
EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

PROCUREMENT REFERENCE NUMBER 7-15.2-2021 SIDA

National Coordinator to wood based MSMEs in Laos

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1. Background

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Laos, in particular micro- and small-scale processors, are often poorly organized and not accustomed to advocate for regulatory reforms. They also lack specialized training and do not have the knowledge and the tools to improve their practices, grow sustainably and fully comply with all relevant laws and regulations. Input-output monitoring (IOM) of timber used, access to legal timber, production management, occupational health and safety, business administration and development are some of the key challenges faced by MSMEs in Laos. With growing demands to demonstrate legality, these MSMEs increasingly need to show they fully conform to all aspects of regulatory requirements.

The European Forest Institute (EFI) has been testing approaches to enable forest- and timber-based MSMEs in the Mekong region to operate legally and sustainably since 2015. In Laos, EFI has been conducting a pilot project in Attapeu to support formal and informal MSMEs in the development of input-output timber accounting, to understand the type of training content and methods that resonate best with household businesses in rural areas of Laos and the type of incentives needed to motivate MSMEs to develop and implement the timber accounting system. As the result of the pilot's trainings, Attapeu's furniture makers can document the use of timber sources (a key legal requirement) and their operational and technical skills improved. The pilot also improved the dialogue and cooperation between the furniture makers and the district authorities, and disseminated lessons learnt and achievements among policy makers at national level.

Building on past activities, over the next two years, EFI seeks a Contractor to upscale the pilot's progress and achievements by building the long-term capacity of district and provincial authorities on timber utilisation to enable them to better inspect and support wood processing factories as prescribed by the law. EFI also seeks to enhance gender aspects of the pilot to promote gender equality (GE) and women's economic empowerment (WEE) in the wood processing sector in Attapeu.

1.2. Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to coordinate support mechanisms for district/provincial authorities and MSMEs in Attapeu province and at national level in Laos. Contractor is primarily responsible for coordinating the pilot's activities in Laos and cooperating with national stakeholders and international organisations to facilitate the creation of support structures and achieve maximum positive impact for MSMEs.

1.3. Scope and tasks

The assignment will be implemented by one expert (hereafter referred to as 'national MSME coordinator') that will carry out the following tasks:

- Continue to build the capacity of micro and small-scale wood processors in Attapeu and Vientiane province to comply with key regulations in the wood processing industry. Integrate the industry associations as well the provincial/district authorities into training and coaching activities. Strengthen the communication between the authorities and the factories.
- Upscale the pilot by:
 - o Building the capacity of district and provincial authorities on timber utilisation to enable them to support, monitor and inspect wood processing factories in Attapeu and Vientiane provinces as prescribed by the law.

- Building the capacity of relevant officials within the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC) on timber utilisation by wood processors to enable them to better support district and provincial authorities nationwide in their monitoring, inspection and reporting duties.
- Building long-term capacity at national and provincial level for training of micro and small-scale wood processors and industry associations on timber utilisation by making use of EFI's pilot's training materials and relationships established with vocational training schools and the University of Laos.
- Disseminate lessons learnt from EFI's pilot among national stakeholders and continue to raise awareness about the situation of small-scale wood processors in Laos. Upscale the pilot by actively reaching out to development partners in Laos such as ACIAR, EU ARISE+, GIZ ProFEB, KfW, the World Bank, etc. to inform them about progress and lessons learnt from EFI's pilot and discuss potential collaborations.
- Strengthen GE and WEE aspects of the pilot by:
 - Conducting workshops to raise awareness about GE and WEE among formal and informal wood processing factories in Attapeu as well as district and provincial authorities.
 - Encouraging dialogue on gender issues among wood processors and organising visits to factories that have a diverse workforce and inclusive labour practices.
 - Supporting EFI's gender expert in collecting and analysing gender-related data on the wood processing sector in Laos and developing relevant knowledge products.
- Work closely with EFI's private sector experts in Kuala Lumpur to analyse lessons learnt from the pilot for sharing them regionally and internationally.

1.4. Resources, timetable and reporting

The indicative start of the contract is November 2021 with a duration of two years, up to 280 working days.

The national MSME coordinator shall be based in Laos, Vientiane with frequent engagement and travel to Attapeu and other provinces.

A local coordinator must be engaged to support logistical arrangements in the implementation of the workplan in Attapeu. The local coordinator will be nominated in the implementation phase, for approval by EFI,

A "work plan budget" will be made available by EFI to cover costs related for example domestic travel, costs of meetings and trainings (including associated expenses) for a maximum of 38,000 Euro. This work plan budget will be integrated as part of the total financial proposal. The total budget for this assignment including work plan budget will not exceed 100,000 Euro.

All travel needs to be approved by EFI prior to departure. The national MSME coordinator is expected to have approx. 10 national flights (on average one mission is 3 days). The number of days of mission will be agreed with EFI in each case prior to the mission. The national MSME coordinator will prepare within four weeks after the signing of the contract, and every six months thereafter, a detailed work plan estimating the number of workdays and the missions during that period.

The national MSME coordinator will **regularly report** on progress related to above listed tasks by email/skype/personal

meetings/videoconferencing to the EFI's private sector experts. The national MSME coordinator prepares **monthly update reports** on the implementation of this contract. **A final report** covering all interventions during the period of assignment shall be prepared by the end of the contract at the latest. All reports are to be produced in English and must be approved by EFI.

2. TENDER DOCUMENTATION

2.1. Administrative Documentation

The tender shall include the following documentation, properly filled out and signed:

- Cover letter (Annex 1)
- Identification form (Annex 2) including supporting documentation
- Bank identification form (Annex 2a)
- Declaration on Exclusion Criteria and Absence of Conflict of Interest (Annex 3)
- Nomination of Experts form (Annex 4)
- Minimum criteria declaration (Annex 5)

The consortium agreement (Annex 6) shall be included, properly filled out and signed, if the tender is submitted jointly by a consortium of economic operators. The consortium agreement (Annex 6) shall not be included if the tender is submitted by a single Tenderer proposing subcontracting of tasks.

2.2. Technical Proposal

In order to evaluate the tender against the minimum criteria and the award criteria A.I. – A.II in section 3.1. and 3.2., the Tenderer shall submit a technical proposal consisting only of the following elements:

- 1) A **nomination** of the following Expert to carry out the tasks in the Terms of Reference:
 - **One national MSME coordinator (Expert)**

The Technical Proposal shall include the CV of the nominated expert.

The Tenderer shall be able to certify the information contained in the CV for the nominated Expert at EFI's request.

The CV shall have all the information as in the EuroPass CV

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae>

The Tenderer can use the EuroPass CV template or its own CV template.

- 2) A **description** of no more than three pages, **making reference to the Terms of Reference and the previous experience of the Expert** showcasing understanding of the aims and the context of the tasks **and addressing the following topics:**

- Input-output monitoring and timber traceability in the context of MSME wood processors in Laos. Particular attention shall be placed on capacity building needs of the private sector, and national, provincial and district authorities on these topics.
- GE and WEE in the wood processing sector in Laos.

- 3) A **presentation** of no more than three pages on the Tenderer's methodology for the assignment – building upon the Terms of Reference and the experience of the Experts – addressing the following elements under separate headings:

- Approach to building the capacity of district and provincial authorities on timber utilisation to enable them to better support MSMEs in their jurisdiction to comply with the relevant legal requirements.
- Approach to building long-term capacity at national level for training on timber utilisation to enhance overall compliance by wood processors with the relevant legal requirements.
- Approach to disseminating lessons learnt from the MSME work to policy makers and other key stakeholders in Laos.
- Approach to promoting GE and WEE in the wood processing sector in Laos.
- Timing and sequence of tasks and deliverables, indicating the approximate allocation of time per nominated expert for each task and analysis of risks and mitigation measures (including in relation to eventual COVID-19 impact) on the implementation of the service.

2.3. Financial Proposal

The Tenderer shall submit a financial proposal, which shall be completed by using the form in annex 7 and by following the instructions therein.

The full general conditions applicable to the payment of fees and per diem as well as the reimbursement of costs can be found in annex 8 (model contract).

3. EVALUATION OF TENDERS AND AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

3.1. Minimum Criteria

The Expert nominated must fulfil the following criteria:

N°	Criteria description
M.I.	Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in natural resource management, business administration, sustainability, development, or related disciplines.
M.II.	Ten (10) years' demonstrated experience leading and coordinating projects in Laos in the context of rural development and/or forestry.
M.III.	Experience training CSOs and the private sector in topics such as occupational health and safety, timber utilisation, leadership, management, communications, etc.
M.IV.	Established or functional network with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC) at national level, and District of Industry and Commerce Office (DICO)/Provincial of Industry and Commerce Office (PICO) in Attapeu as well as key national stakeholders in the context of the FLEGT process in Laos.
M.V.	Experience engaging MSMEs, industry associations and government authorities in the wood processing sector in Laos.
M.VI.	Understanding, speaking, and writing English and Lao as demanded with respect to all tasks covered by the Terms of Reference. Native speaker of Lao preferred.

Tenders not fulfilling the minimum criteria will be rejected.

3.2. Award Criteria

Tenders which fulfil the minimum criteria will be evaluated using the following award criteria:

A. Technical component (maximum 75 points)		
N°	Award criteria	Max points
A.I.	Understanding of:	
i.	Input-output monitoring and timber traceability in the context of MSME wood processors in Laos. Particular attention shall be placed on capacity building needs of the private sector, and national, provincial and district authorities on these topics	15
ii.	GE and WEE in the wood processing sector in Laos	10

A.II.	Proposed methodology for the implementation of the tasks	
i.	Approach to building the capacity of district and provincial authorities on timber utilisation to enable them to better support MSMEs in their jurisdiction to comply with the relevant legal requirements	10
ii.	Approach to building long-term capacity at national level for training on timber utilisation to enhance overall compliance by wood processors with the relevant legal requirements	10
iii.	Approach to disseminating lessons learnt from the MSME work to policy makers and other key stakeholders in Laos	10
iv.	Approach to promoting GE and WEE in the wood processing sector in Laos	10
v.	Timing and sequence of tasks and deliverables, indicating the approximate allocation of time per nominated expert for each task and analysis of risks and mitigation measures (including in relation to eventual COVID-19 impact) on the implementation of the service	10

The Technical component (TC) is calculated according to the following formula:

$TC = A.I. + A.II.$

Tenders must receive a score of more than half of the maximum Technical component to be considered qualitatively acceptable.

Tenders not considered qualitatively acceptable will not be considered further.

B. Financial component (maximum 25 points)

Tenders presenting a total financial proposal (Fo) superior to the maximum contract value of EUR 100,000 will not be considered further.

For tenders being considered, the Financial component (F) is calculated according to the following formula:

$F = (Fmin / Fo) \times 25$

where

F_{min} is total sum in the tender in the evaluation with the lowest total financial proposal; and

F_o is the total sum in the financial proposal being considered.

C. Most economically advantageous tender

A combined score (CS) will be calculated according to the following formula:

$$CS = TC + F$$

The Tenderer with the highest combined score (CS) for Technical component (TC) and Financial component (F) will be awarded the Contract.

Where two or more tenders have an equal combined score the contract will be awarded according to the highest score for the financial component (F).

ANNEXES

Annex 1	Cover letter
Annex 2	Identification form
Annex 2a	Bank identification form
Annex 3	Declaration on exclusion criteria and absence conflict of interest
Annex 4	Nomination of Experts form
Annex 5	Minimum criteria declaration
Annex 6	Consortium agreement
Annex 7	Financial Proposal form
Annex 8	Model contract
Annex 9	Per Diem rates