

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Final Evaluation of the Project

WISE LPB – Wetland Improvement for a Climate Change Resilient City, Luang Prabang

Contracting Authority	Gret (Groupe de Recherche et d'Échanges Technologiques)
Project	WISE LPB – Wetland Improvement for a Climate Change Resilient City
Assignment Title	Final Evaluation of the Project
Location	Luang Prabang Municipality, Lao PDR: the four WISE II villages (Ban Mano, Ban Pongkham, Ban Viengkeo, Ban Viengxay)
Type of Consultancy	External individual consultant, or a pair of consultants working as a team
Languages Required	English and Lao required. At least one member of the consultant / team must be fluent in spoken Lao (for community and institutional interviews) and in working English (for reporting and exchanges with Gret).
Duration	1 month (4 weeks)
Expected Start Date	31 August 2026
Expected End Date	28 september 2026
Reporting to	WISE Project Manager, Program Manager SEA

1 - BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The urban ponds of Luang Prabang (183 recorded in 1999 within the UNESCO World Heritage area) are a defining feature of the city's heritage, ecology, and daily life. They provide critical environmental services: flood regulation, natural wastewater treatment, aquaculture, thermal regulation, and

biodiversity support. However, pollution from largely untreated household wastewater and sustained land pressure have led to the dramatic disappearance of these ponds — from 183 in 1999 to approximately 109 in 2023 (a 40% loss in 24 years). Only 75 of the original 114 ponds remain in the four target villages of WISE LPB.

WISE LPB (Wetland Improvement for a Climate Change Resilient City, 2023–2026) is the second phase of GRET's engagement on Luang Prabang's urban wetlands. Implemented with the Urban Services Office (UMSO), World Heritage Office (WHO), and the Department of Public Works and Transport (DPWT) in four target villages — Ban Pongkham, Ban Mano, Ban Viengxay, and Ban Viengkeo — the project has pursued three complementary objectives:

- 1 - Mobilising inhabitants and local authorities through socio-technical studies, participative diagnosis, and awareness campaigns on the value and management of urban wetlands (SO1).
- 2 - Ensuring sustainable and integrated management of urban wetlands through Village Wetland Management Committees (VWMC / ຄຸກຊຸບ) in all four villages, restoration and protection of at least 10 ponds each, and operational water quality monitoring at UMSO (SO2).
- 3 - Monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating project results and lessons learned in Laos and France (SO3).

The project is funded by the Agence de l'Eau Loire-Bretagne (AELB), the Région Centre-Val de Loire (RCVL), the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and GRET, for a total budget of 249,700 EUR. It is implemented under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport / Department of Housing and Urban Planning (DHUP). The final evaluation is a contractual requirement under the MoU and donor agreements, and is also designed to inform the preparation of a potential next phase.

2 - PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The final evaluation aims to:

- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of project activities and results, against the project logframe and donor frameworks (AELB, RCVL, AFD).
- Measure the level of achievement of all logframe indicators and update the M&E framework accordingly.
- Document lessons learned and good practices from the overall approach applied to WISE in Luang Prabang.
- Provide practical, targeted recommendations for GRET and partners including for a potential future phase of the project WISE III.

The evaluation report will be shared with AELB, RCVL, AFD, ²DHUP/MPWT, and other project partners and stakeholders.

3 - EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluator will assess the project using the five standard OECD/DAC criteria. Key questions are listed below for each criterion.

3.1 - Relevance

- How the project has been aligned with the needs and priorities of wetland communities, pond owners, and local government partners?
- How the Commons governance approach and implementation tools have been adapted to the local context and how appropriate were those changes for the urban wetland context of Luang Prabang?
- Was the project coherent with national policies, the UNESCO World Heritage regulatory framework, and the actions of other actors in Luang Prabang (JICA, World Bank, ADB)?
- How could the next phase of the project improve this aspect?

3.2 - Effectiveness

- Was the project able to adapt its activities to external constraints and new projects impacting the urban ponds?
- Were activities implemented as planned? How delays in implementation could be improved in the future? How did the project team adapt the workplan to those constraints?
- Were logframe targets achieved and how was it impacted by external and internal constraints?
- Were Village Wetland Management Committees (VWMC) established and operational in all 4 target villages?

3.3 - Efficiency

- Were budget, staff, and time used as efficiently as possible to achieve the planned results?
- How effective and efficient was coordination with government partners (UMSO, WHO, DPWT, DoNRE)?
- How effective and efficient was coordination with other external stakeholders?
- The project had to handle multiple funders requirements, and different deadlines based on funder requirements. How has it impacted the efficiency of the project and its implementation?

3.4 - Impact

- Has the project contributed to improving the environmental quality of urban wetlands and sanitation in the target areas?
- How project activities and more specifically awareness activities led to measurable changes in attitudes or behaviors toward urban wetlands among residents and institutional actors?
- What could be improved in terms of awareness, and improvement of the environment for the next phase of the project?
- In terms of governance mechanisms, how did the project strengthen communities' capacity to collectively manage and protect their ponds? What could be the recommendations to improve those capacities?

3.5 - Sustainability

- Are the Village Wetland Management Committees in capacity for leading some activities after the end of the project?

- What financial sustainability mechanisms have been identified or put in place for the VWMCs?
- Are the infrastructure works (constructed wetlands, grease traps, restored ponds) likely to be properly maintained?
- Has sufficient institutional ownership been built among UMSO, WHO, DPWT, and DoNRE to sustain results beyond the project period?
- The next phase of the project aims at strengthening O&M mechanisms of the infrastructures built; what could be the recommendations to improve sustainability based on the lessons-learned from current project ?

3.6 - Cross-cutting themes

Throughout all criteria, the evaluator should address the following cross-cutting themes:

- **Gender and social inclusion (GEDSI):** participation of women, youth, and diverse community members in governance and activities.
- **Climate resilience:** contribution of the project to urban adaptation to climate change.
- **Replicability:** potential to scale up or replicate the approach in other villages or secondary cities in Laos.

4 - METHODOLOGY

The evaluator is expected to propose a detailed methodology in their application. It must include, at minimum:

- **Desk review** of project documents: project document, logframe, MoU, progress reports, M&E data, water quality monitoring data, community meeting minutes.
- **Field mission in Luang Prabang** (minimum 3 days) including visits to the 4 target villages, observation of infrastructure works, and meetings with VWMC members and beneficiary households.
- **Stakeholder interviews** with the GRET project team, UMSO, WHO, DPWT, village chiefs, VWMC members, pond owners, and representatives of the IMC.
- **Focus group discussions** with community members, with dedicated attention to women and youth.
- **Updated logframe** presenting the level of achievement of each indicator, to be included as an annex to the final report.

Prior to the field mission, the evaluator will submit a brief **inception note** describing the methodology, data collection tools, stakeholder list, and detailed schedule.

5 - TIMEFRAME AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation is expected to take place in September 2026, for a total of approximately 9 working days. The proposed schedule is as follows:

Step	Task	Working days
Preparation	Desk review of project documents; briefing with GRET project team; submission of inception note	3
Field mission (Luang Prabang)	Visits to target villages; meetings with UMSO, WHO, DPWT, VWMCs, pond owners, and community members; focus group discussions	6
Analysis and presentation	Data analysis; presentation of preliminary findings to GRET and key partners (UMSO, WHO, village committees)	3
Reporting	Draft report submitted to GRET; incorporation of comments (within 5 working days of receipt); final report submitted	2+1
TOTAL		15

6 - EXPECTED REPORT STRUCTURE

The final evaluation report should be concise (20–30 pages, excluding annexes) and written in English. A summary in French may be requested separately. The report must include:

Executive Summary (maximum 2 pages): key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Introduction: purpose of the evaluation, methodology used, and limitations.

Project description: brief overview of context, objectives, activities, and partners.

Findings by OECD/DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and cross-cutting themes.

Conclusions and recommendations: practical and targeted at GRET, partners, and donors.

Annexes: ToR, logframe (with indicator achievement levels), list of documents consulted, list of persons met, data collection tools used will be provided by the project.

7 - REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Applications are welcome from individual consultants or teams (Ex: one international + one national expert). We particularly encourage applications from women and from mixed international-national teams.

7.1 - Essential requirements

- Demonstrated experience in project evaluation, preferably in natural resource management, urban environment, or WASH sectors.

- Good understanding of development projects and/or community-based natural resource management.
- Experience working in Laos or Southeast Asia; familiarity with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.
- Good writing skills in English;
- Good interpersonal skills for community interviews and stakeholder facilitation. Spoken fluency in Lao is strongly desirable for at least one member of the team.

7.2 - Desirable assets

- Prior experience with GRET or similar international NGOs in Lao PDR.
- Knowledge of urban wetland management, nature-based solutions, or water and sanitation.
- Experience with gender-sensitive evaluation approaches.

8 - APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Interested consultants or teams should submit the following by email to **souphanny.laos@gret.org** with the subject line "Final Evaluation – WISE LPB 2026", no later than **25 August 2026**:

- CV(s) of the evaluator(s), highlighting relevant experience and including at least 2 references from comparable assignments.
- A technical proposal (maximum 5 pages) describing the proposed methodology and work plan.
- A financial proposal **maximum 7000 USD** covering all fees, per diem, accommodation, transport, interview/Meeting cost and communication costs for the full 15 working days assignment.
- One example of a comparable previous evaluation report.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. GRET reserves the right to modify or cancel this process at any stage.

9 - SELECTION CRITERIA

Criterion	Weight	Max Score
Technical expertise and qualifications in evaluation, NRM, urban environment, or WASH	25%	25
Relevance and quality of previous experience in similar evaluations (Laos / Southeast Asia preferred)	30%	30
Quality of technical proposal and methodology	25%	25
Financial proposal	20%	20
TOTAL	100%	100

