

Terms of Reference

Position	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Head)
Number of Position	1
Location	Central Office in Vientiane Capital with regular visits to targeted provinces and districts
Supervisor	Executive Director
Close coordination with	Project Management Team and M&E central team, and District M&E Officers
Duration	A one-year contract with an initial probation period of 6 months. Renewal (up to 4 years) subject to project organisational requirements, budget, and annual performance review

I. Background

Improving Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) rural and agricultural livelihoods is a critical element for advancing sustainable poverty and vulnerability reduction in the upland areas of Lao PDR. While around two-thirds of the country’s population live in rural areas, they represent 88 percent of the poor. Almost all of the poor live in agricultural households. About half of poor agricultural households (or 41 percent of the poor) can be characterized as living in remote areas, mostly in upland villages; only 64 percent of this group live in villages with all-weather road access. In this context, CLEAR is a Community and Local Development project, which aims to improve rural livelihoods and consumption of diverse foods for targeted vulnerable communities, and to respond promptly and effectively in case of Eligible Crisis or Emergency. The project targets some of the most vulnerable communities in Lao PDR within 7 provinces Huaphanh, Oudomxay, Phongsaly, Xiengkhuang, Saravan, Savannakhet and Sekong. In addition, CLEAR is part of the country’s Multisectoral Nutrition Convergence Approach aimed at reducing stunting to 25% by 2025.

The project is composed of 5 components:

Component 1: Local Economic Development and Community Capacity Strengthening (US\$27.6 million) This component supports activities taking place at the level of the whole village community. Activities will strengthen community capacity to prioritize climate resilient village-level initiatives and related small infrastructure investments and organize their operations and maintenance (O&M). This will be done in a way that promotes participation of community members and attention to the needs of women, all ethno-linguistic groups, and vulnerable groups. Priority will be given to initiatives that resolve obstacles to food security, improved nutrition, and/or income generation while being inclusive of these groups. The design, operation and maintenance of small infrastructure will incorporate low-carbon, climate resilience features such as functionality, durability, and safety.

Component 2: Community Livelihoods Enhancement (US\$7.95 million) This component supports group-level activities that promote income generation. Groups will be adapted to the socioeconomic and climatic situation of villages. In type II and type III villages, CLEAR will follow PRF’s process of supporting savings and credit groups, mostly composed of women, building financial literacy, and diversified, climate-resilient income-generation activities. In select type III villages with confirmed market opportunities, the project will support the emergence and capacity

building of registered PGs and of producers of climate-smart agricultural inputs. In type I villages, where capacity to develop self-sustainable savings and credit activities is inadequate as most group members, both men and women, are poorer, the groups will engage in food production to have adequate food for consumption and income generation.

Component 3: Community Nutrition Interventions (US\$4.75 million) This component will support improvements in the dietary intake (both in quality and quantity) of mothers and children in the 1,000-day window through the promotion of innovative nutrition practices. The component is based on five principles: (a) the introduction of proven timesaving in-village processed foods, (b) community contributions, (c) a results-based incentive for well-performing villagers, (d) harnessing the power of youth and social media and maximizing food sources in increasingly resource-constrained local food systems. Community resilience will be strengthened through maintaining a combination of foods from households' own production, food purchases, and collection of forest food products. The food sources promoted, for example, production areas such as homestead gardens, living fences, upland rice fields, lowland rice fields, and types of crops and recipes, will be tailored to the community's agro-ecological and cultural context.

Component 4: Project Management, Capacity Building and Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$4.7 million) This component provides technical and operational assistance for the day-to-day management of the proposed project and its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. It covers hiring, training, and remunerating of national and district PRF staff as well as the costs of village facilitators; associated equipment and operating costs; and accounting, procurement, FM, internal controls, auditing, environmental and social safeguards, M&E, and other specialized support.

Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response (US\$0) The initial value of this Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) is zero, but it may be financed to respond to an Eligible Crisis or Emergency. The three village types are equally eligible for CERC in an emergency or crisis. CERC activities would build on the country's existing DRR strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation is key component of the project implementation. CLEAR will develop and maintain a simple and interactive monitoring system for regular reporting and learning at all levels (village, district, and central). Monitoring data and qualitative information will be entered into a web-based MIS, which will serve as the main source of information for semi-annual and annual reports submitted to Steering Committees. Data will be entered on tablets/phones at the village level by the village facilitator with support from YGs and district teams. It is expected that some villages will be unable to enter information digitally at the village level. In these cases, the Young Graduates will be in charge of data entry. To ensure data quality, regular data auditing will be conducted by central and district project staff. CLEAR will also explore how to effectively use Kobo Toolbox to regularly monitor infrastructure construction progress and quality (particularly with the use of pictures) while considering network connectivity issues. CLEAR will (a) manage or conduct evaluations of outcomes and impacts, (b) track progress against annual work plans and the Results Framework, (c) monitor processes, (d) document and incorporate lessons learned into project implementation, and (e) identify implementation bottlenecks and alert relevant parties to adopt solutions. The project will submit progress reports every six months, a midterm report (MTR), and an end-of-project final evaluation.

J. Summary of Role

The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Head) is responsible for overseeing all required multi-sector data collection, analysis, and reporting on the implementation and progress of CLEAR. He/she provides feedback, strategic guidance and advice to the Executive Director/Component Experts/Implementers on the effectiveness of project implementation and potential steps needed to

achieve anticipated project outputs and outcomes. He/she provide technical backstopping to project staff within the Project Management Team, the districts and villages on M&E requirements, including capacity development and knowledge dissemination. This position is the member of the CLEAR Project Management Team (PMT) and reports directly to the Executive Director (ED). It is expected that the specialist will conduct regular visit to province/district, about 20% of the time.

K. Roles and Responsibilities

Management, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Work closely with other PMT members to ensure the project planning and implementation is aligned and on track with the project development objectives and indicators' targets set in the results framework.
2. Cooperate with other PMT members for the development, consolidation, finalization and monitoring of budgeted Annual Workplan and Quarterly Workplan.
3. Take the lead to analyse and process data to ensure achievements of objectives.
4. Prepare and submit M&E inputs as per the results framework to the consolidated semi and annual project implementation progress reports, presentation as per the requirement of project, government, and donors in a timely manner.
5. Serve as a focal point to prepare, review and provide M&E inputs for implementation progress reports, midterm review reports, project impact assessment reports and project completion report.
6. Oversee the compilation of timely reports produced by external consultants including baseline, midterm, and final evaluation reports.
7. Design the outline/template of project exit strategies (for the first batch villages exit and for the final project exit), consolidate the draft contents prepared by PMT members, and finalize such project exit strategies.
8. Review monitoring and evaluation system/mechanism, process and procedures of the project and forms and formats for project activities applied under its various components to ensure consistency.
9. Monitor project progress through field visit, provide feedback and keep regular communication with related field and concerned staff on the findings and observations from the M&E reports and field missions.
10. Develop the format and content (such as indicators) to be included in the Management Information System (MIS) ensuring that the system capture and monitor all aspects and status of project implementation against the set target indicators agreed in the Results Framework (when applicable) of the project and other relevant indicators (results chain).
11. Support the MIS Specialist to design, develop and improve the Management Information System (MIS), including the Web-based MIS to make it more effective, cost-effective, reliable, and to ensure that the real time field data reporting are available (digitized data collection, storage, and analysis processed in real time). Monitor the status and progress of project implementation based on the different data sources (MIS, evaluations, etc.) and provide regular data and updates on project activity progress versus objectives and indicators.
12. Lead and conduct data auditing in collaboration with Agriculture and Livelihood Specialist, Nutrition and Community Development Specialist and decentralized implementers.
13. Analyze data, information and reports and provide feedback to project management and project counterparts at the different levels on the progress of implementation and of any need to modify schedules, strategies, and objectives.
14. Update as required data collection and reporting formats in collaboration with project counterparts at the different levels and provide training to required implementers on their use.
15. Assess the adequacy of the proposed project inputs, activities, and outputs in delivering desired project objectives/outcomes.

16. Based on findings of the M&E system and other assessments provide PMT with recommendations and strategic direction within the results framework to strengthen project design and implementation in accordance with the Project Implementation Manual (PIM).
17. Cooperate with the Agriculture and Livelihood Specialist, Nutrition Community Development Specialist, and concerned staff to conduct internal evaluation on the impacts of livelihoods and nutrition activities as well as other related activities under CLEAR.
18. Manage the overall M&E system (i.e., provide technical oversight).
19. Work in coordination with the Human Resources (HR) and Procurement team to prepare TORs and necessary documents for hiring external consulting services and consultants and to work on contract performance monitoring and evaluation of external consultancies.
20. Draft TORs for evaluations and studies (need based and in collaboration with the PMT specialists and other partners (World Bank)).
21. Develop tools for tracking progress on infrastructures implementation (including pictures) using Kobo Toolbox/Google forms.
22. Manage and supervise the MIS Specialist and Evaluation and MIS Officer.

M&E Capacity Building

23. Organize, provide and support the training of project staff at national, district, and village levels on M&E related activities.
24. Develop annual budgeted M&E Capacity Building Plan (including on-the job training) to ensure all relevant project staff are aware of their M&E role and responsibilities and able to carry out their tasks assigned, including data processing, analysis, reporting, usage of data for management, and to fill MIS forms and enter the data in the MIS for the activities.
25. Work in collaboration with the Capacity Building/Communication Officer to develop M&E training materials (including YouTube video) and develop tools to assess the quality of trainings (post-training) and assessment of skills adoption.
26. Assist to solve any issues that arise, to ensure that all data are collected, entered timely in the MIS, validated, frequently audited, used for documenting progress, making decision and integrated in, impact assessments and the project completion report.

M&E Communications, Collaboration, and Teamwork

27. Ensure the collaboration and support to M&E activities from all members of PMT.
28. Ensure that all staff in each level aware with the project M&E system, results framework, forms and regulation of the project.
29. Participate in knowledge sharing activities conducted by the project and by concerned government agencies, donors and development partners as assigned by ED or her/his Deputy (DED) when delegated.
30. Play a key role in coordinating the planning, implementation and dissemination of findings of M&E system.
31. Work in close collaboration with the gender expert to include gender in data collection, evaluation, and analysis.
32. Collaborates with other World Bank supported nutrition convergence projects involved in delivering the nutrition program and reducing malnutrition and contribute to joint performance assessment of the convergence approach, in particular the child score card.

Other related Tasks

33. Within scope of responsibility, promote and explain project principles, processes and achievements to the Government representatives, donors, concerned parties and NGOs.
34. Accomplish other tasks as requested by Supervisor, according to project needs.

L. Position Requirements

Qualifications and Experience

- At least a Master's degree in rural development, agricultural economics, project management, social sciences or any other related fields, with a specialized training in monitoring and evaluation.
- Minimum 8 years of work experience in managing M&E systems for rural development/livelihood projects, preferably financed by international banks/international organizations.
- Plus 5 years of work experience with results framework, results chain, M&E plan design and costing, activity plan, report drafting, data analysis, data auditing, results-based management, supportive supervision, managing M&E system management, planning evaluations, MIS, gender in M&E and organizing and running training sessions.
- Advanced ICT knowledge and MIS is essential and familiarity with Kobo Toolbox and Google Forms is an asset.

Personal Attributes

- Fluency in English and Lao using (writing, editing, reporting and speaking), with ability to interpret English-Lao and vice versa is an asset.
- Good social communication skills and experience of working effectively with local authorities and ethnic minorities.
- Strong leadership and team management skills and proven leadership ability.
- A good understanding of government and foreign aid project operations.
- A willingness to work in rural areas for shorter durations to assist in training project staff and conducting data auditing.