

Terms of Reference

Project title:	Evaluation of Community Learning Centre Model in Laos in Pilot Districts
Country:	Laos
Funding agency:	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

1 Introduction

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), the German Adult Education Association. DVV represents the interests of approximately 920 adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) and their state associations, the largest service provider of continuing education in Germany. 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 youth and adult learning and education (YALE).

Funded in a large part by the BMZ for the creation/strengthening of social structures (Sozialstrukturförderung - SSF), the Institute cooperates with more than 200 partners in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. DVV International promotes, together with national, regional and global associations of adult education (AE), lobbying and advocacy activities for the human right to education and lifelong learning. In doing so, DVV International contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Agenda for Education (Education 2030) and the UNESCO International Conferences on Adult Education (CONFINTEA).

DVV International supports the exchange of information and interaction between professionals at European and global level through conferences, seminars and publications. DVV International's interventions cover three levels: *first level* – contribution to policies, strategies, standards and norms, as well as funding on national level (macro level), *second level* – institutional capacity building and capacity building of teaching staff (meso level), and, *third level* - the basic model interventions for the population with potential for replication at national, regional, and international level (micro level).

2 Background of the project

Since 2010, District Education and Sport Bureau (DESB) Sepon and Nong with the support of DVV International have established 24 Community Learning Centers (CLCs) as a multifunctional community space for learning, sharing and meeting in two of the most impoverished regions in Lao PDR, Nong and Sepon Districts of Savannakhet province. Located closely to the border to Vietnam, mainly ethnic minority groups, rarely or not formally educated at all, live there.

The main components of the project activities included:

- Establishment of the CLCs
- Provision of income generating activities and skills trainings
- Literacy courses and equivalency programs
- Health and financial literacy
- Opening the CLCs for youth and children
- Baseline survey, needs assessment, M&E

Additionally, DVV International and its partners supported the counterparts by offering capacity building events for the CLC directors and committees as well as the line agencies on the district level.

A field office in Nong with three staff members is managing the implementation, supervised by a project manager in Vientiane.

3 Objectives of the project

This project has the following objectives:

- (1) Piloting the practicability of applying of the CLC model in remote regions of Lao PDR
- (2) Provide non-formal education services to various parts of the rural population including women and youth
- (3) Clarify the impact of the CLC approach on village level
- (4) Gain experience about the capacities of Lao stakeholders for sustainable support of CLCs

In this framework, the Project in Nong and Sepon should demonstrate the impact of ALE on the livelihood at the village level, using the well-established CLC-model, as developed by UNESCO and being an integral part of Lao PDR's official NFE-system.

4 Activities of the programme

Since 2010, DESB Sepon and Nong with the support of DVV International have established 24 Community Learning Centers (CLCs) as a community space for learning, sharing and meeting in two of the most impoverished regions in Lao PDR, Nong and Sepon Districts of Savannakhet province. Located closely to the border to Vietnam, mainly ethnic minority groups, rarely or not formally educated at all, live there.

During the last nine years, a range of activities was implemented in the centers:

- Literacy and basic education trainings
- Skills trainings with a special attention on agricultural skills
- Establishment of weaving groups
- Trainings on health issues and sanitation
- Awareness raising events including financial literacy
- Trainings and events targeting on youth and children

Additionally, DVV International and its partners supported the counterparts by offering capacity building events for the CLC committees and the line agencies on the district level.

5 Evaluation goal and objectives

DVV International understands itself as a learning organization. In order to improve further project activities, DVV International, as the implementing agency, would like to learn more about achievements, challenges and best practices of the above mentioned project.

The evaluation's main goal is to document project achievements towards the objectives set in the initial project proposal. Furthermore, the evaluation should review and assess the relevance of the

project activities, the achievement of the expected results, and their perspectives for sustainability. It should include a reflection about **lessons learnt** and make **recommendations** for the project counterparts regarding methodologies, strategies and approaches for possible further activities. The evaluation aims at revealing problems and barriers in the project implementation, as well as outlining how they were overcome.

The evaluation and its recommendations shall be a useful tool of information for the project implementing agency – DVV International and its partners. .

6 Main Evaluation questions

The evaluation has to be carried out according to the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluation Development Assistance and should give clear statements regarding the following:

6.1 Relevance

The extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent do the objectives of the project meet the needs of the beneficiaries (Lao government partners, CLC authorities) and target groups (villagers)?
- To what extent does the performance of the CLCs meet the need of the target groups?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

6.2 Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which an activity attains its objectives. In evaluating the effectiveness of a project or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

6.3 Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the activity uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. When evaluating the efficiency of a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- Were activities cost-efficient, e.g. the operation of the field offices?
- Was the project or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

6.4 Impact

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions. When evaluating the impact of a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- What has improved as a result of the project so far?

- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries, e.g. is there some evidence that the livelihood of the villagers improved in villages, where CLCs are operating?
- How has the ability of the villagers improved to run CLCs? What were the key factors in this regard?
- How many people have been affected?
- Have there been any kind of unintended effects (negative or positive)?

6.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. When evaluating the sustainability of a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- What are the major factors which influence the sustainability of CLCs in rural regions?
- How can the institutional readiness of the Lao stakeholders to support CLCs be assessed? What needs to be done to enhance it?
- Has the project been successful to raise the sense of ownership of the villagers for the CLCs? What have been the key factors for the success or failure?

7 Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation will consist of both desk and field study. A combination of primary data collection and secondary data review is expected during the evaluation.

Some secondary data sources will be made available to the contractor. The following **secondary documents** will be provided:

- Project proposals
- Baseline studies and needs assessments
- Project reports
- Mid-term and other kinds of (self)evaluations referring to the project
- Partner documents of project implementation (as far as available)

The contractor should identify additional secondary documents, especially concerning the social, economic, demographic and cultural background in the target districts.

To collect information from **primary data sources**, the contractor is free to propose feasible methodological approaches (quantitative or qualitative). We recommend taking the following groups into consideration:

- Management (including financial management) of regional and country office of DVV International

Representatives of partners:

- Stakeholders from partner institutions (e.g. NFE, LWU, LYU)
- Trainers and teachers
- Managers and committee members of CLCs

Effectiveness with regard to the target group:

- Learners,
- Families of learners

It should be checked if standardized quantitative approaches might be applicable.

The evaluation will begin with an inception phase of reviewing documents provided partly by DVV International (desk study), and the preparation of an inception report. This is followed by a period

of field study and the preparation of a draft report. The final report will consider remarks to the draft report made by the DVV International country, regional office, and regional desk at headquarters.

8 Indicative Timetable and work input

The indicative number of working days foreseen is 20 days; but it is up to the contractor to make alternative suggestions as long as the overall budget line of 8,000 Euro (including taxes) is not exceeded.

The **indicative timetable** for the evaluation is as follows:

Deadline for clarifications: 30 June 2019

Deadline of submission of proposals: 15 July 2019

Selection of candidate: 31 July 2019

Inception Report (Draft): 30 August 2019

Field phase: September 2019

First draft of evaluation report 31 October 2019

Final version of Evaluation Report: 30 November 2019

9 Target group of the evaluation results

The target group of the evaluation results will be the project management team of DVV International Laos as well as the head office in Bonn. The results of the evaluation will also be sent to the Contracting Authority (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development - BMZ). Furthermore, the results of the evaluation will also be presented to the Lao partners and selected development agencies in Laos

10 Right of use

The Principal has the exclusive and unlimited right to use the results fulfilled by the contract. The transfer of this Right of Use is complete with the payment made to the Contractor.

The Contractor has Right of Use permission strictly limited for personal non-commercial purposes. Transfer of the Right of Use to third parties is excluded.

11 Contractual Conditions

The legal basis for this contract is provided by the „General terms and conditions for the implementation of Services" (VOL/B). These general terms and conditions are not attached to this contract; however, an exemplary service contract is part of these Terms of Reference for perusal.

12 Tasks of the evaluator/ evaluation team

The evaluation team will be requested to fulfil the following tasks:

- Methodological design and planning of the evaluation in communication with DVV International;
- Desk Study of relevant project documentation (application and logframe, annual plans and reports, other monitoring documents and project reports, teaching and PR material);
- Design of data collection instruments for the field phase;

- Implementation of the field phase, including travel arrangement and necessary interpretation/translation
- Prepare an Inception Report;
- Conduct the field phase with participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders;
- Compile preliminary evaluation report, integrate comments, and finalize the report.
- De-briefing sessions, possibly in country of evaluation and/or Bonn, Germany

13 Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected:

- **Inception report:** The expert/ team of experts will present a report giving detailed information about methods and specified questions. This report will be presented to DVV International, discussed and, if need be, amended.
- **Debriefing in the country:** By arrangement with the DVV International programme coordinator, the (team of) expert(s) will present the preliminary, country-specific results of the evaluation and will answer questions in this regard, documenting the discussion, which must form part of the final report.
- **Draft evaluation report:** DVV International will receive a first draft of the final report, which will be examined on the basis of the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards; on this basis, comments will be made on the rough draft before it is returned to the expert(s).
- **Final evaluation report:** The final report will take into account the comments on the rough draft about the entire evaluation process and all results and recommendations.

The evaluation report should be produced **in English** and submitted to DVV International **electronically**. A respective template for the final report will be provided in the inception phase to the contractor.

14 Responsible persons at DVV International and logistics

DVV International will be the contracting authority for this evaluation. The main contact persons will be

- The senior manager for monitoring and evaluation Dr. Thomas Lichtenberg, DVV International, Bonn
- The senior desk officer for Southeast Asia of DVV International in Bonn
- DVV International's Regional Director for Southeast Asia

The DVV country office will provide all relevant documents and support the evaluator/ team of evaluators in the field with arranging interviews and field visits etc.

The final report will be accepted by the senior manager for monitoring and evaluation and the senior desk officer for Southeast Asia of DVV International in Bonn.

15 Evaluator eligibility criteria

The evaluation will be done by an evaluator who needs to demonstrate experience in evaluating development projects. The evaluation expert will further have experience with organisational development and capacity building. Previous experience in Laos will be considered as an asset.

The consultant(s) we are looking for should

- have at least 5-year experience in the field of evaluation of development projects (please, provide proof of this experience);
- be able to demonstrate sound knowledge of evaluation methods and instruments;
- be (a) professional(s) in the field of non-formal education or community development,
- have experiences with stakeholder participation and transparent knowledge management;
- analytical and writing skills;
- fluency in English and Lao (in case of lack of Lao language skills, the evaluator can contract interpreters/translators, this should be indicated in the budget)

16 Quality standards

The candidates should propose a suitable evaluation design and methodology, well adapted to the project objectives and TOR for the evaluation, in order to meet the evaluation's goal and objectives.

The evaluation must comply with the following standards and guidelines:

- OECD-DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance

17 Coordination/Responsibility

The Senior Desk Officer for Southeast Asia as well as the Senior Desk Officer for Monitoring and Evaluation at DVV International Headquarters in Bonn will be in charge of the contracting. The evaluator should work in close cooperation with DVV International Regional Director in Vientiane during the preparatory and implementation phase. The Project Coordinator from DVV International in Vientiane will handle the cooperation regarding the exchange of relevant project documentation and data.

Logistical support will be offered to the evaluator by the Project team in Vientiane (DVV International country office staff), including booking of accommodation, local transportation, translation and assistance in arranging interviews and project visits. Please, note that all expenditures should be covered by the contractor(s).

18 Estimated Budget

The estimated cost of the assignment is up to 8000 EUR (including taxes), including honorarium, per diems, travel, necessary translation services and transportation costs of the Evaluator.

19 Application package

Experts participating in the tender for this evaluation should send the application package by **latest 15 July 2019** by e-mail to:

Dr. Thomas Lichtenberg (Senior Manager on Monitoring and Evaluation at DVV International Headquarters in Bonn) e-mail address: Lichtenberg@dvv-international.de

Late submissions will not be accepted.

The application package should include the following documents. Please make sure to comply to the provided requirements below and use the **annexed templates**:

All interested candidates should submit the following documents:

- a) CV(s) of person(s) to be involved in the assignment in English (Please use the template provided);
- b) Technical proposal covering the following aspects (**maximum of 5 pages**);
 - Narrative overview displaying an understanding of the task
 - Detailed methodology
 - Work Plan, including detailed proposed steps of implementation
 - Consideration of any specific requirements envisaged for the evaluation
 - Consideration of the specific context (country, topic)
 - Internal Quality Management
- c) A detailed financial proposal with all expected costs (Please use the template provided and submit with a **hand-written signature**).

20 Evaluation criteria of proposals

The proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Qualifications of the evaluation team (counts one third)** (based on criteria mentioned above);
- **Technical proposal (counts one third)** (based on criteria mentioned above; all of the above mentioned criteria for technical proposals will be taken into account);
Financial proposal (counts one third) (best cost-service relation; please consider the envisaged total number of working days).

21 Request for clarification

If you should have questions concerning this tender, please send your questions to Dr. Thomas Lichtenberg mentioned as contact person, above. The answers to the questions will be published on our website (<https://www.dvv-international.de/dvv-international/stellenangebote/>) for all interested parties the following day.