Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services below the EU threshold

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Consultancy for the Transformative Leadership Coaching Programme	**Project number/ cost centre: G-18091-001** **Tender number**

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1. Context

In Lao PDR, women make an important contribution to public administration and economic development, including in the industry and commerce sector. Women officials work across the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), Provincial Departments of Industry and Commerce (PDICs), and business representative organizations such as the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), contributing to policy development and implementation, private sector development, trade and investment facilitation, business support, and stakeholder engagement.

However, women's participation in the public sector does not yet translate into equal representation in senior leadership and decision-making positions. Recent government reporting indicates that women represented 45% of the civil service in 2025, but only 18% of Cabinet positions. The UN DESA Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) assessment similarly identifies a significant leadership gap, with women accounting for approximately 18% of senior positions in government ministries based on the administrative data reviewed. This highlights the continued need to strengthen women's pathways to leadership, particularly at higher levels of decision-making.

Women officials in the industry and commerce sector operate in increasingly complex environments that require more than technical expertise. They need leadership competencies in areas such as strategic thinking and decision-making, communication and influencing, negotiation, team leadership, delegation, stakeholder engagement, networking, conflict management, and leading organizational change. Barriers such as organizational culture, gender stereotypes, limited leadership development opportunities, and unequal access to professional networks can further constrain women's advancement.

Strengthening women's leadership is therefore important not only for individual career development but also for institutional performance and gender-responsive governance. Women leaders can contribute to more inclusive decision-making and help ensure that policies, regulations, programmes, and services in the industry and commerce sector respond to the different needs of women and men. This is particularly relevant for institutions responsible for private sector development, MSMEs, trade, investment, and business support.

The World Bank's *Women, Business and the Law (WBL)* framework also highlight that Lao PDR has made progress in strengthening the legal and policy framework for women's economic participation, while gaps remain in implementation and institutional mechanisms. This reinforces the importance of capable and empowered leaders who can translate gender-responsive policies and commitments into effective institutional practice.

Recognizing these challenges, GIZ, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is implementing the Women's Economic Empowerment in Lao PDR (EMPOWER) project in partnership with the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (DoSMEP), Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC). The project aims to strengthen women's economic empowerment by improving their access to markets and business development services, promoting gender-responsive policies and reforms, and fostering an enabling institutional environment. In particular, through Output 1, the project seeks to strengthen reform processes that address structural and institutional barriers to women's economic participation, enhance women's representation and influence in decision-making processes, and expand their

opportunities to participate meaningfully in economic policy development, planning, and decision-making at both institutional and policy levels.

Within this context, leadership development represents a strategic complement to technical capacity development and institutional strengthening. The proposed coaching programme will focus specifically on women leaders and emerging women leaders from the industry and commerce sector, including officials from Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Provincial Departments of Industry and Commerce, and Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It will support participants to strengthen leadership competencies relevant to their current roles while preparing emerging leaders for greater responsibilities and decision-making roles.

The programme will use a blended leadership development and coaching approach, combining structured learning, experiential learning, group coaching, selected individual coaching, peer learning, and practical leadership action projects. Participants will apply leadership concepts to real workplace and institutional challenges, reflect on their leadership practices, exchange experiences, receive feedback, and develop practical action plans.

The programme will also create opportunities for women officials across MoIC, PDICs, and LNCCI to build professional networks and peer support. In the longer term, it aims to contribute to a stronger network of women who mentor emerging professionals, support one another, and promote inclusive leadership and women's participation in decision-making within the industry and commerce sector.

2. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

The contractor shall provide the following service: Consultancy for the Transformative Leadership Coaching Programmes for the anticipated contract term from **18th January 2027** to **30th September 2027**.

The contractor is responsible for providing the following services:

Objective of the Assignment

The overall objective of the assignment is to strengthen the leadership competencies, confidence, decision-making, strategic thinking and practical leadership capabilities of women officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and relevant agencies enabling them to apply improved leadership practices in their workplaces and institutions.

Scope of Work

The consultant shall undertake the following tasks, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

Task 1: **Inception and Needs Assessment**

- Review relevant EMPOWER project documents, national policies, and sector strategies, including the NSEDP 2026–2030 and Industry and Commerce Sector Development Plan 2026–2030.
- Review relevant existing leadership, entrepreneurship and institutional capacity building initiatives supported by MOIC and other relevant partners
- Consult with EMPOWER, MoIC, DoSMEP and relevant stakeholders to:

- Develop participant profiles,
- Conduct a leadership learning needs assessment;
- Conduct a baseline leadership competency gaps and learning priorities;
- Identify leadership competency gaps and challenges; practical coaching needs and challenges; differences between the needs of women entrepreneurs and women officials;
- Recommend and appropriate participant selection criteria;
- Establish baseline indicators for the programme; and
- Prepare a detailed methodology and implementation plan

The assessment should consider current position and leadership responsibilities, team management, leadership experience and potential, strategic planning, decision-making, policy communication, stakeholder engagement, organisational change, negotiation and conflict management, gender-responsive leadership, career development objectives and institutional barriers to women's leadership.

Task 2: **Develop Leadership Development Curriculum**

A transformative leadership training curriculum is a foundation that will be applied to target participants. The training program shall apply following indicative competencies but not limited to:

- Leadership mindset & self-awareness
- Design System Thinking
- Emotional intelligence
- Confidence and leadership presence
- Policy Communication & influencing
- Strategic Thinking
- Decision making and problem solving
- Negotiation Skills
- Stakeholder management and networking
- Gender-responsive leadership
- Leading and developing others
- Personal Resilience and adaptability
- Ethics & integrity; and
- Adaptive leadership and managing change

The curriculum should focus on public sector leadership and institutional development and be practical and relevant to the Lao context.

The curriculum shall reflect the realities of public-sector leadership, hierarchical structures, policy implementation, coordination across departments and stakeholder management.

Task 3: Develop Training and Coaching Materials

Prepare training and coaching materials in Lao , materials may include, but not limited to:

- PowerPoint presentations
- Facilitator guide coaching manual, coaching worksheet, coaching case template
- Participant learning materials and handbook
- Evaluating & Monitoring tools
- Pre- and post-training assessment tools
- Selected Lao-context case studies; and
- Leadership development and coaching toolkit

The Toolkit should consolidate the key materials into practical packages that can be reused by EMPOWER and its partners.

The consultant is not expected to develop a large number of separate publications. Materials should be practical, concise and suitable for reuse.

Task 4: Deliver Transformative Leadership Coaching Programme

Indicative activities:

4.1 Leadership Development Training

- Leadership Development Training (2-3 days) comprises with leadership self-assessment, training on selected leadership foundation, public sector leadership modules, practical exercises, case studies, peer learning, leadership goal setting, and preparation of a leadership action project.
- At least 60-70% of workshops should be devoted to practical exercises, case work, reflection, simulations and casework.
- The training venue shall be jointly agreed upon by EMPOWER and MoIC. GIZ shall be responsible for planning, coordinating, and covering all costs related to the logistical arrangements for the training, in accordance with the agreed arrangements and applicable GIZ procedures.

4.2 Group Leadership Coaching Clinics

- The consultant shall conduct 5–6 group coaching clinics over a period of approximately 2–3 months. All coaching clinics shall be completed within this period. Each clinic shall be conducted as a half-day group session with approximately 4–5 participants. The final number and modality of coaching clinics shall be agreed upon with EMPOWER based on the participants' needs and geographical location.
- Each clinic should address real workplace and institutional challenges, including managing team, delegation, influencing communication with senior decision makers, cross-departmental coordination, implementation change, managing conflict, stakeholder engagement.

The consultant shall organize the coaching clinics through two modalities:

1. In-person coaching: In-person coaching clinics shall be organized at a venue arranged by the consultant. The costs related to the venue and other necessary logistical arrangements shall be included in the consultant's total financial proposal.
2. Online coaching: For participants from the provinces who are unable to attend the in-person coaching clinics, the consultant shall provide coaching through an appropriate online modality, such as Zoom, online calls, or another suitable platform, as agreed with EMPOWER.

4.3 Leadership Action Project/Initiative

- Each participant shall identify and implement one small practical leadership action in her workplace or professional environment.
- The action shall address a real leadership challenge and may include Challenge – objective – Action – Application - Result – Reflection.
- The action is intended as a practical learning application and does not constitute a separate business consultancy or organizational restructuring assignment.

4.4 Final reflection, learning exchange, and evaluation

- The final reflection will be organized as half-day event together with all participants and shall conclude with selected action project presentation, peer learning, leadership reflection, post programme assessment, participant feedback and lesson learned.
- The event venue shall be jointly agreed upon by EMPOWER and MoIC. EMPOWER shall be responsible for planning, coordinating, and covering all costs related to the logistical arrangements for the event, in accordance with the agreed arrangements and applicable GIZ procedures.

The training and coaching will be conducted in Lao language as well as the workshop materials.

The consultant may recommend a limited number of each clinic for selected participants demonstrating high leadership potential or facing specific leadership challenges, subject to approval by GIZ.

Task 5: Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The consultant shall:

- Conduct pre- and post-programme leadership assessments.
- Monitor participant progress.
- Evaluate programme effectiveness.
- Document lessons learned and success stories.
- Prepare a final consultancy report in Lao and English with recommendations for future implementation.

The M&E tool shall be developed in consultation with the EMPOWER project, with consideration given to its potential reuse in future activities to monitor the respective output.

Target Participants

Approximately 25–30 women leaders and emerging leaders, including:

- Mid-level managers
- Technical officers with leadership potential, Department focal points and Women identified through MoIC leadership development initiatives
- PDICs of target provinces (Luangnamtha, Vientiane Province, Salavan and Champasack)
- LNCCI in central and target provinces (Luangnamtha, Vientiane Province, Salavan and Champasack)

Target participants list shall be discussed and agreed among EMPOWER and project's partners in MoIC.

Task 6: Submission of Final Report and Training Materials

The final report shall be submitted in both Lao and English versions upon completion of the Transformative Leadership Coaching Programme, together with an annex containing the training and coaching materials used during the programme.

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones/process steps/partial services	**Deadline/place/person responsible**
Inception Report and Leadership Needs Assessment	Within 2 weeks after contract signing - Kick-off meeting with EMPOWER team and MoIC - Review assignment objectives and scope - Develop detailed methodology, workplan, and training topics
Develop Leadership Development Training Curriculum	Beginning of February 2027 Submission of draft curriculum for feedback to EMPOWER and MoIC
Develop Training and Coaching Materials	Week 2 February 2027 Consultation with EMPOWER and MoIC
Complete and Delivery of Transformative Leadership Coaching Programme	March – August 2027 Complete final version of curriculum and incorporate feedback from EMPOWER and MoIC.

	Conduct training and coaching programme according to the agreed schedules with EMPOWER and MoIC. Conduct the final refection event according to the agreed schedules with EMPOWER and MoIC. Approved by EMPOWER Project Director and MoIC
Submit final Consultancy Report and Training Materials	30th September 2027 Report to EMPOWER Project Director and MoIC Submission of final report (in Lao and English) and training materials in Lao. Approved by EMPOWER Director and MoIC

Period of assignment: from **18th January 2027** until **30th September 2027**.

3. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show *how* the objectives defined in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept). In addition, the tenderer must describe the project management system for service provision.

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 1 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 2 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

Processes (1.4): The tenderer is required to describe the key processes for the services for which it is responsible and create an operational plan or schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided.

In particular, the tenderer is required to describe the necessary work steps and, if applicable, take account of the milestones and contributions of other actors (partner contributions) in accordance with Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) (1.4.2).

Project management of the contractor (1.6): The tenderer is required to explain its approach for coordination with the GIZ project (1.6.1). In particular, the project management requirements specified in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) must be explained in detail.

The tenderer is required to draw up a personnel assignment plan (1.6.2) with explanatory notes that lists all the experts proposed in the tender; the plan includes information on assignment

dates (duration and expert days) and locations of the individual members of the team complete with the allocation of work steps as set out in the schedule.

4. Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, on the basis of their CVs (see Chapter 6), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Team leader

Tasks of the team leader

- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor (quality and deadlines)
- Coordinating and ensuring communication with GIZ, partners and others involved in the project
- Personnel management, in particular identifying the need for short-term assignments within the available budget, as well as planning and steering assignments and supporting local and international short-term experts
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines

Qualifications of the team leader

Education/training (2.1.1): Advanced university degree (master's degree or higher) in Leadership, Organizational Development, Business Administration, Public Administration, Human Resource Development, Gender Studies, Psychology, or a related field.

Language (2.1.2): C2-level language proficiency in English and Lao.

General professional experience (2.1.3): 10 years of professional experience in leadership development, organizational development, management consulting, executive/leadership coaching, or capacity development.

Specific professional experience (2.1.4):

- 10 years of professional experience in leadership development, executive coaching, organizational development, or capacity development.
- 5 years of experience working on gender equality, women's leadership, women's economic empowerment, or inclusive leadership would be an advantage.
- Proven experience designing and delivering leadership coaching programmes for both the public and private sectors.
- Demonstrated experience working with women entrepreneurs, MSMEs, or women's leadership initiatives.
- Strong understanding of gender equality, women's economic empowerment, and inclusive leadership.
- Experience working with government institutions, preferably the Ministry of Industry and Commerce or similar agencies.

- Experience with GIZ or other international development organizations is an advantage.

Leadership/management experience (2.1.5):

- 5 years of experience leading multidisciplinary teams or managing leadership/capacity-development assignments.
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate experts, manage deliverables, ensure quality, and communicate effectively with government and development partners.
- Strong analytical, research, coaching, report writing, and communication skills;
- Proven ability to engage effectively with government counterparts, development partners, civil society organizations, and private sector stakeholders.

Development cooperation experience (2.1.7): Proven experience working with bilateral and/or multilateral development organizations on capacities development and leadership initiatives.

Key Expert 1

Task of key exert 1

- Support the Team Leader in developing and delivering the leadership training programme, including training materials and practical exercises.
- Facilitate training sessions on strategic leadership, communication, negotiation, team management, and gender-responsive decision-making.
- Provide individual and/or group coaching to strengthen participants' leadership competencies, influence, and participation in institutional decision-making processes.
- Monitor participants' progress and contribute to documenting results and recommendations.

Qualifications of the key expert 1

Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree in leadership and management, Public Administration, Human Resource Management, Organizational Development, Gender Studies, Social Sciences, or a related field.
Language (2.2.2): C1-level language proficiency in Lao and English.

General professional experience (2.2.3): 7 years of professional experience in leadership development, management training, organizational development, human resource development, or related fields.
Specific professional experience (2.2.4):

- 5 years of experience in gender equality, women's leadership, or promoting women's participation in decision-making, or related fields. Demonstrated experience in designing and delivering leadership training, capacity development programmes, or institutional strengthening initiatives.
- Experience working with public institutions, development organizations, or private-sector stakeholders is an asset. Demonstrated experience facilitating teams, workshops, coaching groups, or multi-stakeholder processes.

Leadership/management experience (2.2.5):

- 5 years of experience managing or leading projects, training programmes, or technical assignments.

Development cooperation (DC) experience (2.2.7):

- Demonstrated experience working with international development organizations, development partners, NGOs, government institutions, or donor-funded projects.
- Experience working on gender equality, women's economic empowerment, private sector development, institutional strengthening, or capacity development is highly desirable.

Key Expert 2

Task of key expert 2:

- Support the Team Leader in preparing and delivering leadership training, with a focus on personal leadership development and interpersonal competencies.
- Facilitate sessions on self-awareness, emotional intelligence, confidence building, communication, and professional development.
- Provide individual and/or group coaching, including online coaching for participants from provincial areas, to support the practical application of leadership skills.
- Monitor participants' leadership development and contribute to documenting changes in leadership practices and opportunities for participation in decision-making

Qualification of key expert 2

Education/training (2.3.1): Master's degree or higher in Psychology, Human Resource Management, Organizational Development, Business Administration, Leadership and Management, Education, or a related field.
Language (2.3.2): C1-level language proficiency in Lao and English.

General professional experience (2.3.3): 7 years of professional experience in executive coaching, leadership development, human resource development, organizational development, or related fields.
Specific professional experience (2.3.4):

- 5 years of experience in providing individual and/or group coaching to managers, professionals, or emerging leaders. Demonstrated experience in gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive leadership, or women's leadership development.
- Experience working with government institutions on leadership, organizational change, policy implementation, or institutional strengthening.

A recognized coaching certification and experience working with women leaders or diverse professional groups are considered assets.
Leadership/management experience (2.3.5):

- 5 years of Experience managing or leading projects, training programmes, or technical assignments.

Development cooperation (DC) experience (2.3.7):

- Demonstrated experience working with international development organizations, development partners, NGOs, government institutions, or donor-funded projects.
- Experience working on gender equality, women's economic empowerment, private sector development, institutional strengthening, or capacity development is highly desirable.

The Team Leader shall provide overall technical oversight and coordination throughout the assignment. The Key Experts shall contribute to specific tasks according to their respective areas of expertise and as agreed with the Team Leader and EMPOWER. The level of involvement of each expert in the training and coaching activities shall be determined based on the agreed methodology and division of responsibilities.

5. Costing requirements

Assignment of personnel and travel expenses

Per diem allowances are reimbursed as a lump sum up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law for each country as set out in the country table in the circular from the German Federal Ministry of Finance on travel expense remuneration (downloadable from the German Federal Ministry of Finance – tax treatment of travel expenses and allowances for international business travel as of 1 January 2026 (GERMAN ONLY)).

Accommodation allowances are reimbursed as detailed in the specification of inputs below.

With special justification, additional Accommodation costs up to a reasonable amount can be reimbursed against evidence.

All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project

Sustainability aspects for travel

GIZ has undertaken an obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO_2 emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest-emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with a higher CO_2 efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

CO_2 emissions caused by air travel must be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

There are many different providers in the market for emissions certificates, and they have different climate impact ambitions. The Development and Climate Alliance (German only) has published a list of standards (German only). GIZ recommends using the standards specified there.

Specification of inputs

Fee days	Number of experts	Number of days per expert	Total	Comments

Designation of TL	1	40	40	
Designation of key expert 1	1	18	18	
Designation of key expert 2	1	18	18	
Travel expenses	**Quantity**	**Number per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**
Per-diem allowance of TL in country of assignment	**1**	4	4	DSA according to GIZ Laos Domestic Travel Regulations; 250,000 LAK (11USD) per full day (24 hours) and 200,000 LAK (8.9USD) for travel day (8–24 hours).
Per-diem allowance of key expert 1&2 in country of assignment	2	4	8	DSA according to GIZ Laos Domestic Travel Regulations; 250,000 LAK (11USD) per full day (24 hours) and 200,000 LAK (8.9USD) for travel day (8–24 hours).
Overnight allowance of TL in country of assignment	1	3	3	According to GIZ Laos Domestic Travel Regulations lump sum of 350,000 LAK (15USD) per night, or against evidence up to 1,200,000 LAK (53USD) per night. Against evidence
Overnight allowance in of key expert 1 & 2 country of assignment	2	3	6	According to GIZ Laos Domestic Travel Regulations lump sum of 350,000 LAK (15USD) per night, or against evidence up to 1,200,000 LAK (53USD) per night. Against evidence
Transport	**Quantity**	**Number per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**
International flights				N/A
Domestic flights				N/A
CO_2 compensation for air travel				N/A

Travel expenses (train, car) • Train	3	1	3	1 round trip train VTE-VangVieng-VTE, against evidence
Other costs	**Number**	**Price**	**Total**	**Comments**
Flexible remuneration				N/A
Workshops	3	700	2100	The budget contains the following costs venue rental for 3 coaching sessions, half-day/session and coffee breaks for participants up to 4-5 pax/session.

Workshops, events and trainings

The contractor implements the following workshops/study trips/training courses:

- The Contractor is responsible to organize in-person coaching sessions for participants based in Vientiane Capital approximately 3 sessions up to 4-5 pax/session following the completion of the Leadership Development Training. The coaching sessions shall be conducted according to a schedule agreed upon with EMPOWER and MoIC. The Contractor shall be responsible for arranging and covering the costs of the venue and necessary catering, including coffee breaks, for each in-person coaching session.
- No travel costs and DSA shall be reimbursed for participants based in Vientiane Capital attending the in-person coaching sessions.
- Online coaching sessions for participants based outside Vientiane Capital should be conducted using an appropriate online platform. No additional costs or reimbursement shall be provided for the delivery of online coaching sessions.

All logistical arrangements, activities, and associated costs described above shall be included in the Contractor's financial proposal and can be reimbursed against evidence. Any arrangements requiring coordination with EMPOWER and MoIC shall be agreed upon in advance.

6. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToR. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English.

The complete tender must not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter 4 of the ToRs must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. The CVs shall not exceed 5 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long. The CVs can also be submitted in English.

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule.