

**LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**  
PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

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## **THE POVERTY REDUCTION FUND III**

### **Draft TOR**

# **Technical, Utilization, and Beneficiary Satisfaction Assessment**

**December 2017**

## **Terms of Reference for the Technical, Utilization & Beneficiary Satisfaction Assessment**

### **I. PRF Back ground**

The Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) was established in May 2002 under the guidance of the Government of Lao PDR and is currently in its third phase (2016-2020). The PRF project's main role is to help the local Government and the communities in the poorest, most remote districts of the country to work together and to improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of poor people in isolated and poor rural villages.

The PRF is governed by the PRF Board which is chaired by the Minister to the Government Office and consists of the Vice Ministers of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, representatives of all other ministries and provincial vice-governors where the PRF operates.

The PRF uses a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, whereby communities themselves decide on how resources are allocated, manage sub-project funds, and implement sub-projects. Extensive facilitation and training is provided through the Program to ensure that all community members, including women and members of different ethnic groups, participate in the decision-making process and benefit from the Program.

With a budget of over US\$ 180 million (US\$ 54 million for PRFIII), PRF has been one of Lao PDR's largest multi-sectorial programs focused on rural poverty reduction.

The project development objective (PDO) is to improve access to basic services for the Project's targeted poor communities. The PDO would be achieved through inclusive community and local development processes with emphasis on ensuring sustainability. The project consists of four components: (1) Community Development Sub-grants; (2) Local and Community Development Capacity Building, (3) Project Management; (4) Nutrition Enhancing Livelihood Development.

The PRF III will build on the project monitoring framework established under PRF II to provide timely data regarding the progress and results of the project. Overall project progress will be measured against the results indicators shown in the Results Framework. A core set of these indicators would be used to report in the Bank's Implementation Status and Results system for the project.

Several studies will be undertaken during project implementation to analyze and evaluate project performance. A full-scale impact evaluation will not be carried out as the impact evaluation of the PRF II has demonstrated the validity of the PRF model. Instead, several special studies will be undertaken to enhance the understanding of key aspects of the project, including: (i) Technical Quality and Beneficiary Satisfaction Assessment, (ii) a review the status of PRF's SHG support and advise on specific steps to improve Component 4 performance, (iii) a case study analysis on the operations of VNCs and (iv) a final end line survey.

The PRF is currently looking for a consultant firm to undertake the Technical Quality and Beneficiary Satisfaction Assessment.

## II. Objectives of the Technical, Utilization & Beneficiary Satisfaction Assessment

The overall purpose of this assessment is to review the **quality and cost of infrastructure subprojects supported by the PRF, the service delivery / utilization** of the investments for the purposes intended, and the **sustainability of these investments** as well as **the beneficiary satisfaction perception** towards the infrastructure delivered and the process used from the survey-design up to the sub-project maintenance. The methodology used and the data generated must contribute to fulfilling the reporting requirements in the PRF III Project Appraisal Document Results Framework. The assessment will also therefore include, but not be limited, to the following analysis:

1. Sub-project preparation
2. Sub-project implementation / supervision
3. Sub-project utilization
4. Sub-project maintenance
5. Budget / financial management
6. Capacity Building
7. Beneficiary satisfaction perception
8. Gender mainstreaming
9. Supporting documents

## III. Scope of the Work

To achieve this objective, the main scope of work of the selected Consultancy firm will include the design, implementation, analysis and documentation of a rigorous study representative of PRF sub-projects across its area of operation. This will involve developing, in consultation with a working group of PRF staff, an appropriate sampling approach of sub-projects, and developing and testing study tools. The development of these tools should be informed by, and build on, the design and application of similar tools under previous phases of PRF, PRF I and PRF II. The Consultancy firm will then supervise and oversee training in these tools and the implementation of the survey.

While the consultant will need to develop study instruments in consultations with PRF and other stakeholders, the following is a list of key topics to be included in the assessments:

### A. Sub-project preparation

#### Quality of the design

1. Appropriateness of the design vs. utilization by the community
2. Quality of the design (understandable by all stakeholders, level of details)
3. Design adherence to Government and/or PRF-specific sector standards and certification
4. Relevance of the sub-project location
5. Resilience to natural disasters (Is the sub-project design relevant to the geography of the site and the potential natural risks of the sub-project surrounding?)
6. Level of community involvement in the survey-design steps

7. Relevance and effectiveness of design features specific to the Community Force Account (CFA), community contracting approach to implementation.

### Procurement

1. Effectiveness of the purpose, process steps and procurement methodology used (how was the sub-contractor selected?)
2. What is the adequacy of the depth of training provided and how was the community involved in the bid opening and in the bid evaluation?
3. What is the capacity level of the community to do procurement by themselves for future sub-projects?

### Social and environmental Safeguards

1. How well the social and environmental safeguards have been applied in the different steps from survey-design up to sub-projects operations and maintenance?
2. Were there any adverse social or environmental impacts and how well have they have been mitigated (land donation, trees plantation, etc.)?
3. Are the FRM tools known by community members and being effectively used (number of feedback received, type of feedback, source of feedback, how were they solved)?
4. Were there any activities promoting environmental protection during the sub-project preparation, sub-project implementation or sub-project operations and maintenance, and did they seem to be effective?
5. How were the DRM activities implemented and what was the role of the community in the process
6. Was UXO clearance carried out?

### **B. Sub-project implementation / supervision**

1. How was the community involved in the sub-project implementation? . What is the motivation provided to the communities to undertake work more by themselves with support from the project staff? What is the degree of confidence communities have on their ability to undertake future sub project by themselves?
2. How the community contribution was organized, executed, recorded and monitored (number of households participating, number of person days, daily fees, and payment methods)?
3. Was the community paid for any of their work and if so, how effective was this?
4. Were all households given equal chances to participate? Or was it depending on the ability of the household?
5. How was the VIT involved in the sub-project supervision (frequency of visits, meetings)?
6. How was the Kum ban Facilitators involved in the sub-project supervision (frequency of visits, meetings)?
7. Type and nature the support received by the community from the concerned sector (frequency of visits, quality of the visits, monitoring tools, technical knowledge / competence)

8. Type and nature of support received by the community from the PRF staff (frequency of visits, quality of the visits, monitoring tools, technical knowledge / competence)
9. What was the coordination mechanism between the different stakeholders and was it applied according to plan (frequency of coordination meeting, who was involved, what was discussed)?
10. How many Accountability meetings have been organized, who joined these meetings, what were presented and discussed during these meetings, what decisions have been made (minutes of meetings)? Was there social auditing or community auditing? How was the use of log book and entries?
11. Was the sub-project construction implemented according to the plan (any advance, delay)?
12. Were there any savings due to community contribution and the use of local material and what is the understanding of the community or change in saving for maintenance of another improvement with ownership? Scope)?

**C. Sub-project utilization**

Quality of the infrastructure (percentage of Sub-project of “high technical quality” and percentage of sub-projects that are “functional”)

1. Current condition of the infrastructure (good, fair, poor) based on list of key criteria developed for each major type of sub-projects
2. Infrastructure compliance with the design approved by the concern sector
3. Quality of the construction materials/inputs used and consistency with BOQ in the bidding document
4. Defects found during construction and how they have been addressed

Access and utilization of the infrastructures / service delivery:

1. Utilization rate (before and after the sub-project construction (school enrollment, road users, etc.)
2. Access means additional access created due to the sub project.
3. What is the saved travel distance due to the infrastructure?
4. Was the utilization increased due to the sub project?
5. What percentage of beneficiary households out of the planned number of HHS currently benefiting from the infrastructure due to the sub project?
6. What is the saved travel time due to the sb project?
7. What is the cost saving?
8. What is the value of production/productivity increase due to the sub Project (minor irrigation)
9. What are other benefits?
10. Sector support provided as agreed (teachers for schools, Health Staff for health centers etc.)

**D. Sub-project maintenance**

1. Relevance of the maintenance plan (requirement, planning, costs)

2. Quality of the maintenance on the ground (what has been done so far, when, by who, how was it organized)?
3. Maintenance methods (RMG, all community members from time to time, Village Operation and Maintenance team, concerned sector)
4. Capacity of the O&M committee (financial management, technical knowledge, capacity to mobilize the community members)
5. Community participation to O&M (financial contribution (monthly fees, level of contribution per households), labor contribution, etc.)
6. Concerned sector involvement and responsibility in the sub-project maintenance (according to plan, realized)

**E. Budget / financial management**

Costs of the infrastructures

1. Review unit costs (was the sub-project cost estimate reasonable and realistic according to standard design and sub-project location)?
2. Community contribution (calculation, value, manner, equity, monitoring, daily payment rate, financial management)
3. Community labor payment (calculation, value, manner, equity, monitoring, daily payment rate, financial management)
4. How was the sub-project budget managed (by who, following which mechanism, budget transfer frequency, modalities)?
5. Did the budget transfer go according to plan?
6. What is the time efficiency of the sub-projects?
7. What is the cost efficiency of the sub projects?

Costs of the approach / method used

1. How was the administrative costs budget managed (by who, following which mechanism, budget transfer frequency, modalities?)
2. Was the administrative costs enough regards to the support provided (number of people involved, man/days)
3. Efficiency of the different steps from sub-project preparation to sub-project operation and maintenance including trainings, meetings and field visits (time and costs for the support provided by the concerned sector, the PRF staff, the Kum ban Facilitators, the VIT)

**F. Beneficiary satisfaction perception (inputs, outputs and outcomes)**

1. Community degree of satisfaction (%) towards the support received from the PRF during the sub-project selection, preparation, supervision / implementation and operation and maintenance (sub-project design and costs, community contribution, quality of the meetings organized (confirmation meeting, kick off meeting, accountability meeting, frequency of the visits, quality of the visits, quality of the training received, quality of the IEC tools (posters, manual), decision making approach, community participation, current capacities developed, gaps still existing, etc.);

2. Community degree of satisfaction (%) towards the support received by the sub-contractor during the sub-project supervision / implementation (technical quality of the infrastructure delivered, community participation during construction and supervision, interaction and behavior of the sub-contractor and outside labors, sub-project costs, community contribution, etc.)
3. Community degree of satisfaction (%) towards the work done by the Village Implementation team from the sub-project preparation to the sub-project Operations and Maintenance (Organization of the meetings and trainings, quality of the translation and information received, frequency of visits, etc.)
4. Community degree of satisfaction (%) towards the support received by the concerned sector (technical support and advice received during the sub-project survey-design, sub-project supervision and sub-project operation and maintenance.);
5. Community degree of satisfaction (%) towards the infrastructure (do the infrastructure correspond to one of the priorities identified in the Village Development Plan, do the infrastructure respond to the need of the community, do all community members can access the service provided, etc.)
6. Degree of community satisfaction (%) on the adequacy and quality of delivery of service after completion of the sub project?
7. Community satisfaction (%) towards the maintenance approach and community role and responsibilities including ability to intervene if needed versus concerned sector.

#### **G. Gender**

1. How was gender equality and social inclusion (i.e. ethnic diversity) taken in to account in the different steps from sub-project survey design up to sub-project maintenance?

#### **H. Supporting documents**

1. What are the different tools used during the different steps from the survey-design up to the sub-project maintenance (drawing, BOQ, site journal, minutes of meetings, manual and guideline, monitoring forms)?
2. Relevance of these documents
3. Quality of the documentation (are the documents filled properly, do they include all the information required)?
4. Were the documentations kept in a proper way?
5. How far the community manual and guidelines, tool kits, pictograms and displays are appropriate to the audience and community capacity?
6. How is community capacities assessed?

### **IV. Methodology**

In order to achieve its objective, the study should assess the infrastructure sub-projects that PRF had supported in cycle XIV. A representative sample of sub-projects should be sampled. Approximately 35 completed subprojects should be sampled in at least 3 provinces. The selected samples of sub-projects shall be carried out using a statistically valid sampling method, giving due attention to following criteria:

- Geographical distribution of sub-projects by two different regions in the country (Northern and Southern);
- Distribution of sub-projects by sector type;
- Projects implemented under community, contractor and joint implementation modalities (as we want to compare among each type of implementation); and
- Location of project sites (remote areas will form at least 50% of the sample with the remaining from the non-remote areas).

The sampling methodology and questionnaires should be validated with PRF management team and the World Bank during the initial stage of the consultancy.

Reference documents to be provided to the national consultant firm will include:

- Project Operations Manual
- Sub-projects Drawings and Technical specifications
- List of sub-projects from Cycle XIV
- PRFII Impact Evaluation Report
- Results Framework.
- PRF Semi-annual and Annual Progress Report
- Technical, Cost Effectiveness and Sustainability Audit, March 2016
- PRF II Impact Evaluation Report

## **V. Tentative schedule**

It is expected that the consultancy firm will start by February 2018.

The final report should be finalized not later than May 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 so that it can be used during the PRFIII mid-term review, which will take place Mid-May 2018.

PRF assessed the number of working days needed to complete the work at approximately 40 days (8 weeks).

## **VI. Deliverables**

The consultant agency has to draft an Inception report (including a detailed schedule, outline for the main report, and draft questionnaires/survey tools), based on consultations with PRF and key stakeholders and review of documentation, and submit to the PRF for comments and clearance.

The Consultancy firm will be responsible to undertake collation and analysis of the findings, documentation of a draft report, presentation of the study in a one day workshop to be organized by PRF, and preparation of the final report incorporating relevant feedback. Datasets collected during the study should be made available to the PRF (with adequate safeguarding of interviewee confidentiality as appropriate.).



The draft report should provide a summary of findings, an analysis of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The final report shall be submitted, as per draft outline, in English and Lao. The English version should be submitted as per time-schedule set in the inception report and an additional two weeks will be allowed for the translation of the report into Lao.

## **Annex A: Proposed Format for Final Report**

The final report will be approximately 40 pages not including annexes.

- Executive Summary (less than 6 pages)
- Introduction and background
- Purpose of the research, key research questions
- Study Methodology
- General description of the villages covered in this study and their social organization.
- Main Findings from the villages. The findings section will be organized by major theme/research question. To the extent possible, quotations and examples will be used throughout the report to illustrate the findings.
- Conclusion and recommendations for PRFII implementation

Annexes:

- Summary profile of each village – basic data and study findings (maximum 3 pages/village)
- List of qualitative research team members

## **Annex B: Qualifications of Research Team**

### **1. Study Team Leader**

*Specific Tasks:*

- Lead the study and design the study parameters
- Prepare the field plan
- Prepare the research guides and methodology
- Recruit the team of researchers
- Train the research team
- Interview project staff and donors regarding the program, review key program docs
- Liaise and coordinate with PRF staff and WB regarding study
- Oversee the research team field work and ensure the highest standards of research
- Prepare mid-term and final report, present finding in a workshop

*Qualifications:*

- Master's degree or higher in relevant social sciences, preferably anthropology, sociology, political science, engineering or related field
- A minimum of 16 years of field research work using qualitative techniques
- Understanding of Lao rural context highly desirable

- Experience working on development projects and their evaluations and social assessments
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing. English language proficiency is required.

## **2. Local Research Team Members**

### *Specific Tasks:*

- Work together with Study Team Leader to prepare field plan and research guides
- Review PRFIII project documents to understand how the program operates and its key principles.
- Undertake village field work, staying in the village.
- Maintain a journal of activities and interviews
- Assist the Study Team Leader in data analysis and preparation of final report
- Two of the local research team will also assist part-time with field supervision.

### *Qualifications:*

- Min. university degree or equivalent in relevant social sciences, preferably anthropology, sociology or political science.
- Experience undertaking rural field research work in Laos highly desirable.
- Understanding of ethnic minority and cultural issues in Laos
- Experience working on development projects and their evaluations and social assessments
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Local ethnic language capability is an advantage.