

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Position	Quality Assurance Officer (Lao National only)
Number of Position	1
Location	Based in Vientiane Capital with regular visits to targeted provinces, districts, and villages
Supervisor	Engineering Specialist
Close coordination with	Engineering Officer and District Engineer Officers
Duration	A one-year contract. Renewal subject to project organizational requirements, budget, and annual performance review

A. 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.

B. Summary of Role

The overall role of this position is to review the quality of infrastructure works supported by the project, the service delivery, the utilization and sustainability of the investments as well as the beneficiary satisfaction towards the infrastructure delivered and the process used from the survey-design up to the infrastructure work maintenance.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

Management and Oversight

1. Support the Engineering Specialist to develop the annual workplan and budget, and quarterly workplans;
2. Work closely with the Engineering Specialist and the Engineering Officer and District Engineer Officers to engender a strong team commitment to the agreed construction plans and processes of the project;
3. Oversee the implementation, management and maintenance of the quality standards and operating procedures as defined in the infrastructure manual;
4. Maintain, develop and update the quality checklists and project quality plans with feedback from districts on implementation;
5. Conduct spot checks on selected subprojects with a focus on checking compliance with the environmental and social management framework, disaster and climate resilient infrastructure, quality checklists/filing system, use of construction site logbook, and maintenance of the feedback mechanism;
6. Report any deviations from standard procedures and corrective actions to management and monitor and record outcomes;
7. Identify and investigate issues affecting the quality of record keeping and archiving for subprojects at district office;
8. Randomly inspect subprojects at least 30% of the total number of subprojects to identify quality problems and analyse to find solutions and notify technical issues to the District Engineer Officers to prevent the reoccurrence of such problems.

Capacity Building

9. In partnership with the Environmental Officer and Social/Gender Officer, deliver environmental and social management trainings to the Engineering Officer and District Engineer Officers as well as Village Implementation Teams (VITs);

10. Prepare content for training of pre-survey and design to improve persistent problems and ensure better quality in the next cycle.

Communication, Collaboration and Team Work

11. Work with the Environmental Officer and Social/Gender Officer to ensure that environment and social management guidelines and checklists are up-to-date and used during subproject survey design;
12. Participate and assist in appraisals, engineering surveys, monitoring of field work of infrastructure works with specific technical challenges.

Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting

13. Complete weekly progress monitoring on the implementation of the subprojects for each cycle to guarantee completion within the stipulated timeframe and report to the World Bank;
14. Collect regular data on infrastructures progress using Kobo Toolbox.
15. Use data collected for decision-making on implementation and identification of issues and best practices.
16. Summarise monthly subproject construction progress and outstanding issues occurred and report to the upper level;
17. Prepare report on the performance of quality management system.

Other related Tasks

18. Within scope of responsibility promote and explain project principles and processes to GoL representatives, donors, concerned parties and NGOs;
19. Accomplish other tasks as requested by the Engineering Specialist, in accordance with project needs.

D. Position Requirements

Qualifications and Experience

- At least Bachelor's degree in engineering (specializing in small scale infrastructure - rural construction, roads, irrigation, bio-engineering);
- A minimum of 7 years' relevant surveying experience and a minimum of 5 years' experience in surveying and supervising community driven/labour-based projects in remote areas;
- Experience in participatory community development, technical training and training of trainers;
- Good English language skills, including speaking, reading and writing; Computer literacy in MS Office Package, Access and engineering software such as AutoCAD.

Personal Attributes

- Ability to work independently, within the framework of the project's requirements;
- Well-developed organizational and task prioritization skills;
- Good communications and social skills, practical and problem-solving skills;
- Sensitivity towards gender and ethnic issues found in the rural areas;
- Willingness to travel to and work in remote areas for extended periods of time;
- Possess strong team building capacity and ability to coordinate with the local people;
- Ability to speak any ethnic language would be an advantage.