



Terms of Reference

Development of NSA toolbox

Technical support to
Department of Planning & Cooperation
Of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment

A) Background

National Nutrition Committee (NNC) leads in currently ongoing revision and subsequent implementation of the National Nutrition Strategy (NNS, 2026-2036) and the National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN, 2026-2030). The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE) is one of the key stakeholders in this process, together with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. The revision of both NNS and NPAN will align with the development of the 10th Five-Year NSEDP (2025-2030). The NNS and NPAN expected to be finalised in 2026.

Within MAE, it is the Department of Planning & Cooperation (DPC) which coordinates the implementation of its tasks and targets as stipulated in the NPAN together with Departments of Rural Development, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. At lower levels the implementation is undertaken by the Provincial Agriculture & Environment Offices (PAEOs) and District Agriculture & Environment Offices (DAEOs). Coordination between line ministries takes place through the Provincial Coordination Committees and the District Nutrition Committees (DNCs). Actual implementation is often undertaken by District Nutrition Teams (DNTs), with staff from one or more line-ministries, and often with other relevant organisations, Department of Health, Department of Education, Lao Women Union, but the structure of DNTs is not described in any policy.

SNV is operating in Laos PDR under an INGO permit from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SNV in partnership with WFP is implementing a nutrition sensitive agriculture project under Component 4 of the Sustainable Rural Infrastructure and Watershed Management Sector Project (SRIWMSP). The ADB-funded SRIWMSP is implemented under coordination of the Department of Irrigation of MAE. The project area includes two districts (Kham and Peak districts) in Xiengkhouang province, and three districts (Xamnuea, Viengxay and Sopbao districts) in Houaphanh province. With EU and GAFSP funding, SRIWMSP is promoting Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture (NSA) in 200 villages till end 2027.

SNV also gained substantial experience in NSA through the Enhancing Nutrition of Upland Farming Families (ENUFF) Project, which was completed in December 2024, and included four districts: Nga and Beng in Oudomxay Province, and Xiengkho and Viengxay in Houaphan Province.

Various other NSA projects have been implemented in Laos, often in close coordination with MAE or MoH. Recent projects include Communication for Improved Nutrition (C4N, a follow-up of NUFNIP), Accelerating Healthy Agriculture and Nutrition (AHAN), Sustainable Change Achieved through Linking Improved Nutrition and Governance (SCALING). Technical Assistance in Support to the Lao PDR National Nutrition Strategy and National Plan of Action on Nutrition (TANPAN) also provided capacity building and TA support to MAE up to 2025.

Still running projects include World Bank Community Livelihood Enhancement Resilience Project (CLEAR) and IFAD/WFP Agriculture For Nutrition (AFN) in addition to the SRIWMSP.

An NSA workshop organised at MAE on October 3, 2025, with DPC, other MAE representatives and various development partners concluded that, although efforts have been considerable to improve the nutritional status in Laos, and often involved PAFOs and DAFOs, the approach has been rather fragmented. Many projects developed their own tools, village structures, activities, etc. This can work out positively, but one consequence has been that after 10 years of increased NSA efforts, the MAE remains without a practical harmonised NSA approach. It was thereby agreed that development partners will support MAE to develop a practical NSA toolbox, which should be appropriate for use by PAEO and DAEO staff. This could happen based on the various tools already tested and applied by various NSA projects. The ongoing revision of the NNS and NPAN is an appropriate moment, as these two policy documents need to be supported with practical tools and guidelines to enable their implementation.

MAE accepted support from SNV, under the SRIWMSP framework, to take additional steps towards a national, practical NSA toolbox to be owned by MAE. This would also require some capacity building regarding the use of toolbox. This ToR describes the involvement of a consultant to develop the NSA toolbox in close collaboration with DPC, other MAE departments and other relevant development partners.

B) Objective of this assignment

This assignment aims:

To develop, in close collaboration with DPC, other MAE departments and other relevant development partners, a practical and harmonized NSA toolbox, appropriate for use by PAEOs and DAEOs.

C) Initial understanding

Discussions between DPC and SNV have led to the following decisions:

- i) **Task force:** Deputy DG of DPC, Head of Department of Rural Development, Department of Agriculture (Crop), SNV Agri-food sector leader, SNV Agriculture Advisor, and Consultant. The task force will provide guidance to the consultant: a) ensuring that expectations from different departments are met; b) ensuring that the NSA toolbox aligns with the updated NPAN; c) ensuring that the NSA toolbox meets the needs of PAEOs and DAEOs and aligns with their capacities and mandates; d) ensure launch and adoption of the end result as the national MAE NSA toolbox; e) propose next steps after NSA toolbox has been adopted.
- ii) **Contours of the content of toolbox:** 1) Practical manual for basic nutritional awareness, 2) production-oriented manuals, 3) Background information for PAEOs and DAEOs. The

- toolbox will exist in English and Lao, hard and soft copy, with visual aids (posters/handouts).
- iii) **Build on what already exists:** many NSA related projects have developed various manuals which have proven to be useful for NSA awareness and behaviour change at village level. Some gaps might be identified in the process and be developed and added to the toolbox, e.g. lack of pictorial training materials.
 - iv) **Users of the NSA toolbox:** the users will be staff of PAEOs and DAEOs who are the implementers of NSA under the MAE. It is expected that projects, whether they collaborate with PAEOs and DAEOs or not, will adopt the NSA toolbox once it is announced as the national approach to NSA. Other users could include Lao Women Union, Provincial Agriculture Training Centers, Lao Farmers Association, etc.
 - v) **Ownership of the toolbox:** MAE will decide which department and section should lead in owning and managing the toolbox, and thereby be responsible for maintaining availability of materials, be point of contact, etc. Design will be aligned to government communication guidelines. Content of the toolbox must be approved by respective departments of MAE. If future updating of the toolbox is required, it is expected that this department/section will seek required funding, e.g. from development partners.
 - vi) **MAE Monitoring & Reporting system:** Ideally NSA activities would be integrated into the national MAE Monitoring & Reporting system. This is however not part of this ToR.
 - vii) **Budget for this assignment.** Costs of this ToR, including consultancy costs, field trips by MAE staff, piloting, will be covered by SNV SRIWMSP project. SNV will also ensure printing of a first batch of manuals. It might involve other development partners (e.g. SUN-CSA) where necessary, e.g. for their expertise or for additional funding.

D) Expected key features of the toolbox

The toolbox will include:

- Training manual/materials for General nutrition awareness: i) basic understanding of nutrition and importance of a healthy diverse diet (including maternal nutrition, breastfeeding, first 1000 days); ii) cultural & gender issues; iii) importance of visiting health services; iv) water, sanitation and hygiene; v) food (in)security & food availability; vi) crop diversification & agriculture workload; vii) natural resource management; viii) households resources for nutrition.
- Production-oriented manuals: i) home gardening (vegetables); ii) fruit trees; iii) small livestock (poultry, fishery).
- A Trainer's Guide with guidelines on how to use this manual, attention for facilitation skills, gender responsive approaches, and more advanced nutrition understanding.

E) Deliverables for the consultant

The consultant will submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report within one week of signing the contract
- First draft of NSA toolbox –Per topic: training manual with facilitator guide and session plan, training content, and posters.

- Second draft of NSA toolbox –Per topic: training manual with facilitator guide and session plan, training content, and posters. This includes incorporation of feedback and advice from the task forces and other consultation meetings.
- Final approved NSA toolbox with its manuals, (draft) posters, etc.
- Reports of facilitated consultation meetings

The above deliverables are all in English language.

SNV will be responsible for: translation into Lao, final design including pictorials, costs of workshops and meetings, training of trainers, pretesting/field visit to see use of tools, printing of hard copies, etc.

F) Activities to be proposed by the consultant

To meet the above objectives and expectations, the proposed activities by the consultant should include submission of an Inception report, submission of two rounds of draft NSA toolboxes to be presented at consultation meetings for feedback, and one final NSA toolbox.

It is expected that the consultant will provide a detailed work plan and budget in the proposal. It is expected this assignment can be fulfilled within 25 days.

G) Qualifications for prospective consultants

Prospective consultants should meet the following qualifications and requirements:

- MSc degree in rural development, agronomy, nutrition, behaviour change communication or other relevant education.
- At least 10 years of work experience in rural/community development, livelihoods, behaviour change, extension methods, nutrition sensitive agriculture.
- At least 5 years work experience in nutrition sensitive agriculture in Laos
- Track record of developing at three participants and facilitator manuals in relevant fields of work.
- Excellent skills in communication, facilitation and relationship building
- Well-informed about the nutrition sensitive development initiatives in the country
- Experience in consultancy works for government agencies and development partners in Laos

H) Timeline

The assignment is expected to start latest in **15th May 2026** and should be completed in 2.5 months' time.

I) Proposal requirement

Prospective consultants are to submit the following:

Technical Proposal which contains:

- CV of lead consultant
- CV of additional consultants if required
- Proposed methodology and workplan (beyond what is presented in this ToR)
- Two examples of developed manuals

Financial Proposal which contains the proposed detailed budget:

- with number of days and daily fee clearly visible
- other costs presented in detail
- Show 5% tax to be deducted at source

J) Submission

All submissions should be sent electronically to: laprourement@snv.org with the subject "Proposal NSA Toolbox".

Your e-mail should have two zip-files attached:

One zip-file named "Technical Proposal - Name of consultant" which contains:

- CV of lead consultant
- CV of additional consultants if required
- Technical proposal: proposed methodology (beyond what is presented in this ToR)
- Two examples of developed manuals

Second zip-file named "Financial Proposal – Name of your consultant" which contains the proposed detailed budget:

- with number of days and daily fee clearly visible
- other costs presented in detail
- 5% tax deducted at source clearly visible

The deadline for receiving submissions is April 20, 2026. Only applicants that have been selected for further discussion will be contacted. If you do not hear from us within two weeks' time from the date, consider your application unsuccessful.

Non-compliance with any of the above may lead to rejection of the bid.

We do not appreciate third-party mediation based on this advertisement. SNV believes in and follows competent selection procedures to ensure quality outcomes in all of its assignments.