

# **PRF SHORT TERM CAPACITY BUILDING SPECIALIST**

## *Terms of Reference*

Project Name:	The Poverty Reduction Fund
Number of positions:	1
Position:	<b>Capacity Building Specialist</b>
Duty Station:	PRF national office in Vientiane with significant period of time working at the district, Kum ban and village level
Duration:	4 months, starting May 2012

## **PRF BACKGROUND**

The Poverty Reduction Fund Project was legally established by Decree from the Lao PDR Prime Minister (No. 073/PM) on May 31, amended on September 29 (No. 222/PM) as an autonomous organization attached to the Prime Minister Office and overseen by the National Leading Committee for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication. The PRF was established with the specific goal of improving access to key public services, by building critical social and economic infrastructure at the village level within the country's poorest districts, based on a model of participatory community development whereby communities themselves decide on how resources are allocated, manage sub-project funds, implement and maintain sub-projects. Initially, the PRF received a World Bank credit of US\$20 million.

Building on an early track record of success, PRF received additional support in 2008 from both the World Bank (US\$15 million) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (about US\$7 million). In 2010, the PRF also received additional funds (US\$410,000) from AusAID through the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction, which is managed by the World Bank, to rebuild PRF supported infrastructure that had been destroyed by typhoon Ketsana. This overall financing envelope of US\$42 million has made the PRF one of the largest multi-sectoral rural poverty reduction programs in the country. Moreover, it is estimated that communities have contributed an additional US\$6.5 million equivalent towards the implementation of PRF-I activities, largely in the form of volunteer labor and local materials.

Monitoring data from PRF-I demonstrates that the program has delivered services in remote areas both quickly and in a cost-effective manner. Over the past eight years, PRF-I has supported 2,185 villages in 8 out of 17 provinces, covering 30 of the country's 144 districts, including 23 of the Government's 47 priority poverty districts. A total of 3,396 sub-projects have been completed, including construction of 91 bridges, 62 health dispensaries, 1,237 water supply points, and 155 irrigation schemes. PRF has also upgraded 3,042 km of 420 rural roads, and constructed or upgraded 597 schools. Data also shows that PRF construction has generally been of satisfactory technical quality and that these investments have enhanced the access of poor villages to important services particularly in the health, agriculture and education sectors.

In light of the positive results achieved by PRF-I to date, the GoL has decided to continue the initiative by launching an expanded second phase beginning in mid-2011 and ending in 2016, with the objective of improving the access to and the utilization of basic infrastructure and services for the project's targeted poor communities in a sustainable manner through inclusive community and local development processes. With a total envelope of US\$ 65.7 million from the Government of Lao PDR, IDA, SDC and AusAID, the PRF-II coverage will be expanded to 11 of the Lao PDR's 17 provinces and cover 285 Kum bans across 40 of the country's poorer districts as prioritized by the GoL in accordance with their poverty data.

## **PRF II CAPACITY BUILDING COMPONENT**

Following on the lessons learned from the implementation of the first phase and from other CDD models tested and implemented in the region, the PRF-II will specifically emphasize and strengthen its activities related to capacity building for its own staff, Government counterparts and the communities, to ensure that the new PRF approach and procedures are fully understood and adopted. It was agreed that additional training and capacity building of the different PRF personnel will be necessary particularly during the first two years of implementation.

Based on the long term view to sustain the program, the implementation of the PRF may be gradually transferred to the concerned Government agency (ies). To this intent, The NLCRDPE will increase its role in coordinating PRF-II activities, at the national level, provincial and district levels with those carried out by all GoL agencies. It is planned that the PRF, together with the Office of the NLCRDPE, will undertake capacity building activities for the NLCRDPE staff to ensure that PRF's approach, methodology and project execution are well understood and mastered. Such activities may include the detachment of members of the Office of the Government staff, in order to learn about the PRF. The PRF will also support capacity building of the sectors at the district level in areas linked to PRF's Kum ban investments.

The Program also hopes to contribute to the development of a single planning process that integrates PRF participatory planning into regular government planning. To this intent, the PRF also plans to enhance the capacity of communities and local governments to plan and undertake local development activities.

At the community level, capacity building training is provided through the program to ensure that all community members, including women and different ethnic groups, participate in the decision-making process and benefit from the PRF. By this way, the program aspires to empower communities by training them in assessing their own needs, discussing them with the district authorities and implementing, as well as, supervising the construction of public infrastructures.

Capacity building of the different PRF staff, in particular PRF staff (including Kum ban facilitators and community volunteers) that operate at the community level has also been identified as needed.

To undertake the Capacity Building activities of the program, it has been decided, during the first six months of program implementation, to design a separate capacity building/training manual composed of the training modules and tools needed to build the capacity of the PRF staff, Government counterparts and the communities. The tools will be designed to correspond to the different needs and functions of the target audiences. The tools/manuals will be gender sensitive and also include guidance on how to work with different ethnic groups.

To this end, it was agreed that the PRF will recruit a short term technical advisor with significant experience in providing capacity building to community driven development project.

## **MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE POSITION**

The Capacity building specialist responsibilities are to assess the level of understanding and ownership of the PRF staff, Government counterparts and communities (including Kum ban facilitators and PRF volunteers) on the CDD model adapted to the Lao context through the implementation of the PRF-II principles, processes and procedures and develop a capacity building strategy, plan, activities and associated tools (materials and trainings) to ensure the Program Development Objectives are understood and met.

## **SCOPE OF THE WORK**

The main tasks and duties of the Capacity Building specialist will be divided into different assignments and periods of time within the course of the PRF phase two. The first assignment will start with:

1/ An assessment of the level of understanding of the PRF staff, government counterparts and communities through the implementation of the planning phase of the current Cycle IX, which includes the Orientation Meeting at the provincial, district, Kum ban and village level, the Village Vision Meeting, the Kum ban Development Plan Meeting, the District Planning and Coordination Meeting, the Village Report Back and Validation Meeting, sub-projects survey and design and associated trainings (Training for the Kum ban facilitators and training of the Village Delegates).

The capacity building specialist will attend the activities of these key steps of the PRF planning phase as an observer and assess:

- The level of understanding of the PRF staff and the Kum ban facilitators on the program principles, processes and procedures and their capacity to explain it to their government counterparts and the communities;
- The methodology and tools used by the PRF staff and their appropriateness to the targeted audience in order to ensure that program principles, processes and procedures are well understood and applied;
- The level of understanding of the Kum ban facilitators, government counterparts and the communities (including PRF volunteers) after trainings were delivered by the PRF staff;
- The capacity of the government staff working closely with the PRF and communities to follow up and implement the CDD approach during the Cycle IX Planning Phase;
- The capacity of the PRF staff to facilitate (and not direct) the overall implementation of the CDD approach during the planning phase.

2/ During the sub-project implementation phase, the capacity building Specialist will more specifically:

- Assess the understanding and appropriateness of the methodology and tools used by the PRF staff to conduct the trainings delivered to the Kum ban finance and procurement team, the training of the village implementation and maintenance team and the training of the village operations and maintenance team. The assessment will also review the Kum ban cross visit

approach and on the job-training delivered by the PRF staff to Government counterparts and the village team during sub-project supervision and accountability meetings;

- Assess the level of understanding of the PRF Government counterparts and communities, through the different Kum ban and village teams, on the PRF principles, processes and procedures and their capacity to manage and apply the different steps of the implementation phase with PRF staff minimum supervision.

Based on the findings, the capacity building Specialist will assist the PMT develop a Capacity Building Strategy and Action Plan for PRF staff, the PRF Government counterparts and communities. The Capacity Building Action Plan will include details of the trainings required with specific schedule, training objectives, contents, timing / frequency, estimated costs, expected outcomes and trainee's evaluation. The consultant should recommend which training activities can be delivered by PRF staff and which would require the services of specialized training providers. As necessary, the consultant should assist the PMT to develop terms of reference for service providers.

It is also expected that the Capacity Building Specialist will develop manuals composed of the detailed training modules and tools needed to build the capacity of the PRF staff, government counterparts and the communities. The consultant would also deliver some initial capacity building trainings. Training and meeting evaluation will be used as a specific tool to assess the progress made by the trainees in their understanding of the CDD approach through the PRF program and capacity to apply its principles, processes and procedures and to build contents and training methodology and tools to be used for further refresher trainings as required in the course of the program.

When necessary, the Capacity Building Specialist will accomplish others tasks as defined by the Executive Director of the PRF.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to achieve the assignment set in this term of reference, the capacity building specialist will work closely with the PRF master trainers and trainers during the implementation of the different activities of the Cycle IX at the district, Kum ban and village level.

The field visit schedule as well as the details of the methodology will be discussed with the PRF management team during the initial stage of the consultancy, following the implementation of the current Cycle IX work plan.

## **DELIVERABLES**

- A report documenting the observations made during participation of the key steps of the PRF, describing the level of understanding of the PRF staff, government counterparts and the communities, methodology and tools used by the PRF staff, gaps/weaknesses identified and recommendations;
- PRF Capacity Building Strategy and Plan;
- Capacity Building training modules and tools;
- Testing and delivery of training modules
- Work plan for further follow up and support to the PRF Capacity Building Component.

In addition, the capacity building specialist is also expected to provide regular feedback of the findings after participation to the key steps of the implementation of the Cycle IX.

## **REPORTING**

The consultant will report to the Executive Director of the PRF or his designate.

## **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- An advanced degree in Rural Development, Social Sciences, Development studies or other related field;
- At least 10 years experience in projects targeting uplands communities in rural areas, using CDD approach;
- Solid relevant working experience in the development of Capacity Building tools in the field of decentralized planning, participatory rural development, and capacity building of project staff and beneficiaries;
- Experience in training project staff;
- Familiarity with the Lao culture and tradition, and of the context of ethnics groups in remote areas will be an asset;
- Fluency in English (writing, editing, reporting and speaking).
- Women are encouraged to apply.