

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Cambodia Australia Partnership for Resilient Economic Development (CAPRED) Program	
RFP Number	RFP26-063
Project Name	Development of a Cambodia Tri-Sectoral Strategy and Implementation Plan 2026–2030
Domain Name	Agriculture
Application Closing Date	5 pm (Phnom Penh Time), 31 March 2026
Assignment Duration	June - Dec 2026

1. Background

Cambodia faces interconnected challenges in agriculture, water resource management, and rural development. Climate change, rural poverty, and fragmented sectoral planning continue to hinder sustainable development and economic progression. Cambodia has a predominantly rural economy (approximately 36.01% of the population in 2023), which requires a well-coordinated and integrated approach to agriculture, water, and rural development to achieve sustainable growth.

The Tri-sectoral Working Group in Cambodia is an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism formed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM), and the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD). It was established to strengthen collaboration across the agriculture, water management, and rural development sectors, ensuring integrated planning and implementation of government priorities, including modern agricultural communities, water-user groups, and rural infrastructure. The group facilitates policy alignment, resource mobilisation, and stakeholder engagement to support the Royal Government of Cambodia’s development strategies, including the Pentagonal Strategy, and aims to improve rural livelihoods, enhance resilience, and promote sustainable socio-economic growth.

Inter-ministerial coordination is facilitated by a Tri-sectoral Working Group Secretariat hosted by MAFF. The Tri-sectoral Working Group has approved a Concept Note to guide the development of a coordinated strategy and strategic plan for integrated agriculture, water, and rural development in Cambodia for 2026-2030. These Terms of Reference (ToR) outline the technical support required to develop that Strategy and Implementation Plan in alignment with Cambodia's priorities.

1.1 Rationale

There is a need to develop a comprehensive, practical, data driven and inclusive Strategy and Implementation Plan that aligns the priorities of MAFF, MOWRAM, and MRD, and can serve as a joint roadmap for coordinated investment, implementation, and resource mobilisation.

The strategy will not replace existing national policies but will complement them by:

- Aligning ministry policy plans and other multi-agency initiatives programs so that investments in agriculture, irrigation, and rural infrastructure support the same goals and reinforce each other.
- Present coordinated, sequenced and costed priorities to government and development partners, whilst enabling and supporting private sector investment in the rural sector.
- Strengthen institutional capacity and collaboration and policy coherence between ministries.
- Provide an evidence-based platform for domestic and international resource mobilisation

- Prioritising and promoting joint interventions such as modern agricultural communities and integrated water systems.
- Identifying priority initiatives to promote climate resilience, gender equality and disability inclusion through specific and measurable opportunities within sectors, sub-sectors or specified initiatives to drive sustained change in the rural economy.
- To ensure that the needs of the rural poor are not overlooked in the drive for economic growth.

The formulation of the Cambodian Tri-Sectoral Strategy and Implementation Plan (2026-2030) has been initiated to strengthen integrated planning across agriculture, water, and rural development.

Led by a team of experts in close collaboration with the Tri-Sectoral Working Group, the strategy will provide a joint roadmap to align sectoral priorities, address emerging challenges, and mobilise resources for coordinated interventions. It aims to enhance agricultural productivity, enhance access to agricultural product value chains, align water resource management with the objective of increasing the income and jobs, and support resilient rural livelihoods, ensuring that future investments are coherent, efficient, and responsive to Cambodia's development objectives.

2. Purpose

CAPRED seeks to engage a qualified consulting firm or consortium of firms (including national and/or international partners) to undertake the work to oversee the work of the consultants and ensure the quality and timeliness of deliverables.

3. Requirement

3.1 Key Tasks and Activities

In response to Cambodia's evolving rural economic and climate challenges, the scope of this work is to deliver a coordinated, inclusive and actionable strategy that prioritises catalytic interventions, strengthens institutional capacity and collaboration and provides a platform for joint investment and long-term impact. The assignment will support the formulation of a coordinated Strategy and Implementation Plan for Agriculture, Water and Rural Development in Cambodia (2026-2030).

The process will focus on designing a practical, evidence-based roadmap that aligns with the RGC's priorities, including the Pentagonal Strategy Phase 1, Climate Change Strategic Plan, and sectoral policies across agriculture, water resources and rural development. The strategy will ensure these priorities are reflected in shared objectives, integrated intervention and institutional arrangements at national and sub-national levels. The assignment's scope will include facilitating inter-ministerial collaboration between MAFF, MOWRAM and MRD through the Tri-Sectoral Working Group Secretariat. Where appropriate, coordination with relevant existing CAPRED technical expertise will be conducted to ensure coherence and efficiency.

Cross-cutting themes to be incorporated include climate resilience, GEDSI, private sector engagement, and, as appropriate, practical and relevant, will be embedded throughout the strategy's design. The process will involve stakeholder consultations, analysis of existing policies and lessons learned, and the development of measurable strategic objectives supported by clear theories of change. Separate consultations will be held with each of the three ministries: MAFF, MOWRAM, and MRD. It will also include drafting a monitoring and evaluation framework, a resource mobilisation plan, and communications materials to enable implementation and donor engagement. All content, including consultation and validation materials, will be translated from English to Khmer.

3.2 Key Deliverables

The consulting firm is expected to design the Strategy and Strategic Plan for Coordinated Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development in Cambodia (2026-2030). Endorsement will be provided by the Secretariat of the Tri-Sectoral Working Group, with concurrence from CAPRED.

Week	Deliverable
Week 1	Inception Plan (5-pages, proposed methodology, key stakeholders, timeline).
Week 12	State-of-sector analysis report (a common perspective of the climate and demographic change challenges)
Week 16	Draft strategic objectives and theory of change of each objective.
Week 20	Endorsed objectives, change pathways, and priority interventions
Week 24	Endorsed the Tri-sectoral strategy, implementation plan, and monitoring and evaluation framework.
Week 28	Endorsed resource mobilisation plan, and communications materials to enable implementation and donor engagement.

3.3 Audiences:

The primary audience, the Tri-Sectoral Working Group, will use the strategy and strategic plan to guide coordinated policy development, investment prioritisation and implementation planning for agriculture water and rural development.

The Australian Embassy in Phnom Penh will draw on the strategy to inform its engagement with the RGC, ensuring alignment with Australian Government priorities and identifying opportunities for targeted support and policy dialogue.

Relevant Government agencies, including but not limited to the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Ministry of Planning, may use the strategy to strengthen their own interministerial coordination, align sectoral plans with national priorities and mobilise resources for joint interventions.

Development partners will benefit from the strategy as a platform for coordinating investments, identifying complementary initiative, and fostering collaboration in climate resilience, gender equality and inclusive rural growth.

Private sector – both domestic and international – may use the strategy to understand priority areas for investment and partnership opportunities in agriculture, irrigation and rural infrastructure.

Academic institutions and research organisations may use the strategy as a reference for policy analyses, sectoral resources and monitoring progress toward rural transformation goals.

3.4 Delivery Timeline:

The engagement is expected to last from March to September 2026.

Month	Milestone
Month 1	Data-driven desk-based baseline assessment of the current state of the rural economy and key constraints and opportunities using existing data sets such as the 2024 agricultural census and survey material from development partners.

Month 2	Stakeholder consultations to define strategic objectives and indicators
Month 3	State-of-sector analysis (common perspective of the climate and demographic challenges).
Month 4	Development of theories of change for each objective
Month 4-5	Prioritisation and sequencing of activities/interventions with indicative costing
Month 5	Validation workshops at national and sub-national levels. This will include one national workshop to finalise and validate the strategy, to be held in Phnom Penh or a province, subject to budget availability.
Month 6	Final Tri-sectoral strategy, implementation plans, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks
Month 7	Final resource mobilisation plan, and communications materials to enable implementation and donor engagement.

3.5 Contracting Arrangements

A consulting firm or consortium of firms (including national and/or international partners) will be hired to undertake the work to oversee the work of the consultants and ensure the quality and timeliness of deliverables. DFAT delegates will collaborate with the Tri-sectoral Working Group Secretariat and the contracted Implementing Partner, consisting of international and national experts.

An open tender process will be used with emphasis on equity and inclusion. Any contract award will be subject to the completion of satisfactory due diligence in accordance with DFAT and CAPRED requirements. The Tri-sectoral Working Group will be given the opportunity to review and provide input during the consultant selection process prior to the final decision on the appointment of the consultancy firm.

The team will report to the Secretariat of the Tri-Sectoral Working Group and DFAT delegates through monthly progress updates and milestone deliverables.

3.6 Accessibility requirements and sign-off

All final products will be produced to high standards of clarity, rigour, and accessibility. All products will be professionally formatted, suitable for publication, and meeting the approval of the involved parties. Internal analysis and supporting documents developed during the drafting process are not required to meet accessibility or publication standards (as they are intended for internal use only). The Tri-Sectoral Working Group and DFAT will mutually sign off on the quality of all deliverables.

3.7 Team and Responsibilities

The Strategy Development Team should be comprised of a team of independent consultants (Cambodian and international). All applicants must also demonstrate reputable experience relevant to the Cambodian and/or regional context. The firm selected for the assignment will be responsible for recruiting, in consultation with the Tri-sectoral Working Group) and managing the team and delivery of outputs. The team will consist of:

Team Leader:

- The Strategy Development Team will be led by an International Team Leader with strong leadership and coordination skills, with the ability to navigate complex political economy dynamics, institutional complexity and stakeholder engagement.

- Technical proficiency in integrated agriculture-water-rural development is essential together with policy formulation, cross-ministerial engagement, institutional reform and resources mobilisation in low- and middle-income country (LMIC) contexts, preferably in Southeast Asia.
- Responsible for the technical quality of all deliverables.

Deputy Team Leader

- Assists the Team Leader, bringing comparable qualifications, skills, and experience to ensure quality standards and timely delivery, with a specialised focus on agricultural development.
- Fluency in Khmer language is preferable.

The Team:

- The team should demonstrate strong capacity in stakeholder engagement, including GEDSI, and be adept at facilitating participatory processes.
- Additional sectoral competencies include climate resilience and private sector development, demonstrated understanding of Cambodia and the broader Mekong regional context.
- Expertise in process facilitation, report drafting and strategic analysis will also be essential, and should be covered across the team.

Applicants are encouraged to propose a team composition that best suits their methodology and understanding of the assignment. Clear communication channels and reporting lines will facilitate coordination and accountability throughout the evaluation process. DFAT delegates will provide guidance and feedback on key documents and support quality assurance throughout the assignment lifecycle.

Indicative Team Composition

Role	Estimated # of Days
Team Leader (National or International locally based during the assignment as required)	52
Deputy Team Leader and Agriculture development specialist (National or International)	48
Water/irrigation development specialist (National or International)	45
Rural development specialist (National or International)	45
GEDSI Specialist (National or International)	42
Climate Change/Environmental Specialist (National or International)	42
Stakeholder engagement Specialist (National or International)	42
Total	316

- The team members could be either national or international but are based in Cambodia.

- The indicative number of days is provided as a guide. Applicants may propose alternative allocations where justified by their methodology and approach

3.8 Ethical Considerations

All activities will adhere to DFAT and RGC ethical guidelines, ensuring inclusivity, gender equality, disability inclusion, and environmental safeguards, while the team upholds the highest ethical standards to maintain the integrity and credibility of the strategy development process.

Informed consent must be obtained from all participants, who should be clearly informed about the nature of the information being collected, how it will be recorded, and its intended use.

All data and findings must be treated with strict confidentiality to protect the privacy of individuals and organisations.

Applicants should also consider any specific vulnerabilities among stakeholders (e.g., persons with disabilities, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), or marginalised groups) and outline how these will be addressed in line with ethical principles.

Proper referencing of all sources, whether published or unpublished, will be maintained to ensure academic and professional integrity throughout the strategy development process.

Information gathered must remain confidential.

All outputs will belong to the Tri-Sectoral Working Group Secretariat and DFAT.

4. Qualifications, Knowledge, and Experience Required

Applications are open to Cambodian and/or international consulting firms or consortia with demonstrated experience relevant to integrated agriculture, water, and rural development in Cambodia or comparable contexts. Firms are encouraged to propose multidisciplinary teams that collectively meet the requirements below.

Organisational Requirements

- Proven experience in the development of multisectoral or cross-ministerial strategies, investment plans, or implementation frameworks in low and middle-income country contexts.
- Demonstrated understanding of Cambodia's policy and institutional landscape, particularly relating to agriculture, water resources, rural development, and climate resilience.
- Experience supporting government-led planning and coordination processes, including facilitation of interministerial working groups and stakeholder consultations.
- Strong analytical capacity, including the ability to undertake evidence-based sector analysis, develop theories of change, and translate analysis into practical and actionable strategies.
- Demonstrated experience integrating GEDSI and climate resilience considerations into policy, strategy, or investment planning processes.
- Capacity to deliver high-quality outputs within tight timelines and to manage complex, consultative assignments involving multiple stakeholders.

Key Personnel Requirements

- An International Team Leader with extensive experience in strategic planning, policy formulation, and cross sectoral coordination, preferably in Southeast Asia or comparable regions.
- A Deputy Team Leader and/or senior national expert with strong contextual knowledge of Cambodia's agriculture, water, or rural development sectors and experience engaging with government counterparts.
- Additional team members with expertise across relevant areas, such as agriculture development, water and irrigation, rural livelihoods, climate change, private sector engagement, GEDSI, monitoring and evaluation, and stakeholder facilitation.
- Proven experience in producing high quality analytical reports, strategic documents, and presentation materials in English; Khmer language capability within the team is strongly preferred.

5. Evaluation criteria

CAPRED will use an objective and transparent process to evaluate all proposals received. Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria (in no particular order):

- a. Compliance with this Request for Proposals (RFP).
- b. Demonstrated understanding of the assignment objectives, scope, and Cambodia's sectoral and institutional context.
- c. Quality, relevance, and feasibility of the proposed methodology and approach.
- d. Organisational capacity and demonstrated experience delivering similar assignments.
- e. Qualifications, experience, and suitability of the proposed team.
- f. Integration of cross-cutting considerations, including GEDSI, climate resilience, and stakeholder engagement.
- g. Past performance and relevant examples of previous work (including referee checks).
- h. Value for money, as demonstrated through the proposed financial proposal.

Note: While price is a factor, greater emphasis will be placed on technical quality and the applicant's ability to deliver value for money. CAPRED reserves the right to contract more than one supplier, to vary contract terms, or not to award a contract as a result of this RFP. Any contract award will be subject to the completion of satisfactory due diligence in accordance with DFAT and CAPRED requirements and satisfactory reference checks.

Due diligence checks will be conducted on the consulting firm/s and individuals nominated in the RFP prior to awarding contract/s.

6. How to Apply

The proposals including the Technical and Financial Response Forms must be submitted no later than **5 pm (Phnom Penh time), 31 March 2026** by email to procurement@capred.org with "Cambodia Tri-Sectoral Strategy" in the subject line. Any proposals submitted after this time and date will not be considered.

CAPRED is available to answer questions or provide more details on the scope of work. Please email procurement@capred.org with "Cambodia Tri-Sectoral Strategy- Enquiry" in the subject line.

Attachments:

- *Technical Response Form*
- *Financial Response Form*
- *Annex A- Relevant Partners & Stakeholder*
- *Annex B- List of Background Documents*

Cowater International is an equal opportunity employer, basing employment on merit and qualifications as they relate to professional experience and position expectations. Cowater does not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of race, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, age, or any other basis protected by law. CAPRED aims to have a diverse workforce and a workplace that is supportive of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion. Women, people with disabilities, and other minorities are highly encouraged to apply.