

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Application deadline	25 September 2025
Contract start and end date	1 October 2025 to 30 Jan 2026
Duration (estimated total working days)	30 working days
Program sector(s)	Climate change, climate-smart agriculture, climate-resilient livelihoods
Project/Program name	MekongElevate: Ethnic Communities Leading Inclusive Climate Action
Type of consultancy	External Baseline Evaluation and GEDSI Analysis
Report to	Project Director, MEAL Advisor in close consultation with the KM & Data Coordinator
Project/Program location	Son La, Dak Lak province
Consultant location	In-country
Funded by	Australian Government through the Mekong-Australia Partnership

Background

Since 1989, CARE in Vietnam has partnered with a wide range of organizations to implement over 300 impactful projects across the country. We believe that true sustainable development can only be achieved by addressing the root causes of poverty, social injustice, and inequality. In collaboration with our partners, we are committed to empowering women and their communities—whether smallholder farmers, workers, or owners of micro and small enterprises—by enhancing their skills, confidence, and capacity to engage in economic development, adapt to climate change, and strengthen their resilience to natural or major disasters. Together, we aim to foster a society where development is inclusive, equitable, and accessible to all.

CARE's 'MekongElevate' project aims to strengthen the climate resilience of upland communities, particularly EM women, youth, and people with disabilities, across two economically and environmentally interconnected regions of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

The project has three interrelated outcome areas:

1. Increased adoption of proven climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices and other innovations that strengthen livelihood resilience among upland communities;
2. Enhanced safety nets for upland communities to cope with unavoidable loss and damage (L&D) from extreme weather events;
3. Amplified voices and leadership of EM women, youth, and people with disabilities in sub-national, national, and regional climate-related decision-making processes.

Resilient livelihoods, safety nets for climate shocks, and an inclusive sustainable development approach will combat the risks of worsening poverty, fracturing communities, and transboundary environmental degradation, contributing to stability and prosperity across the greater Mekong sub-region.

Purpose of Baseline Evaluation and the GEDSI Analysis

The Baseline Evaluation will be conducted specifically:

- To **establish a baseline for the project indicators** to enable measurement of the project's impact at the end of project intervention for the component in Vietnam. (See the annex)
- To analyse the contextual issues, the motivations, and barriers that enable or hinder the project outcomes' achievement.
- To **assess measurability of the selected indicators** and fine-tune the MEL framework for future measurement.
- To **generate evidence-based recommendations** that will be used by the project team for improving the project's strategies or approaches to best serve the impact population.

The GEDSI analysis aims for a comprehensive understanding of the barriers, opportunities, and lived experiences of diverse groups, in particular, ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disabilities.

There are four Core Areas of Inquiry have been selected that most closely correlated to the outcomes of the project:

- *Sexual / Gendered Division of Labour* (aligns with Intermediate Outcomes 1 and 2)
- *Control over Productive Assets* (IO 1 and 2)
- *Claiming Rights & Meaningful Participation in Public Decision-making* (IO 1 and 2, but focused on IO 3)
- *Aspirations for Oneself* (aligns with all IOs)

The Core Areas of Inquiry will also be expanded beyond gender to consider the lived experience of ethnic minorities, youth and people with disabilities

Evaluation target group

Target participants that will be involved in the baseline survey and GEDSI analysis include the following.

1. **Community members:** members of target upland communities in the project sites (Son La, Dak Lak), particularly ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disabilities.
2. **CSO members:** members of local CSO partners engaged in regional development, sustainable agriculture, and climate resilience, including but not limited to the General Council Of Agriculture And Rural Development Vietnam, Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association (VICOFA), and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Provincial coffee associations, Centers for agriculture and forestry development (i.e., Northern Mountainous Agriculture & Forestry Science Institute, Tay Bac centers of the Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences), and so on.
3. **Government staff:** officers in government agencies on the project sites, not limited to the following organizations: People Committee, Department of Agriculture and Environment in targeted provinces,

Scope of work

The following are the expected phases:

Phase One:

- Review all documents related to this project and relevant CARE policies: such as CARE 2030 Vision, CARE Climate Justice Strategy, Gender Equality framework, MekongElevate proposal, Log Frame, and other relevant documents.
- Review national strategies, laws, and policies related to this project.
- Review reports by government agencies, the UN, and other regional or global bodies; existing GEDSI analyses from CARE and peer organisations

Phase Two:

- Present the inception report along with data collection tools in consistency with the tools developed by the consultation team for Laos and Cambodia's project components.
- Provide data collection tool training to enumerators and pilot the data collection tools.
- Lead the data collection process in the field with multiple target groups along with the enumerators to ensure the data is collected in an effective manner.

Phase Three:

- Overseeing cleaning and validation of quantitative and qualitative data
- Conducting all data analysis for baseline
- Conducting a light touch on data analysis for GEDSI
- Elaborate on key findings from GEDSI perspectives and data collected
- Present the evaluation result through a data validation workshop
- Prepare the draft baseline report and take feedback for finalization and presenting the key findings.
- Provide a one-page summary of the report after the final report is submitted.

Approach and Methodology

The baseline survey will take a mixed-method approach and will proceed with:

- A mix of quantitative and qualitative instruments and methods will be used. The GEDSI analysis themes will be integrated into baseline tools and/or have different guidelines if needed.
- A participatory approach should be adopted to capture the perspectives of key stakeholders and project participants/beneficiaries.
- The methodology will be gender and target-group (ethnic minority, disability) sensitive.
- The GEDSI analysis will draw on CARE's Resilience Framework to provide the *contextual framing* for the analysis. Integrating this framework ensures that the GEDSI analysis is linked to climate-related vulnerability, risk, and power, and that the analysis of inequalities is understood within the context of navigating and responding to climate shocks and stresses
- Sampling will be discussed and decided together with CARE. The sampling will be purposeful and represent local diversity (i.e., distance to roads, gender, ethnicity, geography, environmental risks, access to land).
- All project target groups of beneficiaries should be included during the data collection process.
- The data collection should be disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and any other relevant diversity criteria in line with the project's Theory of Change and MEL Framework.
- The quality control in different ways needs to be in place to ensure the data quality.

Deliverables

Below are summaries of key deliverables:

Deliverable	Description	By when	Estimated total working days
Inception report	Including the methodology, sampling, tools, and the guiding principles of the evaluation and data analysis plan.	Week 1 – Week 3, Oct 2025	2 days
Data collection	As field work plan	Week 4, Oct – Week 2 Nov 2025	8 days
Data analysis	An analysis plan will be proposed by the consultant team to CARE together with the Inception report.	Week 2 – Week 3 Nov 2025	10 days
Baseline result findings presentation	Includes the methodology, sampling, tools, key findings, limitations, and recommendations from the baseline survey.	Week 4 Nov 2025	1 day
Key findings for GEDSI	Two- or three-page key findings responding to key areas of inquiry from GEDSI inception report (to be provided)	Week 4 Nov 2025	1 day
Draft baseline survey report (max 30 pages, annexes excluded)	Included: I. Cover Page II. Table of Contents III. Acknowledgments IV. Abbreviations V. Executive Summary VI. Brief Project Overview VII. Methodology – Brief baseline survey design – Sampling strategy – Data analysis plan VIII. Key limitations and ethical considerations to the baseline survey IX. Results, analysis, and discussion (for the baseline survey, specifically including a log frame showing baseline survey status for selected indicators). X. Conclusion and recommendations XI. References with proper citation XII. Appendices or Annexes XIII. Photos are CARE property and will be annexed to the final report together with consent forms.	Week 4 Nov 2025	3 days
Indicator summary table	Update country indicator targets and values in MEL Framework	Week 2 Dec 2025	1 day
Raw and cleaned qualitative and quantitative data sets for both baseline and GEDSI	The consultant should deliver, at minimum, all files, including quantitative data sets (raw and refined products), transcripts of qualitative data, and others in an easy-to-read format and maintain naming conventions and labeling for the use of the project/program/initiative and key stakeholders.	Week 3 Dec 2025	2 days

Completion of the approved final report	Following the feedback on the draft report – submit the final version along with one-page evaluation summary and materials to CARE	Week 2 Jan 2026	2 days
	TOTAL		30 days

NOTE: CARE will cover the consultant's transportation, per diem, and accommodation during data collection in the field.

Selection Criteria

1	Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 years of experience in the fields of climate resilience, agriculture, sustainable livelihoods, and gender- and ethnic minority-empowerment and disability inclusion programming. Demonstrated strong social research and reporting skills, including experience conducting quantitative and qualitative research. Demonstrated successful experience in conducting GEDSI analysis, project baseline survey studies, especially for development projects. Demonstrated good understanding of gender issues and women's empowerment, and disability inclusion in the Vietnamese context. Relevant technical experience (e.g. climate change, agriculture, sustainable livelihoods, women's empowerment, ethnic minority empowerment, etc.) is required.
2	Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant postgraduate qualifications.
3	Technical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, surveys (e.g., PRA/PLA), stakeholder interviews (ranging from national-level to local-level stakeholders), report writing, and presentation. Ability to work autonomously and demonstrated skills in leading baseline survey projects.
4	Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent command of English (writing and speaking). Proficiency in an ethnic minority language (Khmu, Akha, Hmong) is desirable
5	References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of two referee contacts who have managed the proposed consultant previously.

As a matter of course, all consultants are subject to the following policies:

- CARE Child Protection Policy.
- Terrorist Check Safety and Security Management Plan.
- CARE Code of Conduct.

How to apply

If you are interested in this role, please submit your (1) CV, (2) cover letter, (3) two references, (4) proposed baseline evaluation plan, and (5) cost quotation (breakdown all cost including consultancy fee and reimbursement expenses) to email: procurement4@care.org.vn by **25th September, 2025**, please include the text: **"Application for MekongElevate Baseline Evaluation Consultancy"** in the subject of your email.

CARE is an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse workforce. Women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Thanks for your interest in CARE! We are committed to each other and to the protection of the people we serve. We do not tolerate sexual misconduct within or external to our organization and imbed child protection in all we do. Protection from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and child protection are fundamental to our relationships, including employment, and our recruitment practices are designed to ensure we only recruit people who are suitable to work with other staff and the people we serve. As well as pre-employment checks, we will use the recruitment and reference process to ensure potential new consultant/supplier understand and are aligned with these expectations. To find out more, please contact the Human Resources Team Leader.

ANNEX 1 – KEY PROJECT’s INDICATORS

- A. End of Project Outcome:** Targeted upland communities - particularly ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disabilities - in the interconnected border provinces of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam have increased resilience to the impacts of the climate crisis contributing to the stability and prosperity of the greater Mekong sub-region.
1. # and % of targeted individuals who have applied at least 3 practices to protect their livelihoods from negative impacts of climate-related shocks and stresses
 2. # and % of people of all genders and people with disabilities in targeted households who have used formal and informal financial services in ways that actively support climate resilience
 3. # and % of people of all genders and people with disabilities who have actively participated in formal and informal climate-relevant decision-making spaces in targeted communities
 4. The barriers and opportunities faced by diverse individuals and groups (women, youth, people with disabilities) for increasing resilience among targeted upland EM communities
 5. Average % increase in self-assessed livelihood security among targeted households over baseline
 6. # and % of targeted EM households reporting improved adaptive capacity to climate-related shocks over baseline
 7. # of people directly reached through project activities (excluding campaigns)
- B. Intermediate Outcome 1:** Increased adoption of CSA practices and other innovations that strengthen livelihood resilience among targeted upland communities
1. # and % of targeted EM producers/women, youth, and people with disabilities adopting CSA practices and/or innovations
 2. % of targeted households reporting income increase of at least 20% from CSA/innovation-based activities
 3. The barriers and opportunities faced by diverse individuals and groups (women, youth, people with disabilities) for adopting CSA practices among targeted upland EM communities
 4. # of new non-project communities/villages where CSA practices/innovations are adopted by themselves
- C. Intermediate Outcome 2:** Enhanced safety net for targeted upland EM communities to cope with unavoidable loss and damage from extreme weather events
1. # and % of EM households in targeted communities entitled to access Community Disaster Relief Fund (or equivalent) if extreme weather events happen
 2. # of innovative L&D schemes identified through joint research
- D. Intermediate Outcome 3:** Amplified voices of ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disabilities in sub-national, national, and regional climate-related decision-making processes in the Mekong

1. % of EM women, youth, and people with disabilities reporting increased confidence to participate and/or lead in climate-related decision-making spaces
2. The barriers and opportunities faced by diverse individuals and groups (women, youth, people with disabilities) to participate and/or lead in climate-related decision-making spaces in targeted upland EM communities
3. # of policy or decision-making processes influenced by voices from EM women, youth and people with disabilities (focusing on sub-national and community levels)
4. # of new/amended or better implemented climate-relevant policies, legislation, programs, and/or budgets which increase people of all genders' ability to adapt to the effects of climate change, foster climate resilience (focusing on sub-national level)

Note: The Logical Framework will be provided to the selected consultant after the contract has been signed.