

Terms of Reference (TOR)
Provincial Technical Support Facilitator
Governance, Forest Landscapes and Livelihoods (GFLL) - Northern Laos
(6 Positions required for 6 Target Provinces)

1. Background

The Emissions Reduction (ER) Programme of Lao PDR embodies the Government of Lao PDR's (GoL) commitment to reforming land use and enhancing forest restoration and protection. The GoL embraces Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) as the opportunity for transforming rural land use, from opportunistic revenue generation at the cost of natural resources, to strategic and efficient land use delivered through participatory and integrated planning design.

The GoL has participated in the *Forest Carbon Partnership Facility* (FCPF) since May 2008. The FCPF manages two multi-donor funds - the Fund for REDD+ Readiness Preparation Support and the Carbon Fund. Lao PDR was provided with a REDD+ Readiness Preparation grant by FCPF during 2014-2022, which supports analytical work including the development of the REDD+ strategy, relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, capacity development including training and workshops, stakeholder consultations, communication campaigns, and awareness-raising. The FCPF Readiness has contributed to developing Lao PDR's capacity to receive REDD+ investments. One such international investment for REDD+ is from the ER-P through results-based payments from the FCPF Carbon Fund.

The GoL has prepared Six Provincial REDD+ Action Plans (PRAPs) and an Emission Reductions Program Document (ER-PD). The ER-PD was approved by the FCPF Carbon Fund Participant Committee in June 2018, with conditional acceptance of the ER-PD into the portfolio of both Tranche A and Tranche B of the Carbon Fund. The ER-PD proposes a strategy for successfully implementing REDD+ and opportunities to receive results-based payments. The conditional acceptance of the ER-PD into the portfolio requires the GoL to address several key areas to fully comply with the Carbon Fund Methodological Framework. The Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) negotiations were completed and signed in December 2020 and the Conditions of Effectiveness were met in December 2021.

The Department of Forestry (DoF) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is the Emission Reduction Program Entity, as approved by the World Bank's FCPF for the first sub-national emission reduction program in Lao PDR titled Governance, Forest Landscapes and Livelihoods - Northern Laos (GFLL) covering an area of 8.1 million hectares of six northern provinces of Lao PDR, namely Bokeo, Huaphan, Luang Namtha, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, and Sayaburi. The area constitutes approximately one-third of both the country's geographical and forest area, with a population of 1.8 million people and where the dominant land use designation is forest. Northern Lao PDR is characterized by mountainous topography, remote accessibility and limited public and industrial infrastructure, unique ethnic minority communities, and a persistent prevalence of poverty as well as extensive degradation and loss of forest. The area hosts important watersheds feeding major tributaries, including the Mekong River.

2. Objectives of the assignment

The objective of the assignment is to assist the Provincial Project Management Units (PPMUs) and the REDD+ Office under the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Departments (PAFO) of the concern province and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFO) in targeted districts to:

- to support REDD+ Offices/PPMU in GFL target province to coordinate and liaise with the key stakeholders including Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Departments (PAFO), District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFOs), local relevant authorities and other relevant projects;
- Initiate and carry out facilitation of activities related to forestry, forest landscape management, land use, Free Prior Informed Content (FPIC), Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP), Agricultural Practices and Value Chains (PSAP), Village Forest Management Plan (VFMP), Village Development Fund (VDF) and REDD+ including support the organization of meetings, workshops, consultations, field visits and field data collections;
- Ensure the flows of benefits delivered and received by beneficiaries at province, district, and district levels; and
- To be a technical focal point to support the provinces and districts for the overall implementation of the GFL.
- Monitor and record all activities progress in the database system i.e. Safeguard Database / project database.

3. Scope of Work and main tasks

The Provincial Technical Support Facilitator's duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Assist Provincial REDD+ Offices/PPMU in the target province to:
 - a. coordinate and liaise with the key stakeholders including REDD+ Division at the Department of Forestry, MAF and relevant projects at the province and central levels, and relevant authorities in province and district levels;
 - b. prepare quarterly and monthly plans for the province and target district from the annual work plans agreed and approved by the central level;
 - c. prepare reports on forestry, forest landscape management, land use, and REDD+ activities and following up the progress of project implementation;
2. Facilitate and support forestry, forest landscape management, land use, and REDD+ meetings, workshops and consultations in the province where an assistant is assigned;
3. Facilitate and accompany REDD+ and Forest Landscape Management technical teams and experts to conduct field activities and/or data collection;
4. Provide technical support in the collection, consolidation and maintenance of provincial/district/village data on forestry, forest landscape management, land use, and REDD+ as well as project/program related information and data;
5. Support the target districts to carry out activities related to Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP), Promotion of Sustainable and Deforestation-free Agricultural Practices and Value Chains (PSAP), Village Forest Management Plan (VFMP), Village Development Fund (VDF) and community development tasks as required;

6. Facilitate Provincial and District social and environmental safeguard staff to carry out their tasks effectively and prepare quarterly safeguard report;
7. Monitor the Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) and prepare quarterly FGRM report including number of Feedback and Grievance received in target districts and province, number of grievances addressed and action taken;
8. Monitor and ensure the flows of benefits received and delivered to the beneficiaries, and provide brief reports of the use of benefits by beneficiaries to REDD+ Division;
9. Provide technical support to all aspects of M&E works to the M&E staff, compile the overall M&E data from the provinces and districts and include the M&E data in the quarterly progress report;
10. Collect the quarterly progress report from the districts, consolidate at province level and prepare quarterly progress report of the province and submit to NPMU every quarter;
11. Accompany various missions for field trips as well as facilitate and coordinate the organization of the field visits with local authorities and stakeholders as necessary;
12. Participate, as assigned, in the meetings/workshops/seminars and represent GFLP Project advocate its policy positions, mandate, and national priorities and program; and communicate its services and assistance available to the Government authorities and other stakeholders;
13. Prepare and submit summary reports on any meetings attended on a variety of topics as needed;
14. Promote coordinated action for the operational support to the assigned projects and program for their timely and effective implementation in liaison with Administrative Section of the organization; and
15. Perform other tasks that may be assigned by DOF/REDD+ Office and PAFO/PPMU.

4. Management of the assignment and time frame.

The Provincial Technical Support Facilitator will report weekly/monthly directly to his/her counterparts at the provincial level (Provincial Project Coordinator), and also a quarterly-based report to the National Project Coordinator. The duration of service is one year which can be extended based on the satisfactory performance. The assignment is expected to take place as soon as possible. The consultant will be based at REDD+ Office/PPMU in each target Province.

5. Deliverables:

The consultants will each be required to provide the following deliverables:

- Facilitate, participate in and support the preparation and implementation of key systems critical for the ER program, including the safeguards system, benefit sharing system and LNSIS, M&E, REL/MRV system.
- Summary reports of meetings, workshops, field visits and consultations;
- Reports of field data collection, compilation and results;
- Conduct and report workshops/seminars/meetings with Provincial and District authorities;
- Report on project policy, planning and practices implementation between National, Provincial and District levels;
- Annual works plans and monthly and quarterly plans; and

- Quarterly progress reports on project implementation which include progress of the overall implementation of the project activities, safeguard, FGRM, M&E etc...

6. Experience and Qualifications:

The Provincial Technical Support Facilitator should have, at a minimum the following criteria:

- Bachelor degree or equivalent in forestry, environment, natural resources management, agriculture or related field;
- At least 2 years of relevant working experience in forestry, land use, or natural resources. REDD+ knowledge and experience of development projects in Lao PDR is preferable;
- Good computer skills (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint), including forestry, land use planning, and mapping software;
- Good communication skills, including speaking and writing in Lao is essential, and working knowledge in English language is highly preferred;
- Proven reporting and presentation skills;
- Willingness to live in province a long period, can travel extensively to the target districts and villages. Preference will be given to the candidate who reside at the target province.