

Terms of reference for the final evaluation of the project:
Generating Inclusive Economic and Environmental Resilience in Phongsaly province, Lao PDR (GREEN)

1. Introduction

1.1. Project summary

The GREEN project, with a duration of 36 months, targets 40 villages across two districts (Boun Neua and Phongsaly) in Phongsaly Province, Northern Laos. GREEN aims to address the consequences of the economic and environmental crises faced by rural communities.

Through household economic advisory services, the establishment of a network of agroecology farmer facilitators, support for women's groups, and the financing of small-scale economic projects, the project seeks to strengthen household economies, enabling families to invest in and develop more sustainable agricultural production geared toward local markets.

The project also supports the management and preservation of natural resources, particularly water resources. This involves raising awareness of environmental issues, establishing community task forces, constructing water supply systems, and funding environmental initiatives.

The Lao association COSKA is actively involved in the project implementation and receives capacity-building support with a view to promoting skills transfer and strengthening civil society.

1.2. Main issues/challenges tackled by the project

Sustainable family economy, Sustainable agriculture, Food security, Environment, Natural resource management, Capacity building, Gender equality and social inclusion, Support for civil society.

1.3. Project objectives

The main project objective is: Strengthen the resilience of the people of Phongsaly Province to promote sustainable and inclusive development for rural communities comprising ethnic minorities, women, and youth in the province.

Specially, the project aims to ensure: i/ 40 rural communities in Phongsaly Province comprising ethnic minorities, their women, and youth are more economically resilient and better integrated into a revitalized local economy; ii/ The natural resources of Phongsaly Province are preserved and managed to support localized, sustainable, and inclusive economic development; iii/ Civil society in Phongsaly is strengthened, recognized at the local level, and committed to sustainable and inclusive territorial development.

1.4. Project partners

CSO: Cooperation for Development and Support to Local Knowledge Association (COSKA)

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

1.5. Target beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries: 2,200 households from ethnic minorities (Phounoi, Akkha) in 20 villages in Boun Neua District and 20 in Phongsaly, totaling 10,835 people, including 5,700 women; at least 50 local decision-makers from the District Departments of Agriculture and Environment, the Lao Women's Union, the Lao Youth Union, and local authorities; and the local organization COSKA (elected officials and technicians).

Indirect beneficiaries: the population of Boun Neua and Phongsaly Districts, totaling 37,539 people, including 17,878 women; COSKA members; and civil society in Phongsaly.

1.6. Main results targeted

- 1.1) Rural families from 40 villages have improved their economic management and planning
→ *The capacity of 600 households to save and make sustainable investments has improved between the start and end of the project*
 - 1.2) Sustainable and inclusive local value chains and market opportunities are being developed, particularly for women and youth from ethnic minorities
→ *At least three local value chains are supported and offer sustainable economic opportunities for women and youth*
 - 1.3) Women's economic autonomy is strengthened across two districts
→ *Women's capacity for economic decision-making is improved at the household and community levels*
 - 2.1) Agroecological practices and climate change adaptation measures are promoted and implemented in the 40 target villages
→ *At least 40% of households in the target villages are aware of agroecology and climate change*
 - 2.2) Water resources are protected and preserved at the district and provincial levels;
→ *1 water resource protection plan is defined in each district*
 - 2.3) Pilot environmental protection initiatives are implemented
→ *At least 2 pilot environmental conservation initiatives are implemented per district*
 - 3.1) Local development policies are more sustainable and inclusive
→ *The local capacity of 50 local decision-makers in the area of sustainable and inclusive development is enhanced, with at least 50% of them being women*
 - 3.2) The women's civil society organization COSKA is recognized locally and has a regional branch
→ *COSKA's management and governance principles and tools are in place and mastered by its members*
 - 3.3) The CCL's cross-cutting expertise and the tools it has developed are leveraged and transferred to civil society and institutional partners
→ *The CCL's expertise is strengthened, consolidated, and disseminated at the local and national levels*
- Dialogue between local authorities and civil society representatives (associations, women, and youth) is strengthened and increasingly takes into account inclusive sustainable development issues, particularly those affecting women and young people.

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

The CCL has been established for 40 years in Northern Laos and in particular in the province of Phongsaly. The PDDP Program (Rural Development Program of the Phongsaly District) implemented between 1996 and 2007 and financed by the AFD aimed to support rural development in the Phongsaly District through support for agriculture (rainfed rice farming, livestock and market gardening), rural infrastructure (rural roads and bridges to open up isolated villages) as well as water-hygiene-sanitation (construction of community water supply networks, support for health centers, etc.). Starting in 2008, the CCL expanded its activities in the Nyot Ou District to improve food security. The Scaling Up Convergent Program Approaches to improve food and nutrition security in the northern uplands (SUPA/PRESAN) program, funded by the EU and the AFD between 2016 and 2020, targeted, among other areas, the Nyot Ou District and two southern districts of Phongsaly Province.

The PNP (Nutrition Improvement Program in Phongsaly Province), funded by the EU and the AFD between January 2019 and June 2022, enabled the return of the CCL (Community Nutrition Center) to the Phongsaly district and its expansion into the Boun Neua district, which became the provincial capital in 2018 and is experiencing rapid development. Implemented in 80 villages, 35 in Boun Neua and 35 in Phongsaly, the PNP allowed the CCL to strengthen its ties with local authorities, with numerous departments from the districts and the province involved (Departments of Health; Education and Sports; the Lao Women's National Union; the Lao Youth

Union; the Department of Planning and Investment; Agriculture and Forestry; Environment; as well as the District Governors). The CCL also collaborated with all the health centers (10) in the 2 districts of Phongsaly, Boun Neua as well as the 10 secondary schools.

The local association COSKA is involved in the project as a partner. 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.

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 GREEN project implementation.

This evaluation analysis will:

- Give an overview of the project's achievements and constraints against the logical framework;
- Serve as a strategic tool for CCL by providing a strong set of concrete and actionable recommendations for the implementation of a potential Phase 2

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 indicators;**
- c) **Make recommendations** to improve CCL Action's for a possible phase 2.

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 of 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 Phase 2 project.
- A more detailed, qualitative analysis of specific key areas identified in the project objectives: family economy improvement, value chains development, climate adaptation action plans and environment protection micro-projects, and knowledge sharing for advocacy.

The consultant needs to integrate into the methodology an assessment of the changes to which the project has contributed. This assessment should combine quantitative data from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework with qualitative information collected through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and other relevant participatory methods. The consultant should further elaborate on this approach (including sampling strategy, triangulation, Bias management...) and explain the proposed methodology in detail to analyze this contribution.

The consultant should also assess the effects generated by the project in terms of capacity building, governance, empowerment, the quality and effectiveness of partnerships, and the project's contribution to and influence on public policies. **The evaluation should take into consideration the project's contribution to the following cross-cutting themes: women and youth involvement, climate change resilience, biodiversity protection, agroecology development**

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.

The evaluation, in accordance with CCL internal policies and approaches, should analyze the ethical aspect of activities in topics such as confidentiality, gender involvement approach, “do no harm”, or informed consent.

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:

Relevance:

- To what extent does the project design fit the local context and the socioeconomic and socio-environmental dynamics of the project area?
- To what extent does the project address the priority needs of the target local communities, including youth and women?
- To what extent are the initial needs identified at project design still relevant?

Coherence:

- To what extent is the project consistent and coherent with Lao national policies and strategies?
- To what extent is the project coherent with past and ongoing interventions implemented by other development partners?
- To what extent is the project internally coherent, including the linkages between its components and between the overall objective and the specific objectives?

Effectiveness:

- To what extent were the planned activities implemented as intended, and to what extent were the expected results achieved?
- To what extent did the partnerships established under the project contribute to the achievement of the expected results?
- To what extent were the project outputs translated into the intended outcomes?
- To what extent did the project's implementation approach enable effective delivery of results defined in the logical framework?

Efficiency:

To what extent were project resources (financial, human, technical, and institutional resources) used efficiently to achieve the expected results?

- To what extent were the project implementation methods and management arrangements efficient in delivering results?
- To what extent was the project cost-effective in achieving its outputs and outcomes?

Impacts:

- To what extent has the project generated intended and unintended, positive and negative effects?
- To what extent has the project contributed to longer-term and systemic changes beyond the direct beneficiaries?
- What unexpected effects (positive or negative) emerged from the project, and why?
- To what extent has the project contributed to broader economic, environmental, and governance changes?

Sustainability:

- Are the results and benefits of the project likely to be sustained over the medium and long term? Why or why not?
- What factors may support or threaten the continuation of project outcomes?
- Have mechanisms been established to ensure continuity of project benefits beyond the project period?
- Are VSLAs, agroecological practices, water supply system management committees sustainable on a long-term basis?

Regarding the assessment of impact and sustainability, the evaluators should consider, among other aspects, the following technical and thematic questions:

- To what extent do the project's activities contribute to improving the resilience of targeted ethnic families to economic and climate shocks?
- To what extent the family economy management and the VSLA activities have contributed to a better economic management of targeted households and to a women empowerment at household level?
- To what extent have agroecological practice been implemented and has impacted positively on the economic and environmental resilience of the beneficiaries?
- To what extent have the adapted value chain been developed and are giving a new orientation in the villagers' future income generation?
- To what extent do the project achievements contribute to the preservation of natural resources (water and forest) and biodiversity in the districts of Boun Neua and Phongsaly?
- 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 what extent" means to evaluate qualitative and quantitative results. It can be done by defining performance thresholds or comparing impacts to expected standards.

The evaluation should take into consideration the project's contribution to the following cross-cutting themes: women and youth involvement, climate change resilience, biodiversity protection, agroecology development.

The evaluation should also **assess the validity of the project's theory of change and the assumptions underlying expected results through hypothesis, mechanisms of change, causal links.**

Considering the findings on project progress, achievement of results and considering a potential new Phase, **formulate practical recommendations and statements for these different aspects especially regarding: A/ approaches that should be scaled up, B/ best innovations, C/ models that can be replicable.**

5. Roles and responsibilities

In consultation with 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

Deliverables	Deadlines
Methodology Guideline with field work plan	17/09/2026
1 st Draft of final report	16/10/2026
Final report	23/10/2026
Summarizing PowerPoint	30/10/2026
Workshop on key findings	05/11/2026

These deadlines are indicative. It will be necessary to review them with the selected consultant.

7. Indicative timeframe and consultancy workload

Tasks	# of days
Literature review	2
Evaluation methodology design	3
Data collection (interviews, meetings, FGD etc...)	15
Data analysis and report writing	7
Results presentations at an official workshop in Boun Neua and with the CCL office in Vientiane	1
Total	28

The start of the final evaluation is planned for **September 7th 2026**. Flexibility over a few days can be discussed if necessary.

8. Report structure and content

The Final 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. The first version will be submitted to CCL advisors for comments.

To ensure focus and readability, the final report (excluding annexes) should not exceed 40 pages. The consultant is expected to be concise, focusing on high-quality analysis and actionable recommendations. The report should prioritize clear, evidence-based synthesis over lengthy descriptions of project background, as the latter is already documented.

9. Consultants' selection criteria

The selected consultant should:

- a. Have 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, value chain, climate change adaptation 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.

The consultant is expected to navigate the complexity of a multi-donor environment. The methodology must explicitly outline how the evaluation will harmonize data collection to provide a global strategic overview of the 'GREEN' action, while maintaining the necessary segregation of information to satisfy the specific reporting and contractual obligations of each donor. The consultant should demonstrate a clear strategy for presenting findings that are both comprehensive for internal programming and compliant with individual donor restrictions.

Selected candidates will be required, prior to contract signing, to read, acknowledge, and commit to complying with CCL's internal policies throughout the duration of their assignment. This includes, but is not limited to, the policies on Environmental and Biodiversity Protection, Gender Equality, Child Protection and Protection of Vulnerable Persons, as well as Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption.

10. 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. a financial offer including the following points:
 - Daily rate for the consultants both international and national (Per diem / DSA to be included in the fees)
 - Other expected costs
- e. CVs (including at least 2 references)
- f. A design document of the proposed methodology:
 - The proposal should explicitly detail how the evaluation will address the two main objectives
- g. A detailed evaluation plan with a clear allocation of days for each activity.

Note: CCL will cover flight tickets/train/taxi/other transportation from Vientiane to Boun Neua and domestic transports to the project areas. The logistical proposal must be included in the work plan.

Candidates are invited to include a specific paragraph in their technical proposal detailing their experience and approach in managing evaluations involving multiple donors with separate reporting requirements.

For any question about this call for proposition, please contact:

- Mr Robert Williamson: robert.williamson@ccl-laos.org

Candidates should send their application file per email **by August 28 , 2026** to:

- CCL Director, Mrs. Manivone Vorachak, manirachak@gmail.com,
- and the Project advisor Mr Robert Williamson, robert.williamson@ccl-laos.org

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