



Facilitating the VBNK Strategic Plan Development

CONSULTANT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

VBNK has been a leading contributor to the capacity of the Cambodian social development sector for more than 20 years. From the start VBNK has tried to be strategic in terms of understanding the sector's needs and finding the most effective ways of meeting them. This meant that over time the organisation has moved away from being a training provider to one that offers tailored responses, using a range of methods and tools, for organisations that need to improve their internal functioning. Additionally, VBNK works with a small number of organisations to help them learn how to be more effective and sustainable in their work with local communities and duty bearers. Working with participatory processes that utilise creative learning methodologies and develop capacity and build confidence and skills VBNK aims to equip Cambodian civil society organisations to be more effective and more sustainable in their organisational and program development and interventions.

To respond to the rapid changes in the Cambodian development context, VBNK continually seeks to enhance its own capacity to respond to the increasingly complex development needs of those who are not yet fully able to participate and benefit from the changes going on around them.

The current Strategic Plan (2021 – 2024) was formulated late 2020, and has been guiding the organisation's programmatic decision making since then. This has included a significant change in terms of no longer doing any stand-alone training activities, focusing instead on the more sustainable approach of working with partners over time using multiple methods to support learning and change. The last Annual Impact Assessments (AIA) were conducted in 2022, looking at specific elements of programme delivery with selected partners. While the AIA provide invaluable information about the impact of some interventions, they are not designed to review the effectiveness of VBNK's guiding strategies. Nor do they look at any aspect of the organisation's internal functioning.

What is now needed is a brief strategic review of the current 2021-2024 plan and, using the findings of this review and other information gathered in the process, formulate the next 4 years strategic plan 2025-2028.

Ideally VBNK would prefer a consultancy team which is familiar with capacity development work and social development issues in Cambodia, regional and internationally.

2. VBNK's Strategy

The Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 (which will be provided to the consultants) sets out the following framework to guide the organisation's work.

2.1 Programme Framework

The programme framework for 2021-2024 was adapted from a version in the previous strategic plan. While the strategic focus areas of our work remain largely the same the framework has been modified to highlight VBNK's approach of **accompaniment**, which is relevant to our work in all areas of the functioning of organisations and communities. The strategic focus areas are not given in any order of priority, because all are important in different degrees according to the organisation in question and its circumstances at any given time. The diagram below illustrates the core components of our approach:

Diagram 1: The Programme Framework



2.2 Organisational strategies

VBNK recognises the need for continual attention to all aspects of its own internal functioning. This is not only to ensure that all dimensions of the organisation remain strong and relevant to both support programme delivery and keep VBANK sustainable, but also to ensure that we have integrity in terms of doing ourselves what we promote with others to be good practices.

Three of the strategic objectives for the organisation are straightforward and standard good practice, being about ensuring continual:

- Staff capacity development to enable high quality programme delivery and support;
- Review and upgrade of policies and procedures where needed, especially in terms of compliance with the increasing number of RGC requirements for all organisations and employers; and,
- Processes to secure new work and thus VBANK's ongoing financial security.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is for the external consultant to lead and facilitate VBANK to develop a visionary Strategic Plan for 2025 – 2028 that senior management, board and staff use to guide project implementation, decision-making, funding generation opportunities and the formulation of the annual work-plan. The consultant should enable VBANK to answer the following questions:

1. Review of previous Strategic Plan:
 - a. Is the existing **Theory of Capacity Development** (Strategic Plan, pages 3-4) still valid, or in what ways should it be revised?
 - b. How well has the existing **program framework** (Strategic Plan, pages 5-10) been implemented (with reference to the following elements: accompaniment, participation and empowerment, leadership and governance, creative development solutions, organisation development)?
 - c. How well have the **organisational strategies** (Strategic Plan, page 11) been implemented (with reference to staff capacity development, upgrade of policies and procedures, and processes to secure new work)?
 - d. To what extent was the **results framework** (Strategic Plan, page 12-16) followed and successfully implemented?
2. Development of new Strategic Plan:

- a. What are the changes in the external environment that may affect VBANK's strategy, and how should VBANK adapt to those changes?
- b. Over the next 4 years, what should VBANK do the same or differently compare to the past? What should VBANK stop doing? What can be improved? Why, and in what way?
- c. What changes should be made to the **program framework** over the next 4 years, and how should VBANK use the program framework? What should be the internal enabling processes to ensure that the program framework functions effectively?
- d. What should be included in the new **results framework**? How should the results framework be monitored and reported?
- e. What are the strengths of VBANK's existing internal **staff capacity** and the current composition of the staff? In what ways does this capacity fit with VBANK's market? What are the capacity gaps within VBANK compared to the potential opportunities? How should VBANK invest in the building of internal staff capacity? What ongoing capacity assessment should be in place to ensure the capacity gaps are addressed and monitored?

4. Expected deliverables

1. A planning schedule detailing the list of activities and expected timetable for completion of the task.
2. A draft strategic plan in English for review and feedback, containing at least: Theory of Capacity Development, Programme Framework, Organisational Strategies, and Results Framework (i.e. similar in structure to the previous strategic plan).
3. A final 2025-2028 strategic plan in English that addresses all the relevant evaluation questions and VBANK's feedback comments, after no more than two rounds of review.

5. Expected methodology

Activities should include, but not be limited to:

- Document review:
 - o VBANK internal documentation and reports to donors
 - o Capacity development initiatives conducted by other organisations
 - o Anything providing information about state-of-the-art approaches to capacity development in the social development context
- Interviews with key informants:

- VBNK management and staff
- VBNK Board
- Selected partners
- Donors supporting capacity development of Cambodian civil society
- Other organisations or businesses offering capacity development services
- Produce summary of data collection from key stakeholder above
- Facilitate the 3 days strategic plan workshop with VBNK staff
- Draft the strategic plan documents and send to VBNK MT (Management Team) and Board for review and feedback
- Final draft of the strategic plan

6. Arrangements

6.1 Tasks and timeframe

The proposed timeframe for the strategic plan review and development is April-August 2024, as set out below:

No.	Activities	# days	Indicative dates
1	Document review, development of action plan and methodology for the data collection	2.5	April 2024
2	Meeting with the VBNK MT	0.5	April 2024
3	Data collection from key stakeholder, analysis and write up of findings	6	May 2024
4	Prepare strategic plan workshop	2	June 2024
5	Facilitation of the strategic plan workshop with staff in Phnom Penh	3	Late June 2024
6	Write-up workshop findings and discuss with MT	2	July 2024
7	First draft of strategic plan	3	August 2024
8	Finalise the strategic plan document in response to feedback from MT and Board.	1	October 2024
	Total days	20	

6.2 Logistics and Responsibilities

The consultant team will be supervised by Tourt Chamroen, VBNK Director. The consultant team is expected to include someone proficient in Khmer, at least for the data collection and strategic planning workshop. VBNK can provide additional translation support if required.

All workshop expenses will be covered by VBNK. If travel to the provinces is required, then transportation expenses will be covered directly by VBNK. Accommodation expenses in the provinces will be paid against receipt, and the per diem will be paid according to VBNK's policy.

8. Requirements

Interested candidates should possess:

- A higher-level degree in a relevant subject
- Extensive knowledge and experience of the Cambodian social development sector
- Experience of conducting strategic reviews and development
- The ability to provide strategic analysis and recommendations based on data from multiple sources

9. Payment

The Consultant will be paid according to the following schedule, on completion of the deliverables noted above.

Total package:

Output & Date	Fee payable
1 st instalment: upon completing reviewing the documents and having submitted a schedule for the strategic plan review and development that has been approved and submission of an invoice.	30% of total budget
2 nd instalment: upon completion of the data collection and SP workshop and submission of first draft of the strategic plan and an invoice.	40% of the total budget + reimbursement of expenses (if any)

3 rd instalment: upon submission of the final strategic plan document and invoice.	30% of total budget
---	---------------------