

Terms of Reference

Needs Assessment - Model Community Learning Centres

1 Introduction

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), the German Adult Education Association. As the leading professional organisation in the field of adult education and development cooperation, DVV International has committed itself to supporting lifelong learning for 50 years now. DVV International provides worldwide support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for a lifelong Adult Learning and Education (ALE).

Since 2009, DVV International has partnered with the Lao PDR Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), particularly the **Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE)**, to enhance access to and quality of Non-Formal Education (NFE) for vulnerable populations. As the central authority for NFE, DNFE oversees its provision through a network of 18 Province Non-Formal Education Centres (PNFECs), 37 District Non-Formal Education Centres (DNFECs), and 128 Community Learning Centres (CLCs) (recent figures as of 2023). In Laos, NFE prioritizes both equivalency programs and basic vocational training, aiming to empower individuals and improve livelihoods.

DVV International has been supporting since its beginning in Lao PDR **community learning centres (CLC)** in two districts of the Province of Savannakhet with capacity and institution building, literacy courses, income generation activities and other trainings for adults. These activities were later complemented by specific activities for children and youth, through additional funding.

DVV has also been partnering for long time with the **Non-formal Education Development Centre (NFEDC)** to strengthen NFE structures in the country. This collaborative effort equipped NFE institutions at all levels with **new tools and recourses**, including handbooks and learning materials for **contemporary non-formal education approaches**. These approaches include topics such as women empowerment, soft and life skills, mobile skills trainings, digital learning in equivalency programs and non-formal learning for children and youth. These materials now serve as a guideline and a valuable toolkit for NFE institutions.

2 Background

DVV International started a new project phase continuing its commitment to support CLCs as learning spaces at local level. The new “Model CLC” initiative builds on the longstanding experience of CLC support in Savannakhet (completed in 2023), the developed teaching and learning resources and - last but not least - DVV's well established partnership with the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) and the Non-Formal Education Development Center (NFEDC).

The new initiative aims to establish **four model CLCs** in four strategically selected provinces: **Luang Prabang, Vientiane Capital, Vientiane Province, and Bolikhamxai Province**. The four model CLCs will upgrade already existing facilities according to national standards currently developed and will serve as hubs for community-driven learning, offering essential skills training, income generation activities, literacy programs, and access to vital information to improve livelihoods and well-being. DVV's and its Lao partners will support capacity development of CLC staff (managers, teachers, facilitators, volunteers), the provision of equipment and renovation of facilities as well as the implementation of various pilot trainings according to the demand of the NFE target groups **to be identified through a needs assessment**.

3 Objectives and key questions of the needs assessment

DVV International, in cooperation with the Department of Non-Formal Education, MoES selected the following four model CLCs:

1. Meungkhai CLC in Luang Prabang (*to be confirmed*)
2. Simmano CLC in Vientiane Capital (*to be confirmed*)
3. Keokou CLC in Vientiane Province, and
4. Buavengkham CLC in Bolikhamxai Province.

To ensure that the initiative addresses relevant barriers and needs of the target community members, the needs assessment has to provide answers to the following **key questions**:

- Existing non-formal learning opportunities of model CLCs and other providers (supply side).
- Most common demands and priorities for skills development from community members (demand side) – learning “topics” and preferred income generation activities.
- Suggestions as to the successful delivery of training programs.

The assessment results will be used to inform the training program for CLC staff and beneficiaries, develop/update teaching and learning material and to learn about other priorities for improvement.

The assessment results will be used for two new initiatives in the four model CLCs, with different target groups. One addressing mainly adults (BMZ funding) and one addressing children and youth (funding by “die Sternsinger”). Therefore, the assessment requires separate approaches and presentations of results for the different target groups (see chapter 4 below for details).

4 Assessment approach and methods

The assessment must address separately the following two **target groups**:

Target Group 1: Women and men with age between 18-50 years.

Target Group 2: Children and Youths with age between 6-17 years.

For group 1 a more comprehensive assessment including surveys with adult learners and key stakeholders is required, while for group 2 interviews with key informants (teachers, parents, local authorities) will be sufficient to prioritize topics identified for children and youth in former projects.

The assessment for group 1 will consist of both desk research and field data collection, using a combination of primary data collection and secondary data assessment. To collect information from **primary data sources**, the consultant is free to propose a sample size and feasible methodological approach. We recommend taking the following stakeholder groups into consideration:

- Partner institutions: Provincial Education and Sports Services (PESS), District Education Sports Bureau (DESB) and Village Education Development Community (VEDC).
- CLC officials, staff, and volunteers.
- Primary and secondary school principals and teachers.
- Community members.

The following additional **information** will be provided by DVV International:

- Fact sheets of the four model CLCs selected.
- Project reports and assessments from other CLC initiatives.
- Existing handbooks and learning materials (especially the handbook for children and youth).
- Partner documents (as far as available).

The assessment will begin with a kick off meeting, followed by an inception phase of searching secondary data and reviewing documents provided by DVV International (desk study), and the preparation of an inception report, that must contain the survey tools for both target groups. This is followed by a period of field data collection and the preparation of a draft report. The final report will consider remarks to the draft report made by DVV International and key partners.

5 Indicative Timetable and work input

The estimated number of working days is about 25 with the following **indicative timetable**:

- Kick-off meeting with DVV and partners in Vientiane: 1 day.
- Preparation of Inception Report, including methodologies and survey tools: 5 days.
- Presentation and testing of survey tools / planning of field visits with partners: 2 days.
- Field surveys in 4 target provinces/districts and 4 model CLCs: 10 days.
- Data processing and elaboration of draft and final assessment report: 5 days.
- Presentation of draft assessment reports and incorporation of comments: 2 days.

6 Target group of the assessment results

The target group of the assessment results will be the project management team of DVV International in Laos and its GoL partners including Department of Non-Formal Education, Non-Formal Education Development Center, target provincial and district education departments.

7 Tasks of the Consultant(s)

The consultant(s) will be requested to fulfil the following tasks:

- Methodological design of the assessment in communication with DVV and partners.
- Desk Study of relevant project documentation and other secondary sources identified.
- Design of data collection instruments for field phase (to be included in the Inception Report).
- Conduct the field phase with participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders.
- Compile preliminary assessment report, integrate comments, and finalize the report.
- Meetings with DVV International and partners to discuss progress and next steps: kick-off meeting, inception report/survey tools, draft and final report.
- Presentation of final assessment to DVVI, DNFE, NFEDC and other stakeholders.

8 Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected:

- **Inception report:** The consultant(s) will present a report giving detailed information about
 - o First findings from desk research.
 - o Survey tools / questionnaires for all stakeholders of Target Group 1.
 - o Survey tools / questionnaires for all stakeholders of Target Group 2.
 - o Time schedule for field survey Implementation.
 - o Preliminary table of contents of the Final Report.
- **Draft assessment report:** This report must provide answers to all key research questions outlined in chapter 3. Comments will need to be considered for the final report.
- **Final assessment report:** The final assessment report will be submitted to DVV International and presented in an official de-briefing meeting with key partners.
- **Report summary and presentation:** Together with the final report, the Consultant must submit a report summary with key findings and recommendation (3 pages) and prepare a power point presentation for the debriefing session.

All deliverables must be produced **in English** and submitted to DVV International electronically. The report summary and the power point presentation must be submitted in **English and Lao language**. Survey tools/questionnaires for all stakeholders should be in Lao language.

9 Responsible persons at DVV International and logistics

DVV International will be the contracting authority for this assessment. The main contact persons will be DVV International' Project Manager Leklai Southavilay (southavilay@dvv-international.la), while overall responsibility will be with DVV International's Regional Director.

DVV International will provide the additional information outlined in chapter 4 and supports the consultant(s) as regards the field survey: contacts to key stakeholders, the arrangement of accommodation, transportation, and assistance in arranging interviews and project visits.

The final report will be accepted by DVV International's Project Manager and the Regional Director

10 Eligibility criteria

The assessment will be done by a (team of) consultant(s) who need(s) to demonstrate experience in need assessments, development project studies and capacity building.

The consultant(s) we are looking for should:

- Have university degree in Education, Development, Social Sciences, M&E or related disciplines with strong experience in conducting similar research works and studies.
- Be able to demonstrate sound knowledge of assessment methods and instruments.
- Strong experience in community development, non-formal education for children, youth and adults, youth-led initiatives and social development.
- Analytical/writing skills; fluent in Lao and English, know-how of ethnic languages an asset.

11 Application Package

The application package should include the following documents:

- a) CV(s) of person(s) to be involved in the assignment in English. The CV should inform about qualifications, former assignments, and experiences relevant to this tender,
- b) Technical proposal covering the following aspects (**3-5 pages**):
 - Narrative overview displaying an understanding of the task and ToR.
 - Methodology/approach of the assessment for both target groups.
 - Work Plan, including provisional timeline.
 - Consideration of the specific context and requirements for the assessment.
 - Internal Quality Management.
- c) A detailed financial proposal with indication of working days and daily rates, if for a team please provide costs per expert. Note: Travelling and accommodation costs for the assessment implementation will be covered by DVV International and do not need to be included in the financial proposal.

Consultant(s) participating in the tender for this assessment should send the application package by latest 21 February 2024 by e-mail to: southavilay@dvv-international.la

Requests for clarification can be sent to respective until 14 February 2024.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

12 Assessment criteria of proposals

The proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Qualification of the consultant(s) based on the detailed CV (40%)
- Technical proposal based on criteria mentioned above (30%)
- Financial proposal based on best cost-service relation (30%)