



Terms of Reference for Consultancy for Research on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Laos

Date: October-November 2018

I. Introduction and Background:

A gender responsive budget is a budget that works for everyone women men and, girls and boys by ensuring gender equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is essential both for gender justice and for fiscal justice. It involves analysing government budgets for their effect on different genders and the norms and roles associated with them, and the relationship between genders. It also involves actually transforming these budgets to ensure that gender equality commitments are realized.

Oxfam in Laos has been part of Oxfam global efforts on fiscal accountability and started doing some research and participated in regional initiatives on this regard (e.g. Even it up! Campaign). There is a global Oxfam FAIR programme that focuses specifically on fiscal accountability for inequality reduction, and that puts citizen engagement around budgeting – both revenue and spending sides – front and centre. Both FAIR and Even It Up! are putting growing emphasis on women and girls especially from marginalised groups, so that fiscal policies work to tackle inequalities more comprehensively.

Given the Lao context, Oxfam in Laos has decided to start the work on Gender Responsive Budgeting as a strong entry point to work on this critical area. In doing so, it is joining a growing number of Oxfam teams and partners investing in GRB in the region and globally. It is also building on some initiatives that have already taken place in Laos regarding Gender Responsive Budgeting.

In 2016, National Commission NCAWMC introduced and organized a first workshop on gender budgeting in collaboration and supported by The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP or ESCAP). The aim of this workshop was to share the concept of gender budgeting and sharing good practices from various ministries, development partners and other countries in the region. That was an initial step in Lao PDR to make a commitment on collection and allocation of public resources to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. The NCAWMC formulated the Vision 2030, National Strategies (2016-2025) and Plans of Action on Gender Equality 2016-2020, that includes GRB as part of it.

On the other hand, the National Assembly (NA) has a constitutional mandate for government oversight and to protect the rights of Lao citizens. It has embarked on a series of reforms that promote a state governed by the rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights.



OXFAM

OXFAM has had discussions with the Women Parliamentarian Caucus (WPC) and the National Assembly on gender mainstreaming development through different meetings in February, April and May 2018, and with NCAWMC last April 2018. After the discussion, the parties agreed to move further and strengthen the collaboration on gender responsive budgeting in national and local level, focusing in gender responsive budgeting, which it is also in line with the Women Parliamentarian Caucus' vision 2030, strategic plan 2016 – 2025 and the Gender mainstreaming manual for the National Assembly VII Legislature that aims to increase the women participation in national and provincial assembly, especially the promotion of young leadership among the elected candidates and then providing capacity support.

As part of this collaboration, a joint exposure visit to Vietnam was organised in July 2018 that has been useful to approach the collaboration between NAWPC, NCAWMC and civil society organizations on gender mainstreaming in national and community level. The peer to peer exchange visit in Vietnam triggered the interest of the delegation (Women Parliamentarian Caucus, National Assembly, NCAWMC, ADWLE and Oxfam) to engage further on Gender Responsive Budgeting, including by developing an operational programme. The initiatives under GRB umbrella can include programming on state budgeting management, citizen participation, publication of budget management, amongst others.

In order to build a future programme on this topic, Oxfam in Laos together with national stakeholders is looking for a consultant to conduct a research to scope the potential Oxfam contribution to gender responsive budgeting in Laos, focusing on the opportunities to use gender responsive budgeting to address inequalities in Laos, mapping the key actors and the current challenges on this topic.

II. Overall objective is to have a clear picture on the state of gender budgeting in Laos and identify opportunities to inform the future programme development on the topic.

III. Specific Objectives:

- To have a better understanding of the GRB initiatives in Laos, the key stakeholders and the gaps and challenges to inform the development of a programme, by:
 - Analysing the current policies on the topic and their actual implementation.
 - Mapping key stakeholders involved and potential role of Oxfam
 - looking at how budget decisions are made, understanding the role of gender budgeting beyond the national level, including community level.

IV. Expected Outputs:

- The research will be led by external consultant, including research design, questionnaire and appropriate methodology development in consultation with relevant stakeholders and the research committee mentioned on below.
- Produce a mapping of actors/who is doing what on GRB, including a power analysis, through initial conversations with key people and desk review.

- Facilitation of a workshop with stakeholders, to gather inputs from in the research, identifying challenges and opportunities on GRB and explore Oxfam niche and priorities going forward.
- Producing a final report with clear recommendations for further program development on GRB.

V. Methodology/ key questions

The research will be cover two main parts: one covering the state of gender budgeting (= budgets reducing gender inequality) and the other looking at the actors who are doing what on GRB, what are their experiences, strengths, challenges and opportunities.

- **Part I** Gender responsive budgeting at national and local level
 - What are differences between man's needs and women's needs from economic policy, focusing in different sectors and areas of spending (e.g. social protection, health, education, social care, infrastructure, etc)?
 - How these differences are addressed by policies / budget allocation (sector to be agreed with the consultant)? What needs are addressed at the national and local level? What level of policy is relevant – how can women and men from different groups access information in the discussion and how are they involved in the budgeting process?
 - How different the man and women benefit from policies?
 - Is there any gap in the policies which are causing gender inequality?
- **Part II** Review actors and relevant departments who are engaged in the part I, compiling information about their experiences, strengths, challenges and opportunities. This will include:
 - What are the opportunities for others to participate in budgeting process and in what stage? How are these different for women and men at the moment?

The research will use the Oxfam short guide to GRB as a point of departure, noting that GRB potentially relates to voice, accountability of women and men, esp from marginalised communities and groups, as well as data and analysis underpinning budgets, and actual budget decisions that are reducing gender inequality.

This guide can be found here:

<https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-guide-to-gender-responsive-budgeting-620429>

The consultant will propose a methodology with a variety of methods that allows to gather the requested information, that might vary from desk review to focus group discussions, interviews with key people and surveys.

After this first research is completed and discussed, Oxfam in Laos will identify what are the specific areas worth exploring further that will allow building on the current programme.

VI. Research location:

The research will focus on the policies available and actors at national level. Analysing how policies at national level are grounded at provincial level is included.

VII. Timeline

No	Deadline	Descriptions and Activities
1	Oct 11, 2018	Advertisement for a consultant
2	Oct 17, 2018	Contracting with consultant
3	Oct 25, 2018	Research design by the consultant, methodology shared and validated
4	Nov 10, 2018	Conduct desk review, field research and convene a workshop with key stakeholders
5	Nov 10 – 20, 2018	Research analysis and writing report
6	Nov 21, 2018	1 st draft of the report to be sent to Oxfam
7	Nov 27, 2018	Workshop with stakeholders, to look at the draft findings and agree Oxfam niche and priorities going forward
8	30 November 2018	Submit the final report to OXFAM

Total tentative number of days: 15 days

VIII. Evaluation team: qualifications and skills needed for this research

- External Evaluator consultant or team
- Track record in analysis of related policies
- Relevant experience on Gender Responsive Budgeting
- Ability to conduct qualitative and quantitative reviews

IX. Process of the selection of the evaluator or evaluation team and expectations for evaluation proposal

Deadline for applicants by **11th October 2018**.

Proposal/offer must include methodology, tentative calendar/timeframe (if different from the suggested timeline in s. VII), a quote for desired financial compensation, CV of consultant/team.

The evaluation committee will meet and select a candidate on the 15th October 2018 based on:

- Relevance of the proposal and understanding of the assignment
- Clarity on the methods used and the workplan
- Demonstrated track record
- Budget and cost efficiency
- Feasibility of the work

X. Please submit all information through one of the methods noted below:

Email: recruitment.laos@oxfam.org

Physically: 98/8, Sithong Road, Ban Nongduangtai, Sikhottabong District, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Mail: PO Box 4723, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

For any questions regarding this advertisement, please email:

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