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Terms of Reference

Expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to the Agri-Food Processing Sector

January 2026

Plan International Laos (PIL) is currently seeking a service provider to expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to include the agri-food processing sector, focusing on promoting circular economy, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and decent work practices of local MSMEs in support of the **Lasting Laos Project**.

1. About Plan International Laos

Working in over 50 developing countries globally, Plan International strives for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls. Plan International has been working in Laos since 2007, and is delivering programs in 10 provinces in Laos, including Bokeo, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang, Vientiane and Salavan Provinces. We support children and youth to access their rights through our Public Health, Education, Livelihoods, Adolescent and Youth Economic Empowerment programmes. In all contexts, together with partners, we strive for lasting impact in norms, attitudes and behaviors, social and economic safety nets, and policy frameworks. Our work includes community-based action, partner strengthening, and policy advocacy, all focused on gender transformative programming. Visit www.plan-international.org and www.lastinglaos.com for more information.

2. Project Background

The overall objective of the **Lasting Laos Project** is to contribute to Laos 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, National Green Growth Strategy, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Roadmap and the EU's New Green Deal by supporting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and young entrepreneurs (YEs) in the Lao tourism value chain to adopt and promote SCP, circular economy and decent work practices. The project builds upon and scales-up key aspects of a previously EU funded project, SUSTOUR Laos Project (2020-2024). Specific actions continued into the Lasting Laos project include: the Lasting Laos sustainability certification programme; developing green products and services; tackling single-use plastic (SUP) waste; and access to finance for MSMEs and young entrepreneurs (YEs) in the tourism value chain.

Focusing upon key tourist destinations and urban centres with the highest concentration of MSMEs (Vientiane Capital, Luang Prabang Province, Vientiane Province), while expanding and scaling-up to one additional province (Champasak Province), the project contributes to the tourism value chain in its growth, ensuring MSMEs are sustainable, non-polluting and contributing to the sustainable livelihoods of Lao women, men and children. Plan and its partners will achieve this by promoting and standardizing sustainability certifications and bringing MSMEs in a variety of tourism related sectors into the green transition of the

economy. The Lasting Laos certification provides tailored support for MSMEs, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to transform their businesses towards circular economy, decent work and SCP practices while creating spaces and opportunities for YEs to innovate in these areas. The project creates a foundation for replication and scale-up across other sectors of the Laos economy and ultimately aims to cultivate a movement for environmentally and socially conscious entrepreneurship and investment in the Lao tourism value chain.

The project objectives are as follows:

- **Overall Objective:** To contribute to Laos 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, National Green Growth Strategy, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Roadmap and the EU's New Green Deal by supporting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and young entrepreneurs (YEs) in the Lao tourism value chain to adopt and promote SCP, circular economy and decent work practices.
 - **Specific Objective 1:** MSMEs throughout the Lao tourism supply chain adopt SCP, circular economy and decent work practices through the Lasting Laos sustainability certification programme supported by an enabling policy environment.
 - **Specific Objective 2:** MSMEs and 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.

Central to PIL and LNCCIs role in the project is the ***Lasting Laos Certification Programme*** which is a local sustainability programme for MSMEs in the Lao tourism industry that have demonstrated sustainable environmental, social and economic practices. The programme has been developed previously as part of the SUSTOUR Laos project (implemented by PIL and funded by the European Union) and administered locally by the LNCCI. The goal of the programme is to improve the overall sustainability of the tourism value chain by providing benchmarks and guidance for local MSMEs to measure and improve their sustainability. The certification is based on a set of sustainability criteria developed for four key sectors of the tourism industry (transportation, handicrafts, food & beverage, cultural excursions) with waste management as a priority cross-cutting issue across all sectors. These criteria have been developed in consultation with relevant private and public sector stakeholders and is based on the internationally recognized Travelife certification. MSMEs must demonstrate compliance with the criteria in order to become a Lasting Laos certified business. MSMEs report their compliance of the checklist through an online platform and compliance is verified by LNCCI with technical support provided by Plan. MSMEs who have proven compliance with the certification criteria are awarded and recognized as leading sustainable MSMEs in the Lao tourism industry.

3. Objective

The overall objective of this consultancy is to expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to include the **agri-food processing sector**, thereby broadening its application in tourism and services to include key MSMEs engaged in local food production, packaging and sales. The activity will ensure that the certification supports sustainable production models that are relevant to the Lasting Laos project's goals of reducing plastic pollution and promoting a circular economy within the wider tourism value chain. The selected service provider will work closely with the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) throughout the assignment.

The service provider will support PIL and LNCCI by:

- Developing sector-specific sustainability criteria aligned with national regulations, ASEAN standards, and global schemes (e.g., GSTC, ISO, Travelife), informed by prior research and consultation conducted by the project.
- Integrating circular economy principles including SUP waste management as well as gender, inclusion, and child safeguarding into the new certification components.
- Designing or adapting verification processes, scoring systems, and implementation guidance.
- Preparing new training materials for LNCCI assessors and MSMEs in the new sector.
- Leading two consultation workshops with project partners, government, private sector, and associations to validate the criteria and processes.
- Facilitate training and capacity building for PIL and LNCCI staff.

4. Scope of Work

The consultant will work under the supervision of PIL and LNCCI, in close coordination with the CTA and other relevant stakeholders. The tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Inception and Review

- Review existing Lasting Laos certification criteria, processes, and materials.
- Review previously conducted research on relevant local, regional and international policies and certifications (national regulations, ASEAN standards, GSTC, ISO, UNEP guidance, etc.) and recommendations for improvements to the certification.
- Hold initial meetings with PIL and LNCCI to agree on a methodological approach.
- Develop a concise work plan.

2. Development of Criteria and Processes for the Agri-Food Processing Sectors

- Draft sustainability criteria based on previous research and recommendations, tailored to local MSME capacity and in alignment with project priorities (i.e. circular economy, SCP, decent work practices).
- Include specific criteria related to SUP reduction, waste management, substitute products, and circular economy, gender equality, inclusion, and child safeguarding.
- Develop verification methods, compliance indicators, evidence requirements, and scoring systems.
- Prepare MSME-friendly guidance materials explaining expectations and good practices.

3. Stakeholder Consultation Workshops (2 workshops)

- Organize and facilitate two stakeholder workshops in Vientiane Capital (or remote/hybrid):
 - Workshop 1: Initial consultation including representatives of local MSMEs, relevant government departments, hotel associations, etc.
 - Workshop 2: Validation workshop on new sector criteria, processes, materials, etc.
- Specific tasks include:
 - Preparing agendas, discussion materials and presentations

- Facilitating the workshop, encouraging participation and discussion and ensuring feedback is received from all stakeholders
- Documenting feedback and recommendations in meeting minutes

(Workshop costs to be covered by PIL; consultant supports preparation and leads facilitation.)

4. Development of Training Materials

- Prepare user-friendly training materials on (but not limited to):
 - Revised certification processes for the new sectors
 - Assessment/verification procedures
 - Circular economy, SCP and decent work components
 - Gender, inclusion, and safeguarding elements

5. Finalization of Certification Materials

- Revise criteria, processes, and guidance based on workshop inputs.
- Submit final versions of all materials for final approval and integration into the Lasting Laos system.

6. Capacity Building for PIL and LNCCI staff

- Deliver one training session for PIL, LNCCI and other relevant stakeholders on the revised certification standards, processes, and materials to ensure effective implementation.

5. Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected from the service provider:

#	Deliverable	Description
1	Research and Draft Criteria and Processes for the Agri-Food Processing Sector	Desk review and analysis of existing certification materials, develop initial draft criteria, verification mechanisms, scoring systems, and guidance materials for agri-food processing sector
2	Facilitate Consultation Workshops (2)*	Design and facilitation of two stakeholder consultation workshops (in-person or remotely); submission of meeting minutes summarising key feedback and agreed areas of revision.
3	Revision and Finalization of Expand Certification Criteria and Processes with Relevant Materials	Fully revised and validated certification criteria, processes, verification guidelines, and MSME guidance materials for both new sectors.
4	Training Session for PIL and LNCCI*	Facilitate one training session delivered for PIL and LNCCI on the expanded certification criteria, processes and materials.

**The costs of the workshops/training will be covered by PIL. The consultant is only responsible for supporting the planning and leading the facilitation of these workshops/training session.*

6. Timeline & Working Days

The contract is expected to commence on 1 February 2026 and end on 30 May 2026 for an estimated 18 working days. The working location can be remote or on-site.

#	Deliverables	Timeframe	Estimated Working Days
1	Desk Research and Develop Draft Criteria / Processes	February 13 - March 31, 2026	8
2	Facilitate Consultation Workshops (2)*	February 1 – April 30, 2026	2
3	Revision and Finalization of Expand Certification Criteria and Processes with Relevant Materials	March 1 – May 15, 2026	6
4	Training Session for PIL and LNCCI (including preparation) *	May 15 – 30, 2026	2
Total No. of Working Days			18

**The costs related to the workshops and trainings (e.g. venue, food & beverage, etc.) will be covered by PIL. The service provider is only responsible to prepare and facilitate the workshops and training session.*

7. Payment Details

There will be a total of 4 equal payment installments (25% each) provided upon the satisfactory completion and approval of each deliverable (1 through 4) based on the value of the budget submitted by the awarded service provider.

8. Qualifications

- Advanced degree in sustainable food systems, agri-business, environmental management, or certification systems.
- Minimum 7 years of experience in sustainability certification, auditing, or environmental compliance (e.g., ISO, B Corp, GSTC, or equivalent).
- Proven experience with agri-food processing value chains and MSME sustainability.
- Demonstrated expertise in SUP reduction, waste management, and circular economy practices.
- Demonstrated expertise in SUP reduction, waste management, and circular economy practices.
- Proven experience developing sector-specific sustainability criteria.
- Strong facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills; experience conducting participatory workshops with government and private sector.
- Experience working in Southeast Asia; knowledge of Lao context is a significant asset.
- Experience working with development organizations or donor-funded projects is an asset.
- Excellent English communication and report-writing skills; Lao language an advantage.
- Commitment to Plan International's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and ethical standards.

Child Protection: Plan or its partners does not tolerate child abuse. All staff and consultants are selected and employed in line with the conditions of Plan's Child Protection Policy. These include appropriate reference and background checks.

9. Application Process

Plan invites interested applicants to submit their application to Laos.procurement@plan-international.org, and copy to Chindavone.Keomanykhod@plan-international.org. The application deadline is February 8th, 2026. For any technical inquiries please contact connor.bedard@plan-international.org. Please note that only the successful applicant will be contacted.

Please include the text “**Expand the Lasting Laos Certification Programme to the Agri-Food Processing Sector**” in the email subject line and kindly include support documents as outlined below:

1. An expression of interest (1-page maximum).
2. An indicative work plan with timeframe (1-page maximum).
3. An indicative budget with a daily rate, any travel and other costs (must be inclusive of per diem, travel costs and other related government charge (Tax, VAT)).
4. Curriculum Vitae of any persons mentioned in the work plan (*If a consulting firm or company, a company profile with: a company name, registered office address, physical address, telephone numbers, date of registration, registration number, copy of registration certificate, names of directors/proprietors and name of contact person*).

Note: All applications received after the time of the deadline will not be accepted without exception. Only the successful tender will be contacted.