

# PRF SHORT TERM NATIONAL NUTRITION CONSULTANT

## *Terms of Reference*

Project Name:	The Poverty Reduction Fund Livelihood Opportunities and Nutritional Gains (LONG)
Number of positions:	1
Position:	<b>National Nutrition Consultant</b>
Duty Station:	PRF/LONG Central office in Vientiane with regular missions to the selected target provinces, districts, Kum bans and villages.
Duration:	Starting May 1, 2014

## **I. Background**

The Poverty Reduction Fund Project was legally established by Decree from the Prime Minister of Lao PDR (No. 073/PM) on 31 May 2002, initially supported by the World Bank in the form of a low-interest credit, repayable over a forty-year term. The consented credit amounts to approximately 19.5 million US\$. The Prime Ministerial Decree allows the PRF to also receive and use funds from other sources.

The objectives of the PRF Project are to support the Lao PDR Government in its efforts to reduce poverty through expanding community opportunities to identify local development needs and manage small scale development projects through financing sub-projects for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of social and economic infrastructure, and other socially productive activities, including creating income generating opportunities through training and other support. Key emphases of the PRF include participation of the communities, transparency and sustainability of the sub-project outputs.

### **Specifically the project objectives are to:**

- (i) Assist villagers to develop community public infrastructure and gain improved access to services;
- (ii) Build capacity and empower villages in poor districts to manage their own public investment planning and sub-project implementation in a decentralized and transparent manner; and
- (iii) Strengthen local institutions to support participatory decision-making and conflict resolution processes at the village, Kum Ban and district levels, involving a broad range of villagers, including women and the poor.

A network of volunteers (village and Kum ban representatives) was set up. Through their elected representatives, villagers decide on how resources are allocated, manage funds, and implement sub-projects. Extensive facilitation and training is provided to ensure that poor villagers, including women and people from smaller ethnic groups, participate in the decision-making process and benefit from Program inputs. The Program builds community capacity by providing technical support for villagers.

The Program aims to create stronger links between the local government and the aspirations of villagers with Program staff at district, province and national level coordinating and building linkages. A forum was created at district level where villagers and district authorities meet regularly to discuss each other priorities and plans and reach a compromise that will satisfy each party.

During the first 5-year phase of the project (cycles I to V), with a loan from the World Bank, PRF supported more than 2,000 subprojects in 21 districts located in 5 provinces (LuangNamtha, Huaphanh, Xiengkhouang, Champasak, Savannakhet and Saravane) representing 161 Kum Ban, more than 1,900 villages and a total population of 744,140 persons. The total budget for the first phase reached more than US\$ 20,000,000. A budget of US\$ 16,616,000 was directly invested in more than 2,000 sub-projects at village level.

The Lao government and PRF donors decided to extend PRF project with a 3-year additional phase which started in October 2008 with grants from the World Bank (US\$ 15 million) and from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (US\$ 5 million). During the current cycle (Cycle VI), PRF is working in 19 first priority districts located in 6 provinces and is currently supporting 355 sub-projects corresponding to a total direct investment of US\$ 4.4 million.

In July 2009, during the 13th PRF National Administrative Board meeting chaired by Lao PDR Deputy Prime Minister, which took place in July 2009, the board members agreed to upgrade PRF into a National Program after completion of the project additional phase in 2011. Building on its past achievements, the next phase of the PRF (2011-2016) will continue to contribute to the Government's poverty reduction agenda. Specifically, the PRF II will fill a gap by financing investments in small public infrastructure that facilitate poor communities' access to basic services and markets in relatively remote and inaccessible areas.

In its 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, the Poverty Reduction Fund aims to strengthen its pro-active outreach to program stakeholders with information on what PRF is, what it does, how it works, and how one can benefit from it. Focus will be on informing and educating targeted Kum Ban and villages. The main objectives of this revised IEC M&S are:

- Inform local communities in the targeted Kum Ban how the PRF II funded projects will support them and introduce the process of community participation.
- Provide communities with the means to provide feed-back and access project and operational information.
- Ensure that stakeholders get relevant information about the PRF II – status, projects, results etc.
- Ensure visibility of PRF vis a vis the Government of Lao and the international donor community.

In addition, in response to the Government's request that the PRF also address livelihood challenges, the PRF II would support livelihoods activities on a parallel financing track through a grant (US\$2.6 million) financed by the Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF). The livelihood pilot would be implemented during three years in five districts in Houaphan and Savannakhet provinces, where PRF has a strong presence, and be closely aligned with the PRF's planning cycle. It would have a strong gender and ethnic group focus and seek to test models for effective and sustainable rural livelihood improvements for poor communities. Depending on the success of the pilot, options for scale-up and replication would be developed accordingly.

## **II. Main objectives of the position**

The main objective of the position is to lead and oversee the management and implementation of the nutrition related activities around the Village Nutrition Center (VNC), following the Project Manual of Operations and VNC manual. This assignment include more specifically finalization of the curriculum for the VNC and behavior change framework, training of the project staff, work plan preparation, production of the necessary equipments linked with the VNC, monitoring and reporting of project nutrition activities and related financial aspects.

## **III. Tentative schedule**

The consultancy shall be carried out the assignment over a period of one year, starting May 1, 2014, and can be extended as needed. It is expected that the assignment will be fulfilled over a period of 140 working days (full time the first 3 months and part time for 9 months

The indicative Schedule (frequency of visits and length of inputs) will be discussed between the consultant and the PRF-LONG team during the first weeks of the consultancy and revised from time to time.

## **IV. Scope of work**

The scope of work which required the consultant to carry out is as below:

- (i) Train National, Provincial and District Teams (incl. young graduates) on VNC implementation (following the VNC Manual) and technical aspect of nutrition together with MOH staff.
- (ii) Prepare work plans for VNC activity 1-5 (including work plans for monthly clinics with DHO/HC).
- (iii) review and finalize the behavior change framework which is available (including messages for VNC activity 4 and 5)
- (iv) Finalize the curriculum for VNC activity 4 with inputs from PRF LONG team
- (v) Finalize the curriculum for VNC activity 5 with inputs from MOH and PRF LONG team
- (vi) Prepare an IEC product plan (including use of existing materials from other projects and design of new IEC as needed)
- (vii) Train on appropriate recipes during the 1,000 day window (e.g. TIPP recipes developed by MOH)
- (viii) Support the procurement and production of necessary equipment (e.g. weighing scales, height measurement boards, growth monitoring charts).

- (ix) Supervise the implementation of the VNC (5 activities) at village level following the VNC manual and provide mentoring services to young graduates and District Nutrition Coordinator as needed to assure quality of implementation
- (x) Oversee the preparation of monitoring reports (LONG MIS form 5 and 6 as well as organized summary statistics for the DHO/HC on the monthly clinic) to assure quality and accuracy in the data collection, monitoring and implementation process and make recommendations on its improvement
- (xi) Review the budget plan and disbursement summaries prepared by the Head of LONG with regard to logistical aspects and field work
- (xii) Represent the project in meeting with the donor, MOH and other partners as regards to nutrition technical aspects.

The National Nutrition Consultant will report to the Head of LONG and work in close collaboration with the National Livelihood consultant and the International Project Implementation Advisor.

The National Nutrition Consultant has to maintain excellent working relationship with authorities at all levels as well as with donors and other institutions involved in project activities.

When necessary, s/he will accomplish others tasks as defined either by the Head of Long or the Executive Director of the PRF.

## **V. Qualifications**

- An advanced university degree, Social Sciences, Rural Development, Economics, Development studies or other relevant field;
- At least 5 years of experience in multi-sectoral project management in decentralized and Community Development approaches is required;
- Experience in working with – in particular training of ethnic groups in mountainous and remote areas through bottom-up and participatory approaches reflective of community needs;
- Experience in the implementation of program with focus on gender promotion;
- Experience in agriculture-based nutrition activities, handicraft or other micro-enterprise;
- Experience of project preparation, design, monitoring, coordination support and institutional strengthening;
- Experience in training of Project staff for community development operations;
- Strong analytical skills for project design and for incorporating of best practices and lesson learned;
- Excellent knowledge of the different stakeholders involved in rural development activities in Lao PDR (government and donors community);
- Fluency in English and Lao (writing, editing, reporting and speaking);
- Perfect command of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point, Email and Internet);
- Familiarity with projects financed by the World Bank is an advantage
- Women are encouraged to apply
- Lao National only.

