



EUROPEAN COMMISSION



PROJECT FINAL EVALUATION

Terms of references

Name of the proxy organization:	<i>GRET</i>
Title(s) of the project:	<i>SYNERGIES – Support Young NGO network to Empower Rural Groups to Integrate Environment in Society</i>
Locations of the action:	<i>Vinh Phuc, Phu Tho, Hung Yen and Thanh Hoa Provinces</i>
Date of implementation:	<i>1st March 2011 to 28st February 2014 (36 months).</i>
Date of TOR:	<i>February 2014</i>
Date of the mission:	<i>March – April 2014</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. GRET

GRET – a non-governmental organization, Professional unit of solidarity and international cooperation

Founded in 1976, GRET is a French NGO fighting poverty and inequalities in the field and in policy. Its professionals intervene in a broad range of subjects to provide lasting, innovative solutions for fair development of professionals for fair development. Active in 30 countries in 2011, GRET has 12 permanent branch offices in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

GRET acts on a range of 16 complementary themes that, together, contribute to the development of developing countries: climate change, international trade and trade negotiations, agricultural development and food security, urban social development and housing, drinking water and sanitation, energy, agri-food commodity chains and consumption, land tenure, information management and ICTs, natural resource management, media, micro-insurance (health and agriculture), microfinance, nutrition, strengthening the actors of social change, and business development services, training and vocational insertion.

Has been working in Vietnam since 1988. GRET has developed diversified forms of support in agriculture, rural development, community health and institutional development. During its long term growth in Vietnam, expertise of the technical assistants, the profound knowledge of rural context and local regulations, capacity of coordination of projects, experience of GRET in publication of references have been strength of GRET in Vietnam.

GRET has one representative office in Hanoi and project offices based in the intervention provinces. Composed of 15 staff (14 local and one foreign), 12 of whom working on projects, GRET is currently implementing in Vietnam 4 programs and projects with a total turnover of € 1 630 thousand.

1.2. SYNERGIES PROJECT

“SYNERGIES”: Support Young Network Empowering Rural Groups to Integrate Environment in Society

Overall objective: to foster and strengthen civil society, creating intermediate-level social actors with the organisational wherewithal, competence and knowledge that they need to participate at local level in mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development actions in the face of climate change.

Specific objective: To strengthen the capacities of a network of five local NGOs, especially in the areas of environment and climate change, with practical measures on the ground, awareness raising and support actions for local stakeholders, whilst also fostering integration with national networks.

There are three Expected Outcomes, based on three inter-related components as follows:

EO 1: *The five NGOs and one network will be able to: i) organise their actions efficiently, ii) manage and develop their human resources, in order to iii) build awareness, give advice and support local stakeholders in the areas of environment and climate change.*

EO 2: *The five NGOs and the network will actively contribute to environmental development and policies in the area by improving awareness among the population, lobbying local*

authorities, and providing services and support to the related organisations and local stakeholders.

EO 3: An effective NERAD network, engaged and working closely with one or more networks at national level to i) obtain support or guidance, ii) bring problems and results to wider attention and exchange information, and iii) engage in dialogue with the authorities.

On the basis of these expected outcomes, we propose to organise the project into three relatively autonomous but tightly linked components. To facilitate project presentation, we propose the following nomenclature:

Component 1: Capacity building for the NERAD network, the five NGOs and their members (“capacity building” component)

Main quantifiable expected outcomes

In terms of autonomy and strategic planning for the five NGOs:

- At least 3 NGOs are technically and financially autonomous, with a strategic action plan
- At least 70% of the NGO’s strategic goals are attained

In terms of management, governance and control among NGOs:

- At least 3 NGOs and a minimum of 8 NGO leaders are fully competent in management
- 33% of decision-makers within each NGO are women
- 75 % of the strengthened and/or competent human resources are permanently set by the end of the project’s third year.

In terms of specific technical competence in key areas:

- 25 NGO members, i.e. more than 50% of the total, are competent in their domains
- 100% of capacity building materials/resources is disseminated and available in different forms

In terms of specific technical capacities and skills in the environment field

- 5 NGOs or cooperative have competencies in at least three sectors in environment
- NERAD network has competencies in at least six environmental sectors including: awareness raising and lobbying in environment, domestic wastes, industrial wastes, pig raising wastes, crop production, forest, energy saving and renewable energy, carbon mechanisms, ...
- 10 NGO members can carry out training or consultancies in the environmental domain for other entities, state agencies or external projects implemented by international NGOs

In terms of professionalisation and external recognition:

- At least 3 NGOs are recognised as professional development organisations, including different environmental competencies and capacities
- 3 consultancies or local project implementation contracts per NGO are signed out of Gret

Component 2: Linkage with local stakeholders and support for local environmental development and policy (“environmental development” component)

Main quantifiable expected outcomes

For component 2, the main expected outcomes at the end of the project are listed below:

- 15 training sessions are carried out on the basis of concerted requests at local level.
- 12 concerted environmental action plans are approved by commune authorities
- 5 local policies (at province or district level) and 10 local decisions (at commune level) positively impact upon by the different stakeholders supported by the project

- 5 innovative actions in environmental sectors (such as waste management, environmental protection, energy saving, awareness raising, etc.) are developed by NGOs

Apart from training, the expected outcomes given are, by their nature, difficult to quantify as they depend on outside factors. However, knowing the potential of NGOs and their capacity to evolve and to impact on institutions at local level, we can estimate the following figures:

- 60 local organisations (cooperatives, interest groups, mass organisations, ...) are strengthened
- 5,000 families, households are positively affected on environmental aspects by the NGOs or by local organisations supported and strengthened by NGOs
- 10-15 small, targeted local projects, innovative and/or formative are, developed in a concerted way, selected on a transparent basis and assessed through participatory methods

Component 3: Support for the linking up of the NERAD network and liaison at national level (“networking” component)

Main quantifiable expected outcomes

For component 3, the main quantifiable results expected at the end of the project include:

In terms of everyday internal NERAD network functionality and added value:

- 1 operational network, serving all the participating NGOs effectively
- 1 common network action plan, discussed and updated annually
- 3 support or assistance actions for NGOs due to the network
- A real added value in the network in terms of actions led at individual NGO level among the five NGOs (relations, communications, project participation, bidding for contracts etc.)

In terms of quantity and diversity of issues tackled through external networking:

- Integration into at least 1 national environmental network
- 3 thematic issues or dialogues opened through networking at national level
- 5 new projects or consultancies got through participation into national network

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The final evaluation actualizes the planned activity 3.5.3: *Final external evaluation of the project’s impacts on stakeholders and the dynamics or processes being initiated.*

The general objective of the evaluation is makes an overall assessment on the performance of the project, paying particularly attention to the effectiveness and impacts of the project actions against its objectives; and identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for follow-up actions.

Specifically, the consultants shall review, analyse and assess in detail following issues:

Relevance: Review the goals, objectives, components, activities and outputs defined in the project document. Assess the logic, linkage, relevance, feasibility and sustainability in the context of improving role of LNGOs in supporting CSOs, local authorities in the field of environmental governance in rural areas.

Effectiveness: Analysis and assessment of achievement of expected outcomes .It will be evaluated whether Synergies moves toward its objectives and if it helps to enhance capacity of targeted LNGOs/Network in the both expertise and governance issues; and also their capability of networking and partnership. The effectiveness of implementation of the project will be evaluated objectively and precisely and compared with the log-frame.

Efficiency: Analyze cost-effectiveness of the activities' implementation in the following fields: i) The forward planning and the accomplishment of the activities (particularly the amount of beneficiaries); ii) The strategy implemented; iii) The major components such as the personnel, the logistic, the accountancy, the selection of the beneficiaries, the relevance of the action considering the local practices; iv) The management and the stocking of the goods and facilities.

Impact: Analyze and assess the long term and short term impact (both positive and negative) on both individual and organization level of the target LNGOs/Network; the negative/positive changes on local environment policy and changes in life and production of the target community.

Sustainability: Assess and analyze to learn about whether the appropriate approaches and methodology; established institutions, operational mechanism to be continued working or not? Will the trained persons be employed as core group to continue improving environmental issue of the locality? Do have any available financial resource to sustain the activities? And Do the best practices disseminate and replicate?

Moreover, appreciation of the GRET and Donor visibility level in the area of operation among the beneficiaries, partners and the other stakeholders and the authorities should have to take into consideration.

3. METHODOLOGY

Once the external evaluation team has been contractually engaged, the evaluation process will be carried out through three phases: a Desk Phase, a Field Phase and a Synthesis Phase, as described below:

3.1. Desk Phase – Inception

In the inception stage of the Desk Phase, the relevant project documents should be reviewed, as well as documents shaping the wider strategy/policy framework. The evaluation team will then analyse the logical framework. The relevant project documents should also be reviewed, as well as documents shaping the wider strategy/policy framework. On the basis of the information collected the evaluation team should:

- Describe the development co-operation context.
- Comment on the logical framework.
- Comment on the issues / evaluation questions suggested (see annexe 2; section3) or, when relevant, propose an alternative or complementary set of evaluation questions justifying their relevance. Develop the evaluation into sub-questions identify provisional indicators and their verification means, and describe the analysis strategy.

- Propose the work plan for the finalisation of the first phase.
- Confirm the final time schedule.

During the inception stage an inception report shall be prepared (see section 4).

3.2. Desk phase - Finalisation

In the finalisation stage of the Desk Phase, the evaluation team should carry out the following tasks:

- Review systematically the relevant available documents (see Annex 2);
- Present an indicative methodology to the overall assessment of the project/programme.
- Interview the project team, EC services
- Present each evaluation question stating the information already gathered and their limitations provide a first partial answer to the question, identify the issues still to be covered and the assumptions still to be tested, and describe a full method to answer the question.
- Identify and present the list of tools to be applied in the Field Phase;
- List all preparatory steps already taken for the Field Phase.

At the end of the desk phase a desk report shall be prepared (see section 4).

3.3. Field phase

The Field Phase should start upon approval of the Desk Phase report by the evaluation manager. The evaluation team should:

- Submit its detailed work plan with an indicative list of people to be interviewed, surveys to be undertaken, dates of visit, itinerary, and name of team members in charge. This plan has to be applied in a way that is flexible enough to accommodate for any last-minute difficulties in the field. If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation, these should be immediately discussed with the evaluation manager.
- Hold a briefing meeting with project management, in the first days of the field phase.
- Ensure adequate contact and consultation with, and involvement of, the different stakeholders; working closely with the relevant government authorities and agencies during their entire assignment. Use the most reliable and appropriate sources of information and will harmonise data from different sources to allow ready interpretation.
- Summarise its field works at the end of the field phase, discuss the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present its preliminary findings in a meeting with the project management, the EC Delegation.

3.4. Synthesis phase

This phase is mainly devoted to the preparation of the draft final report. The consultants will make sure that:

- Their assessments are objective and balanced, affirmations accurate and verifiable, and recommendations realistic.
- When drafting the report, they will acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place, in order to avoid misleading readers and causing unnecessary irritation or offence.

If the evaluation manager considers the draft report of sufficient quality, he/she will circulate it for comments to the reference group members, and convene a meeting in the presence of the evaluation team.

On the basis of comments expressed by the reference group members, and collected by the evaluation manager, the evaluation team has to amend and revise the draft report. Comments requesting methodological quality improvements should be taken into account, except where there is a demonstrated impossibility, in which case full justification should be provided by the evaluation team. Comments on the substance of the report may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team is to motivate and explain the reasons in writing.

3.5. Discussion seminar (if relevant)

The evaluation team has to present the revised draft final report at a seminar at GRET office. The purpose of the seminar is to present the draft final report to the main stakeholders, to check the factual basis of the evaluation, and to discuss the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations.

On the basis of comments made by participants, and collected by the evaluation manager, the evaluation team has to write the final version of the report, in which the rules applying to the integration of comments are those stated in the previous section.

4. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The reports must match quality standards. The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables; a map of the project's area(s) of intervention is required (to be attached as Annex).

The consultant will submit the following reports in English and Vietnamese:

4.1. Inception report of maximum 12 pages to be produced after [*indicate days/weeks*] from s/he starts of the consultant services In the report the consultant shall describe the first finding of the study, the foreseen degree of difficulties in collecting data, other encountered and/or foreseen difficulties in addition to his programme of work and staff mobilization.

4.2. Desk report (of maximum 20 pages, main text, excluding annexes) to be submitted at the end of the desk phase to address the issues mentioned in section 3.

4.3. Draft final report (of maximum 60 pages) using the structure set out in the **Annex** and taking due account of comments received from the reference group members Besides

answering the evaluation questions, the draft final report should also synthesise all findings and conclusions into an overall assessment of the project/programme. The report should be presented within 5 days from the receipt of the reference group's comments.

4.4. Final report with the same specifications as mentioned under 3 above, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report, to be presented within 5 days of the receipt of these comments.

5. WORK PLAN AND TIMETABLE

The dates mentioned in the table may be changed with the agreement of all parties concerned.

Activity	Location	Expected deadline
Desk phase- Inception	Hanoi	25 March
Desk phase- Finalization	Hanoi	30 March
Field phase	Hung Yen, Thanh Hoa, Vinh Phuc and Phu Tho	15 April
Synthesis phase	Hanoi	25 April

6. THE EVALUATION TEAM

6.1. Qualification

The evaluation team will be composed of 1 - 2 experts with the following profiles and qualifications:

- National team or combined international and national team is accepted.
- University Degree in Social Sciences, Development studies or other relevant technical field.
- Experience in evaluating development projects, especially environment and capacity building issues
- Sound knowledge of NGOs, CSOs and Networking
- Familiar with community-based projects and participatory approach.
- Familiar with Viet Nam context and practical working experience in Viet Nam is required
- Knowledge of cross-cutter issues such as Gender, CC, minority and awareness raising is an asset
- Knowledge of the European Union regulations is an asset
- Proficiency in English and Vietnamese (both spoken and written) since all the work will be done in both languages. French could be a very valuable asset.

The Evaluation Team shall submit the Curriculum Vitae of each one of its members together with their proposal.

6.2. Selection criteria and application Procedure

The criteria for the evaluation of the quality of the proposal are:

- Technical quality of the proposed methodology.
- Experience and qualification of the evaluation team.
- Financial proposal.

The evaluation proposal must include, at least:

- A technical proposal, stating clearly and at least the evaluation methodology, the use of data collection tools, and the work plan
- A human resources proposal, including CVs highlighting relevant qualifications and experience.
- A detailed financial proposal considering an adequate use of the economic resources in each stage of the assessment. Note that all expenses related to the field assessment (transportation, accommodation, Per Diem) shall be clearly distinguished in a different budget line in the proposal.

7. DEADLINE OF APPLICATION

Interested candidate should send their CV and proposals to the following address:

gretvn@gret.org.vn; and nguyen_huu_ninh@gret.org.vn no later than 20/03/2014.

Annex: proposed final report structure