

Job Description (Terms of Reference)

PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

Project Title:	Ecosystem services valuation and policy-making with a focus on poverty reduction and ecosystem degradation UNDP Project (Project number: 00074227- PEI-NERI)
Position Title:	Project Accountant
Duty Station:	National Economic Research Institute, MPI, Vientiane, Lao PDR
Duration of Appointment:	6 months extendable based on performance
Working Conditions:	Standard Government of Lao working conditions (including, 8am – 4:30 pm 5 days a week, 15 days annual leave per year)
Expected Starting Date:	February 2012

1. Background

Environmental management is central to the health, livelihoods and vulnerability of poor people in Asia and the Pacific. Mainstreaming seeks to improve environment outcomes that contribute to achieving the MDGs. Governments and other stakeholders improve environment outcomes that matter to poor people by mainstreaming poverty environment issues into key processes and their implementation – including national plans, sectoral strategies, environmental policies, economic decision making and subnational planning. The UN and other development partners can encourage mainstreaming by expanding knowledge and strengthening capacity, incentives and institutional processes to give a higher priority to environment issues that matter to poor people.

The Joint UNEP and UNDP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) was formulated in Lao PDR to integrate pro-poor environmental concerns and opportunities in the national development planning, implementation and budgeting processes. PEI will provide targeted support to the Government of Lao PDR's on-going efforts to achieve poverty reduction through sustainable natural resource management. PEI programme will be implemented over a period of 38 months (May 2009 – June 2012) and in preparation of programme's phase II until 2015 by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and provincial authorities in targeted provinces with support from the UNDP CO Lao PDR. Its expected outputs include the integration of poverty-environment linkages in the 7th National Socio Economic Development Plan (NSEDPlan), awareness raising of the National Assembly in the areas of natural resource management and sustainable management of investment for poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

UNDP and NERI-PEI wishes to recruit a qualified accountant for 6 months extendable based on performance to provide support to the implementation of the NERI-PEI programme in Lao PDR.

2. Duties and Responsibilities

Under supervision of the Director of National Economic Research Institute (NERI), International technical advisor working within MPI and PEI Financial manager, the Project Accountant provides support to the development of all financial matters related to the project. The Project Accountant will be responsible for advising on the financial management of the project and the maintenance of accurate accounting and financial records and reports, in accordance with the project document and

UNDP Guidelines for Nationally Executed Projects. The Project Accountant's major tasks will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Maintaining proper financial records and files in accordance with prevailing procedures;
- Preparing draft financial reports for the project team and advising them accordingly;
- Monitoring and supervising expenditures by project;
- Monitoring and analyzing project expenditures with respect to approved budgets and work-plans;
- Assisting the Assistant to Project Manager (APM), Project Manager (PM) and National Project Director (NPD) to prepare work plan, budgets and estimates of project quarterly expenditure; and
- Realizing, on a monthly basis, bank, CDR and expenditures reconciliations against project budget;
- Compiling monthly, quarterly and annual expenditure reports for the APM, PM and NPD and project team and providing expenditure updates as required;
- Preparing requests for direct payment and requests for advance to project operating account;
- Preparing and maintaining updated ledgers and inventories of supplies and non-expendable property;
- Liaising with UNDP Finance Unit and UNDP Programme Analyst and Programme Associate as required;
- Briefing people or organizations in receipt of payments from the project on financial procedures and required documentation and overseeing payments of payments from the project including daily living and travel allowances for training participants etc.;
- Briefing and assisting newly arriving international and local consultants on basic financial procedures and requirements with respect to payments, entitlements, banking, currency provision and other issues related to finance;
- Ensuring financial guidelines are followed and best practices maintained during the implementation of all project activities;
- Performing other relevant duties as required.

3. Qualifications and Experience

- Recognized accounting qualification
- Knowledge of modern accounting and office procedures
- At least three years accounting experience
- Proven spreadsheet (Excel), typing, word-processing and PC ability
- Experience working with development projects an advantage
- Fluency in English and Lao, with reasonable written and oral communications skills

4. Reporting, Supervision and Performance Evaluation

- The Project Accountant will report jointly to the APM and PM and will work closely with the project team.
- Performance to be evaluated by the PM, in coordination with the UNDP Programme Analyst