



## Terms of Reference (ToR) for Project Mid-term Review (MTR)

<b>Project Title</b>	Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Lao PDR
<b>Country</b>	Lao PDR
<b>Project Reference No:</b>	NDICI CSO/2023/444-833
<b>Budget</b>	3,000,000EUR European Union (EU): 1,500,000EUR Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC): 1,500,000EUR
<b>Duration</b>	January 2024 – December 2027
<b>Location</b>	Vientiane Capital (Xaysetha, Chanthabury, Sistrattanak district) Luang Prabang (Luang Prabang city, Chomphet, Ngoy district)

### 1 Project Description and Background

The Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Lao Project aims to enable environmental Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), with particular focus on youth and women-led organization, to contribute effectively to green and inclusive economic growth in the Lao PDR. This will be achieved by strengthening CSO capacities in policy engagement, evidence-based advocacy, raising public awareness, and green income generation within the waste and circular economy sector.

The Lao PDR continues to face significant environmental challenges, including low municipal waste collection and recycling rates, limited separation of waste at source, and weak coordination among public authorities, private sector actors, and civil society. These challenges are compounded by the absence of clear national guidance on household waste separation, limited data and research to inform policy decisions, and underdeveloped waste-to-resource and value-creation initiatives that could generate livelihoods, particularly for women and youth. In response, the SCP Lao Project adopts a systemic and participatory approach to transforming the waste management and recycling system. The project combines CSO capacity strengthening, behavior change interventions, and practical recycling and value-creation pilots to address both the demand-and supply-side constraints of sustainable waste management. Research, pilot, and policy dialogue are used to generate evidence, demonstrate viable solutions, and influence enabling frameworks as national and sub-national level.

The project is implemented in partnership with Sisterhood for Development Association (SDA) and STELLA, ensuring strong gender and youth perspective across all components. The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE) serves as the line ministry, providing policy linkage and institutional anchoring.

The project's Theory of Change is grounded in the assumption that sustainable improvements in waste management and circular economy outcomes require simultaneous change at three interlined level: institutional capacity, individual and collective behavior, and economic incentives.

- If environmental CSOs are strengthened in technical knowledge, organizational capacity, research skills, and policy engagement.

- Then they can more effectively design and deliver evidence-based awareness campaigns, community mobilization activities, and policy dialogue, particularly targeting women and youth as key change agents.
- If households, youth, women, and communities adopt improved waste separation and consumption practices, driven by targeted behavior change communication and practical demonstrations, then the quality and quantity of recyclable materials entering the system will improve, enabling more efficient recycling and upcycling initiatives.
- If recycling and value-creation initiatives are supported and lined to market opportunities, then green jobs, income generation, and small-scale enterprises especially for women and youth will become economically viable, reinforcing behavior change through tangible economic benefits.

These pathways, CSO capacity strengthening, behavior change, and recycling / value creation are mutually reinforcing. Strong CSOs act as system facilitators, behavior change increases material flows and social acceptance, and viable recycling and green livelihoods opportunities create sustained incentives for continued participation. Together, they contribute to more inclusive, coordinated, and sustainable consumption and production practices in the waste sector.

## **2. Objectives**

The specific objectives are grouped into three outcomes:

- **Outcome 1** – improved role of Lao CSOs in environmental policy processes with particular focus on sustainable consumption and production.
- **Outcome 2** – increased environmentally-conscious behavior among the wider population with focus on youth and women.
- **Outcome 3** – improved recycling systems, employment, and income generation from green and upcycled products.

## **3. Geographical Coverage of Project**

Project activities are implemented in the Chanthabuly, Xaysetha, and Sisattanak districts in Vientiane Capital, and the Luang Prabang city, Chomphet, and Ngoi districts in Luang Prabang Province.

## **4. Purpose of the Evaluation**

This Mid-term Review (MTR) is a formative evaluation intended to support adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making. It aims to assess progress made since the start of project implementation in June 2024 against the project's objectives, outcomes, and expected results. The MTR will examine the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation, identify strengths, challenges, and lessons learned. The evaluation will provide actionable and forward-looking recommendations to enhance project performance, results achievement, and impact for the remainder of the implementation period, as well as to inform the design and strategic orientation of a potential follow-up phase.

In line with the project's results framework, the MTR will place a strong analytical focus on CSOs, youth, and women as the project's primary target groups, assessing the relevance, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of project interventions in responding to their needs, capacities, and roles in advancing sustainable consumption and production.

The findings of the MTR will include an analysis of achievements, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations to support project management and key stakeholders in planning the next steps of the project. In particular, the MTR will:

1. Analyse the project approach and the intervention logic, including the selected intervention areas, and assess their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact, with a view to supporting improvements in project implementation and results achievement.
2. Provide the project management with an independent and objective assessment of the project’s overall status, progress to date, relevance, and quality of management and implementation, including and assessment of likelihood of achieving the project’s immediate and longer-term objectives.
3. Formulate practical and evidence-based recommendations related to the project design, strategic orientation, implementation modalities, and management arrangements, aim at improving project performance and results delivery for the remainder of the current implementation period
4. Critical reflection on the participation, leadership, and agency of women- and youth- focused CSOs across the different project components.
5. Identify and document good practice, lessons learned, and strategic recommendations that can inform the design and planning of a potential follow-up phase, including options for consolidation, scaling, and sustainability of results.

#### 6. Scope of the Evaluation

The MTR will assess the project in line with **OECD-DAC** evaluation criteria, with particular emphasis on **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and potential impact**. The full list of criteria and guiding questions will be shared with the applicants in a separate e-mail.

#### 7. Methodology and Tasks

The evaluation methodology shall ensure that CSOs, youth, and women are explicitly included as part of the assessment exercise, including through targeted interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, or participatory methods, as appropriate.

Step	Tasks
Documents to be reviewed	<p>The evaluator is expected to conduct a desk review of relevant project documentation, including but not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project proposal and Project documents (including log-frame and result framework)</li> <li>- Grant contract</li> <li>- Baseline report</li> <li>- Interim reports</li> <li>- Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) Guidelines</li> <li>- Other relevant project-related documents as deemed necessary by the evaluator and project management.</li> </ul>
<i>Preparation:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collection of and acquaintance with project documents;</li> </ul>

By evaluator in close coordination with project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review of project progress reports and other relevant project-related materials (such as the <i>internal self-assessment</i>);</li> <li>• designing detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including methods for data collection and analysis);</li> <li>• elaboration of questionnaires and evaluation forms for different stakeholders;</li> <li>• setting up detailed mission programme in coordination with project team;</li> </ul>
Internal Self-Assessment by project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis by project team</li> <li>• Internal assessment on Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability</li> </ul>
Field Visit / Mission: by external evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• briefing with project team;</li> <li>• meetings with project staff;</li> <li>• structured interviews with different stakeholders</li> <li>• visiting field activities (if possible)</li> <li>• debriefing with project team with a presentation of preliminary evaluation results to project team;</li> </ul>
Elaboration of draft report: by external evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• additional desk review;</li> <li>• completion of draft report;</li> <li>• submission of draft report to project team for comments and suggestions.</li> <li>• additional information and further clarification on a need basis;</li> </ul>
Elaboration of final report: by external evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporation of comments and additional findings into draft report;</li> <li>• submission of final report</li> </ul>

## 8. Deliverables

Throughout the evaluation process, the consultant shall provide the following deliverables, in line with OECD-DAC evaluation principles and SDC/EU quality standards, ensuring methodological rigor, transparency, and usability of findings:

1. **Inception Report Methodology:** A concise inception report outlining the evaluation methodology, including the evaluation framework aligned with OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and where feasible, **early impact signals**), data collection tools (e.g. questionnaires, interview and focus group discussion guides), sampling approach, stakeholder mapping, and a detailed mission and workplan.
2. **Debriefing with Project Staff and Key stakeholders:** A structure debriefing session conducted on the final day of the field visit / mission to present preliminary findings, emerging conclusions, and initial observations. The debriefing will allow validation of findings, collection of feedback from project teams and key stakeholders, and input into the preparation of the draft evaluation report.
3. **DRAFT Mid-Term Evaluation Report:** A draft MTR report to be submitted within three weeks of completing the field mission and shared with the project team for review and comments.

- a. **Indicative length:** approximately 20-25 pages, excluding annexes.
  - b. **Analytical approach:** the report shall be analytical in nature, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data, and structured around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and coherence (and impact, where applicable).
  - c. **Recommendations:** the draft report shall include **clear-prioritised**, and actionable recommendations specifying for each recommendation:
    - Priority level (high / medium/low),
    - Responsible actor(s), and
    - Indicative timeframe (short, medium, long-term)
4. **FINAL MTR Report:** shall be submitted within one week of receiving consolidated comments on the draft report, incorporating all agreed feedback and revisions. The final report shall explicitly highlight how findings and recommendations inform:
- The project **management response and adaptive planning** for the remainder of the current phase; and
  - Strategic discussions on a potential follow-up phase, including design considerations and scaling opportunities.

The MTR report shall be prepared in English and comply with the objectives, scope, and evaluation questions outlined in this ToR. The report shall:

- Include an executive summary highlighting key findings, conclusions, and priority recommendations, including identification of best and promising practices.
- Present findings in a clear, evidence-based, and analytical manner, combining qualitative and quantitative data and structured around on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.
- **Analysis cross-cutting theme, including participation, leadership, and agency of women-and youth-focused CSOs.**
- Outline key lessons learned and conclusions for each of the three project components, accompanied by actionable recommendations for the remainder of the current project phase.
- Provide strategic recommendations and considerations for a potential follow-up phase of the project.

The report shall include, at a minimum, the following annexes:

- Term of Reference (ToR)
- Evaluation matrix
- Data collection tools (surveys, questionnaires, interviews guides)
- List of interviewed institutions and stakeholders
- Other relevant documentation supporting the analysis and findings.

## 9. LoE and Timeframe

The total Level of Effort (LoE) of the evaluation should not exceed 12 days within the period of 3/2026 – 4/2026, according to the following plan: Preparation 3 days, Field Visit / Mission 5 days, Draft Report Elaboration 3 days, Final Report Elaboration 2 days.

Activity	Days	Deliverable
<i>Preparation</i>	<b>3</b>	<i>Methodology, questionnaires, and mission plan</i>
<i>Field Visit / Mission</i>	<b>5</b>	<i>Debrief with Project Team on preliminary findings</i>
<i>Elaboration of draft report</i>	<b>3</b>	<i>DRAFT Evaluation Report</i>
<i>Elaboration of final report</i>	<b>1</b>	<i>FINAL Evaluation Report</i>
<b>TOTAL DAYS</b>	<b>12</b>	

*Tentative timeline:*

Preparation / Desk review – 1<sup>st</sup> week of March

Internal Self-Assessment – 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March

Field visit / Mission – 3<sup>rd</sup> week of March

Elaboration of draft report – 4<sup>th</sup> week of March to 1<sup>st</sup> week of April

Elaboration of final report – 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April

## 10. Required Qualification

The evaluation and planning process will be carried out by an external consultant who must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- At least 7 years of proven experience in evaluating development projects, preferably EU-funded programmes.
- Solid experience working with and supporting youth-led initiatives and CSOs in development programmes. Particularly in participatory approaches and organizational development.
- Strong knowledge of and practical experience applying EU evaluation standards, including the OECD-DAC criteria.
- In-depth knowledge and relevant experience in Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), civil society development, and waste management and/or circular economy.
- Proven track record in conducting project evaluations, including mid-term and/or final evaluations.
- Excellent analytical and report-writing skills, with the ability to produce clear, high-quality evaluation reports.
- Fluency in English is required; proficiency in Lao language is a strong asset.

## 11. Administrative Clauses

This project mid-term review will be conducted by a competent external consultant who will be assisted by the project management to carry out the assignment. Invoicing will follow Swisscontact internal procedures.

**Interested consultant/s should get in touch with the Project Manager using this link:**

<https://bit.ly/SCPMTR>

**Deadline for submission of expressions of interest via the link is on 20 February 2026**