analysis of specific key areas identified in the project objectives: value chain development, climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation, and knowledge sharing for advocacy.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative instruments and methods should be used, and a participatory approach should be adopted, considering the views of key stakeholders. The consultant will have to integrate into the methodology the measurement of the changes to which the project has contributed, that of the effects produced in terms of capacity building, governance, empowerment,

quality of partnerships, contribution/influence of public policies. **The evaluation should also take into consideration the project's contribution to the following cross-cutting themes: youth, biodiversity and climate.**

The methodology will also include field visits to meet beneficiaries, villagers, local authorities at district and provincial level and presentation of the results to the partners concerned.

4. Key questions

Standard OECD/DAC criteria will be assessed following the proposed questions. Other questions can be included by the evaluator(s) in their proposal, while describing the evaluation method.

The key questions that the evaluation should answer are:

- **To what extent do the project's activities contribute to improving the livelihoods of targeted ethnic families?**
- **To what extent do the project achievements contribute to the preservation of forest resources and biodiversity in the Nyot Ou district?**
- **To what extent do the project achievements contribute to improve the premium and organic tea production and commercialization?**
- **To what extent do the project achievements contribute to the empowerment of women and youth, particularly regarding their involvement in decision-making bodies and access to economic opportunities?**
- **To which extent the objective of the creation of the Nyot Ou tea cooperative has been achieved? In which way, the Cooperative contributes to the productivity and marketing of sustainable tea production?**
- **To what extent the project participates in the strengthening of i/staff and villagers' capacities, ii/local governance on key issues?**
- **To what extent were the recommendations from the Phase 1 final evaluation implemented, and what was their contribution to the design and achievements of Phase 2?**
- **The evaluation should also take into consideration the project's contribution to the following cross-cutting themes: youth, biodiversity and climate.**

- **Considering the findings on project progress, achievement of results and considering a potential new CCL program, formulate practical recommendations and statements for these different aspects.**

5. Roles and responsibilities

In consultation with the CCL and its partners, the consultant will be responsible for:

design of the evaluation methodology;

implementation of the agreed methodology;

presentation of the first results to the stakeholders;

documenting the results (report + data);

prepare a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the results of the study for the CCL and partners.

The CCL will provide administrative support for all tasks concerning the evaluation and will contribute to the definition of the methodology. The CCL will also provide the necessary documentation.

6. List of deliverables

- a. Work plan and financial offer;
- b. Workshop on key findings with key partners;
- c. Draft of report to be shared with CCL project advisor before finalization
- d. Final report.

The report should cover, but not be limited to:

Cover page;

Summary of the study and the main results;

Introduction and background;

Summary of the methodology, including general limitations and ethical considerations;

Results, analysis and discussion;

Conclusion and recommendations;

References;

Appendices - including the tools used during the assessment;

The report will be submitted electronically in Word and PDF format. A first version will be submitted to CCL advisors for comments.

7. Indicative timeframe and consultancy dates

Tasks	# of days
Literature review	2
Evaluation methodology design	3
Data collection (interviews, meetings, FGD etc...)	18
Data analysis and report writing	5
Results presentations	1
Total	29

The start of the final evaluation is planned for the November 1st, 2025. Flexibility over a few days can be discussed if necessary.

8. Consultants' selection criteria

- a. Proven experience in conducting final evaluations of rural development projects in Laos focusing on natural resource management, support to NTFP value chains, biodiversity conservation.
- b. Profiles consultants: Agronomy, environment, and/or relevant qualifications.
- c. Technical skills: Knowledge of the production systems of the upland areas of Northern Laos, analytical skills, ability to conduct direct and semi-directive interviews, autonomous and adaptable, leadership, writing and presentation skills.
- d. Languages: English and Lao; French desired, Chinese will be a strong asset.
- e. References: a minimum of two references will be requested.

Note that the constitution of a team of several consultants is strongly encouraged to cover the expertise required for the project's thematic areas. Involvement of national expert(s) is highly recommended to conduct fieldwork and data collection. Women are also strongly encouraged to apply.

9. Application process

The application should include:

- a. a timeline (showing availability/schedule),
- b. a letter of expression of interest,
- c. a budget and a sample report already completed.
- d. The financial offer must include the following points:
 - Daily rate for the consultants both international and national (Per diem / DSA to be included in the fees)
 - Other expected costs
 - CVs (including at least 2 references)
 - A design document of the proposed methodology. The proposal should explicitly detail how the evaluation will address the three key strategic areas of the new program.
 - A detailed evaluation plan with a clear allocation of days for each activity.

Note: The project will cover flight tickets Vientiane to Phongsaly and domestic transport to the project areas. The logistical proposal must be included in the work plan.

For any question about this call for proposition, please contact: Mr Anthony Gueguen: a.gueguen.ccl@gmail.com. Candidates should send their application file per email by October 15th, 2025 to the CCL Director, Mrs. Manivone Vorachak, manirachak@gmail.com, and the Project advisor Mr Anthony GUEGUEN, a.gueguen.ccl@gmail.com

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