

Terms of Reference

(Refer to Draft 29 December 2014)

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| Title: | Executive Assistant |
| Contracting Authority: | Environment Protection Fund Office (EPFO) |
| Location: | EPFO Vientiane Office |
| Duration: | 12 months renewable (subject to satisfactory performance and business needs) |

EPF Operations

1. The Environment Protection Fund (EPF) has been established in 2005 as an autonomous financial institution with an aim to promote sustainable development by providing financing support for conservation and environmental management activities in Lao PDR. EPF organization comprises the EPF Board of Directors and the EPF Office (EPFO). The EPFO comprises an Executive Director, a deputy Executive Director, and four groups of operations and management staff responsible for office administration and fund raising, financial management, procurement, and operations. EPF operates a sub-project mechanism through five thematic windows¹ using funding supports from various sources. At present, EPF portfolios comprise funding activities from interest of the EPF's endowment, contribution from private investors, and the World Bank (WB). During 2014-2021, two WB projects namely the Protected Area and Wildlife (PAW) project and the second Laos Environment and Social project (LENS2) have been under operations and background is provided below.

PAW/LENS2 Project Background

2. The Government of Lao PDR (GoL) through the operation of EPF is preparing LENS2 which will replace the existing PAW project. The LENS2 has been designed *to help strengthen selected environmental protection management systems, specifically for protected areas conservation, enforcement of wildlife laws and environmental assessment management*. The project activities will be implemented through the following 3 components (details can be found on the project document available at EPF).

- *Component 1: National Institution Development and Capacity Building (US\$ 6.6 million) (PICE window)*. This component seeks to improve the capacity and collaboration of national and provincial public institutions to design and monitor national and regional natural resources, environmental, and social policies. These sub-projects are implemented through the EPF's window Policy Implementation and Capacity Enhancement (PICE).
- *Component 2: Management of Wildlife and Protected Areas (US\$ 9.0 million) (CBI window)*. This component seeks to improve the capacity and collaboration of local public institutions, civil society and communities to manage wildlife and protected areas. These sub-projects are implemented through the EPF's window Community and Biodiversity

¹ The five windows are Policy Implementation and Capacity Enhancement (PICE), Community and Biodiversity Investments (CBI), Water Resources Management (WRM), Land Use Management (LUM), and Pollution Control (PC).

Investment (CBI). The first two sub-projects which are expected to use the CEF are the Nam Et Phou Louey NPA (NEPL NPA) and the Nam Theun 2 watershed (NT2W). The preparation of these sub-projects is expected to be initiated in 2015. Component 2 could be implemented in PAs located in the project provinces: Houaphan (HP), Xiengkhouang (XK), Xaysomboun (XSB), Luang Phabang (LPB), Vientiane province (VTP), Bolikhamxay (BLKX), Khammouane (KM), and Savannakhet (SVK).

- *Component 3: Project Administration and EPF Capacity Building (EPFO).* This component is implemented in 2 sub-components. Sub-Component 3.1 Project administration. This sub-component seeks to deliver the Project's outputs within the allocated time frame and with satisfactory planning, procurement, financial management, monitoring, and communication. It supports the administration of the sub-project mechanism by EPF. It includes technical assistance to help EPF assure compliance with the World Bank's fiduciary requirements, especially procurement, financial management, and environment and social safeguards, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), communication with stakeholders, and facilitating effective coordination and cooperation among SDAs. Sub-Component 3.2 EPF's capacity development. This sub-component seeks to help EPF become a significant and recognized player in environment financing capable to deliver and monitor sub-projects throughout the country. It supports capacity building of EPF staff and systems to improve organization and staffing for effectiveness and efficiency as well as optimize business functions such as (a) fund raising, (b) planning and M&E, and (c) communication.

3. The sub-projects under Component 1 and 2 are being prepared by the Sub-project Delivery Agency (SDA) and appraised by EPFO. There are about 16 sub-projects pre-identified under PAW and proposals are being prepared, appraised, and approved². Additional of nearly 30 proposals have been identified for LENS2 and proposals are being prepared and expected to be approved by the end of December 2015.

4. EPFO is responsible for implementation of Component 3. To meet the expected performance of PAW/LENS2 Component 3, it is necessary to establish an effective administration and personnel management system and improve staff capacity that could facilitate effective and timely administration of EPFO services as well as to conduct effective communication and outreach activities with key stakeholders that could enhance sustainability of EPF. The administrative and personnel unit will work closely with the financial management unit, the procurement management unit, and the operations management unit under close supervision of the EPFO managers. It is expected that EPFO staff will be expanded to include around 38 people during 2015-2021 and the remaining staff are being mobilized. At present, around 16 staff is on board.

Objective of the assignment

² As of end of December 2014, 3 proposals from central agencies have been endorsed by Technical Committee (TC) and approved by WB while 8 proposals from provinces have been endorsed by the TC.

5. Main objective of this assignment is to provide direct administrative and management support to EPFO managers to carry out the day-to-day operations of the EPFO office under guidance of the unit head or the Deputy Executive Director (DED).

Scope of the assignment

6. The Consultant (**Executive Assistant**) will be responsible for providing all supports to the EPFO managers in close coordination with all the EPFO units and under supervision of the unit head. The Consultant will carry out, but not limited to, the following tasks:

Task 1: Provide direct supports to EPFO managers

- The Consultant will be responsible for providing direct supports to EPFO managers including the Executive Director (ED) and the Deputy Executive Director (DED). Key responsibility will include, but not limited to the following: (a) Reviews all incoming and outgoing EPF documents and if necessary provide follow up, (b) Prepares principle office correspondence reviews type written work with regards to correctness and priority, prior to release to and from the ED, (c) Attends to safekeeping, recording, storage, routing of various papers, correspondence reports and other relevant actions that needs follow-up from time to time, (e) Performs any related duties as may be assigned from time to time by ED and/or DED, and Contributes to the preparation of technical reports that necessitates action by the ED, including keeping proper records.

Task 2: Coordinates and facilitates linkages/tie-ups with outside agencies that involves EPF operation.

- EPFO managers are responsible for taking the lead in building connection with potential development partners, private investors, and other agencies. The Consultant will assist the EPFO managers in building these connections and facilitate cooperation that could contribute to sustainable and effective operations of EPFO.

Task 3: Coordinate with other EPFO team member

- As assigned by the EPFO managers, the Consultant will facilitate effective coordination and cooperation with other EPF team members of all the four units and facilitate effective management of EPFO in close consultation with the administrative and personnel unit head. The Consultant will work closely with all EPFO consultants and specialists to enhance capacity of the office management and support services to EPFO operations.

General principles

7. The Consultant is expected to observe at all times the highest standard of professional ethics and integrity, and promote results-oriented approach in the area of his/her responsibility and accountability. The Consultant will need to report, as appropriate, to EPF and/or WB for any occurrence/irregularity or critical issues.

Deliverables

8. Ability to (a) timely support the EPFO managers (ED and DED), (b) facilitate and coordinate with other EPFO team members as a team, and (c) provide connection with outside stakeholders as assigned by the EPFO managers.

Reporting

9. The Consultant will work under the supervision and guidance of, and report to EPFO managers.

Duration

10. This assignment is 1 year contract renewable based on an annual performance evaluation. The assignment will start with a 3 month probation period.

Experience and qualifications

11. Candidates should demonstrate skills and core competencies to deliver and attain results expected above, along with ability in interpersonal relation and communication, and in working effectively with a wide range of constituencies in a diverse working environment. It is also expected he/she should be adequately experienced in and comfortable working with public institutions.

12. Key Academic and Professional Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree or higher preferably in areas related to art, business administration, political science, management, or other relevant degree.
- A minimum of 2-3 years of working experience in secretarial services to senior managers and with good command of English both writing and speaking with good computer proficiency capable of using word, excel, etc.
- Experience in both public and private sectors with pleasant personality. Some work experience with senior managers is a strong advantage.
- Solid interpersonal skills and willingness to work as part of a team.

Others

- Willing to travel and spend time in provinces;
- Women, are strongly encouraged to apply;
- Only short listed candidates will be contacted for confirmation or called for an interview.