



Until we are all equal

## JOB DESCRIPTION PLAN LAOS

Title	Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning (MERL) Coordinator		
Unit	Rural Enterprises for Agricultural Livelihoods (C-REAL),		
Reports to	Project Manager		
Location	PU Bokeo Province	Travel required	60%
Effective Date	01/05/2026	Grade	

### About Plan International Laos (Plan Laos)

Plan International has been working in Laos since 2007, delivering integrated programs in Bokeo, Champasak, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Saravane, Vientiane Capital, and Vientiane provinces, while also working through partners in other provinces. Plan International Laos’ 2020–2027 Country Strategy takes a life-cycle approach, focusing on supporting children—especially girls—in accessing their rights to **public health and nutrition, education and skills, adolescent development and participation, and opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship**. We are also globally mandated to provide humanitarian assistance in the event of an emergency in Lao PDR.

Plan International Laos is a leading INGO in Laos and participates in various civil society and government sectoral working groups, as well as regional and global networks. We work closely with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, UN agencies, and civil society partners in line with the principles of aid effectiveness, promoting child rights—especially for girls. Our work includes community-based action, partner strengthening, and policy influencing and advocacy. Our values-based feminist leadership principles underpin our work, and we are committed to being locally led and globally connected. Globally, by 2027, Plan International aims to impact the lives of **200 million girls**.

### ROLE PURPOSE

Plan International Laos’s Youth Economic Empowerment program is underpinned by the overall goal to foster an enabling environment where young people especially women have control over their aspirations and resources through decent work opportunities in the 21st century labour market. In Laos, we are looking forward to achieving this through enabling young women develop and promote their agribusinesses as agri-entrepreneurs primarily in the rural settings. In the urban settings like in Vientiane we will work with young people in enterprise development and support their growth and value creating through impact investment funding. We are also looking at supporting and enabling sustainable tourism.

The purpose of this roles is to support C-REAL and all Plan Laos Programs to:

- oversee and coordinate monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) processes within the project;
- strengthen and improve monitoring, evaluation, learning, and knowledge management systems;
- support capacity development of program teams in quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation methodologies;
- support monitoring and reporting against the Country Program Strategy and relevant MOUs;
- provide translation and interpretation support from local languages to English when required;
- support and promote the transition to digital data collection toolsnate monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) processes within the project;

## DIMENSIONS OF THE ROLE

- Support the MERL and knowledge management processes for Plan Laos programs in dual languages (Lao and English); namely for the Country Program Strategy and MOU monitoring and reporting;
- Be familiar with all aspects of the MERL system including the Country Program Strategy; program objectives and indicators, indicator tracking matrix and data collections tools;
- Support the transition from paper based data collection to digital data collection;
- Support the utilization of qualitative data collection methods such as most significant change, appreciative inquiry and case studies;
- Support Project Manager in quarterly, bi-annual and annual progress reporting for C-REAL project and projects under YEE program;
- Support training such as results based project management, monitoring and evaluation skills;
- Support the training on use of the system to project, CSO partner and government staff;
- Contributes to documentation of project experiences and results;
- Does not line manage staff but provides significant coaching and support to team members in the course of implementing activities;
- Requires approximately 60% travel in target Provinces, including remote districts.

## ACCOUNTABILITIES

### 1. Research, monitoring, evaluation and learning coordination

- Support the Project Manager, and Program Quality Manager in the development and implementation of monitoring, evaluation, and research activities aligned with the Country Program Strategy and project objectives.
- Support the coordination and quarterly updating of the Program-wide Annual Evaluation and Research Plan, including monitoring the implementation of management response plans to evaluations and post-intervention studies.
- Support program teams to consult with and provide feedback to communities, particularly children in Plan's program areas.
- Ensure that MERL standards and policies are applied in the development and implementation of M&E and research frameworks.
- Ensure that monitoring data and results are analyzed and used to improve programming through monthly, quarterly, and annual data analysis, interpretation, and review workshops.
- Coordinate with and provide logistical and administrative support to consultants and survey firms as required to facilitate research and assessment activities.
- Support program teams in the dissemination of research findings and MERL results at national, provincial, and district levels.
- Provide translation support for MERL-related documentation when required.

#### **Success Metrics**

- MERL standards and policies are applied across initiatives (e.g., ethical standards, proper design, planning, implementation, and utilization of MERL activities).
- Completion of all required MERL technical self-paced training, including PMERL system training.

- MERL practices are integrated with Gender Equality and Inclusion (GEI) and Child Safeguarding standards.
- Findings from research and evaluation studies are communicated back to beneficiary communities in ways that are accessible and understandable to people of different ages and language backgrounds

## 2. Activity Management

- Design and facilitate Training of Trainers (TOT), trainings, workshops, and other key MERL-related activities.
- Support the digitalization of data collection tools and system set-up in field offices as required.
- Implement and pilot data collection instruments and protocols aligned with the project's Performance Measurement Plan (PMP) and research needs.
- Support teams to maintain project data storage systems and data analysis interfaces, and regularly monitor data completeness and quality.
- Work with program staff to train project staff, District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO) and Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) staff, and CSO partners in the use of MERL tools, gender-sensitive facilitation approaches, data entry and transfer systems, database management, and associated equipment.
- Support periodic reviews of monitoring data and assist teams in identifying lessons learned and areas for improvement.
- Provide ongoing coaching and technical guidance to staff to ensure high-quality implementation and reporting of MERL activities.
- Provide support to other program and project tasks as needed, demonstrating flexibility and collaboration across different areas of the project.

### **Success Metrics**

- MERL tools are successfully digitalized as planned, and data storage and management systems are user-friendly and allow easy retrieval of information.
- MERL trainings and workshops are delivered to a high standard and receive positive participant feedback.
- Local CSO partners (NPAs) demonstrate improved M&E and research practices.

## 3. Accountability and relationships

- Maintain positive relationships and regular communication with internal and external stakeholders, including Plan International National Office staff, Plan Laos staff, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFO), District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFO), and CSO partners.
- Support the Head/Deputy Head of the YEE Program, Project Manager, and Program Quality Manager in maintaining mechanisms for sharing major M&E and research findings with beneficiary communities, partners, and Plan International staff.
- Support innovation in programming and ensure that evidence and results are applied in program and project design.
- Participate in national, regional, and global learning initiatives and seek opportunities for knowledge sharing and learning exchanges.
- Provide technical advice, support, and training to local CSO partners (NPAs) to strengthen continuous learning within their programs.

### **Success metrics:**

- Serves as a resource person for field staff and partners requesting MERL training and support.
- Partners and communities are able to provide input and feedback throughout the project cycle.
- Local CSO partners demonstrate continuous learning and improvement in programming.

## 4. Budgeting and financial management

- Provide MERL-related inputs for monthly costed work plans, quarterly procurement plans, monthly cash forecasts, annual financial reports, and budget revisions.
- Prepare requisitions and manage cash advances for MERL-related activities as required.
- Ensure timely clearance and reconciliation of expenses and advances related to MERL activities.

**Success metrics:**

- All expenses and advances are settled in accordance with organizational finance procedures

**5. Communications**

- Contribute information, photos, case studies, and learning materials for project communication products and knowledge sharing.
- Ensure that Plan International's global policies on Child Safeguarding and Gender Equality and Inclusion (GEI) are fully integrated into MERL activities in accordance with relevant policies, implementation standards, and guidelines.
- Ensure that staff and partners understand their responsibilities under the Child Safeguarding Policy, GEI Policy, and Plan International's Code of Conduct (CoC) and that concerns are reported and addressed through appropriate procedures.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Position	Reasons for contact	Level (high, medium, low)
<b>Internal</b>		
Programme Director	1) Ensure that team members are supported and equipped to fulfil the responsibilities and requirements of the position	Medium
Rural Enterprises for Agricultural Livelihoods II (REAL II) Project Manager	1) Training for teams as required. 2) Coordinate advice and training with local partners (government and NPAs) 3) Support reporting and monitoring for projects and to government	High
Program Quality Manager	1) Ensure MERL Policy/Standard are applied 2) Ensure all M&E functions are well managed and trackable	Medium
Human Resource and Training Manager	1) Coordinate trainings and provide information on planned training	Medium
Safeguarding Children and Young people Coordinator	1) Coordinate on Child Protection Policy Compliance	Medium
<b>External</b>		
Local CSO Partners	1) Coordinate with NPAs to ensure good support, including training  2) Advice, training and support as in the JD above	High
Government Partners	1) Coordination of activities to ensure project implementation is conducted in a timely manner and suited to the project beneficiaries.	High
Development Partners	1) In coordination with the Program Quality Manager, work with partners	Medium

# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

## Knowledge:

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree. A range of academic specializations may be considered relevant, including micro-agribusiness development, employment development, income generation and/or livelihoods improvement, computer science, mathematics/statistics, social sciences, or other related fields.
- 3–5 years of professional experience working with development organizations such as Non-Profit Associations (NPAs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), bilateral or multilateral agencies, and development programs.
- A minimum of 2–3 years of professional experience in research, monitoring, and evaluation of development programs and projects.
- Knowledge of monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL) approaches, including logical frameworks, monitoring plans, results and process indicators, qualitative and quantitative research approaches, gender-sensitive research methodologies, and participatory methods.
- Solid understanding of MERL systems and program quality standards.
- Good written and spoken Lao and English (Advanced/Upper-Intermediate level).

## Skills:

- Strong analytical, research, and evaluation skills.
- Experience in designing data collection tools, managing data collection processes, and conducting both quantitative and qualitative interviews and research techniques.
- Experience managing databases and conducting data analysis.
- Practical experience in conducting advanced descriptive statistics, preferably using statistical software packages such as SPSS or STATA, would be an advantage.
- Experience in developing, using, and training others in digital data collection tools would be an advantage.
- Advanced computer skills in Microsoft Office applications, particularly Excel.
- Strong ability to use digital technologies, including tablets, cloud-based storage systems, smartphones, and video and photography applications.
- Knowledge of additional data collection and data visualization software, such as Pol Mapper, SNAP, FrontlineSMS, CommCare, FormHub, Memento, Tableau, or Power BI, would be an advantage.
- Strong facilitation and training skills, with the ability to design and deliver high-quality trainings and communicate complex information in a clear and accessible way for different audiences.
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously and meet deadlines.

## Behaviours:

- Strong interest in building evidence and applying technology to improve development outcomes in Lao PDR.
- Self-motivated and proactive, demonstrating creativity and innovation.
- Able to produce high-quality work under pressure and tight deadlines.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Team-oriented, with willingness to travel to remote villages when required.
- Strong coaching and mentoring ability, working with a diverse range of colleagues and stakeholders.
- Commitment to gender equality, child rights, and safeguarding principles.

# PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S VALUES IN PRACTICE

## **We are open and accountable**

1. Promotes a culture of openness and transparency, including with sponsors and donors.
2. Holds self and others accountable to achieve the highest standards of integrity.
3. Consistent and fair in the treatment of people.
4. Open about mistakes and keen to learn from them.
5. Accountable for ensuring we are a safe organisation for all children, girls & young people

## **We strive for lasting impact**

1. Articulates a clear purpose for staff and sets high expectations.
2. Creates a climate of continuous improvement, open to challenge and new ideas.
3. Focuses resources to drive change and maximise long-term impact, responsive to changed priorities or crises.
4. Evidence-based and evaluates effectiveness.

## **We work well together**

1. Seeks constructive outcomes, listens to others, willing to compromise when appropriate.
2. Builds constructive relationships across Plan International to support our shared goals.
3. Develops trusting and 'win-win' relationships with funders, partners and communities.
4. Engages and works well with others outside the organization to build a better world for girls and all children.

## **We are inclusive and empowering**

1. We empower our staff to give their best and develop their potential
2. We respect all people, appreciate differences and challenge equality in our programs and our workplace
3. We support children, girls and young people to increase their confidence and to change their own lives.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Typical office-based working environment, with frequent field travel.

Frequent travel to Pha Oudom, Meung, Paktha, and Ton Pheung Districts in Bokeo Province, and occasional travel to Oudomxay and Saravan Provinces, including travel at the district level and to remote villages.

## LEVEL OF CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

**Low contact: No contact or very low frequency of interaction**

Mid contact: Occasional interaction with children

High level: Frequent interaction with children