

TERMS OF REFERENCE

JUNIOR RESEARCHER CONSULTANT

Kenan Foundation Asia believes in a world where everyone has the right to build a better life for themselves, their family, and their community. Every day, we are working in Thailand and the region to inspire students, develop skilled people, and grow strong leaders by empowering them with the knowledge, technology, and skills necessary for a better future. Whether it's an entrepreneur, a teacher, a student, a community leader, or non-profit manager, we conduct tailored, engaging activities to train, coach and equip them so they can achieve their dreams.

ABOUT KENAN

Kenan Foundation Asia, a non-profit development organization working in partnership with companies, governments, academia, and committed individuals to empower people with the knowledge, technology, and skills necessary for a better future.

1. ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Position: Junior Researcher Consultant

Project: Studying and Designing the Ecosystem to Strengthen Northern Food Valley (NFV) Cluster Competitiveness

Assignment Period: Approximately six months

Contract Modality: Individual consultancy, deliverable-based

Duty Station: Bangkok, with travel to project locations in Northern Thailand as required

Reporting to: Project Manager and Lead Researcher

Indicative Level of Effort: Approximately 60 working days over the assignment period

Professional Fee: Up to THB 120,000 gross for the completion of all agreed deliverables

Expected Start Date: To be confirmed

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Kenan Foundation Asia is implementing the project **“Studying and Designing the Ecosystem to Strengthen Northern Food Valley (NFV) Cluster Competitiveness.”**

The project aims to develop a validated, evidence-based, and implementation-oriented understanding of the Northern Food Valley ecosystem and identify practical mechanisms to strengthen the competitiveness of food-related enterprises and value chains in Northern Thailand.

The study covers the full food-sector ecosystem, including:

- farmers and producers;
- farmer groups and cooperatives;
- community enterprises;
- food processors;
- micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises;

- buyers and distributors;
- logistics providers;
- financial institutions;
- universities and research institutions;
- technology and technical-service providers;
- business-development service providers;
- regulators and public agencies; and
- other organizations supporting the food-sector ecosystem.

The research will include policy and institutional analysis, value-chain analysis, cluster and stakeholder-network analysis, assessment of enterprise capabilities and business-support mechanisms, and identification of future competitiveness opportunities.

The findings will inform practical recommendations and the possible design of policy experiments, sandbox mechanisms, or ecosystem-support pathways for strengthening the competitiveness, inclusiveness, resilience, and sustainability of the Northern Food Valley ecosystem.

Kenan Foundation Asia is seeking a qualified **Junior Researcher Consultant** to support research implementation, evidence collection, stakeholder engagement, fieldwork, data management, preliminary analysis, and preparation of project outputs.

3. PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Junior Researcher Consultant will provide research, analytical, documentation, and coordination support to the Project Manager, Lead Researcher, technical experts, and project coordination team.

The Consultant will contribute to:

- desk research and evidence review;
- stakeholder identification and mapping;
- preparation of research tools;
- coordination of stakeholder interviews and consultations;
- primary data collection and fieldwork;
- organisation and verification of research data;
- preliminary qualitative and quantitative analysis;
- preparation of analytical tables, matrices, and maps;
- drafting of research summaries and report inputs; and
- preparation of presentations and validation materials.

The assignment will be managed on a deliverable basis. The detailed workplan and final submission dates will be agreed with the selected candidate at the beginning of the assignment.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

4.1 Desk Research and Evidence Review

The Consultant will:

1. Conduct desk research on the Northern Food Valley, food-industry development, cluster competitiveness, regional economic development, and relevant national and provincial policies.
2. Review relevant materials, including:
 - a. national and provincial policies and development plans;
 - b. government strategies and regulations;
 - c. official agricultural, industrial, trade, and economic statistics;
 - d. academic studies and research reports;
 - e. market and industry reports;
 - f. value-chain studies;
 - g. programme and project documents;
 - h. institutional reports; and
 - i. documents shared by project partners and stakeholders.
3. Identify and summarize evidence relating to:
 - a. priority food products and value chains;
 - b. raw-material availability and production capacity;
 - c. processing and value-addition capacity;
 - d. enterprise capabilities and constraints;
 - e. market access and buyer requirements;
 - f. technology and innovation;
 - g. access to finance;
 - h. standards, certification, and food safety;
 - i. logistics and infrastructure;
 - j. research and technical services;
 - k. business-development services; and
 - l. institutional and ecosystem-support mechanisms.
4. Maintain an organised evidence library, source register, reference database, and document repository.
5. Prepare concise research notes, evidence summaries, policy summaries, institutional profiles, and background briefing materials.
6. Verify data points, institutional information, sources, references, and citations used in project outputs.

4.2 Stakeholder Mapping and Coordination

The Consultant will:

1. Support the identification and mapping of stakeholders across:
 - a. upstream production;
 - b. midstream aggregation and processing;
 - c. downstream markets and distribution; and
 - d. the enabling ecosystem.
2. Collect and maintain stakeholder information, including:
 - a. name and position;
 - b. organisation;
 - c. province or location;
 - d. contact details;
 - e. role in the value chain;
 - f. institutional function;
 - g. relevant product or value chain;
 - h. information or evidence that may be provided; and

- i. recommended engagement format.
3. Support the classification and prioritisation of stakeholders for:
 - a. key informant interviews;
 - b. focus-group discussions;
 - c. stakeholder consultations;
 - d. site visits;
 - e. field observations;
 - f. co-creation activities; and
 - g. validation workshops.
4. Coordinate appointments and follow-up communication with relevant stakeholders, including:
 - a. national and provincial government agencies;
 - b. private-sector enterprises;
 - c. business associations;
 - d. universities and research institutions;
 - e. financial institutions;
 - f. technical and business-service providers;
 - g. community enterprises;
 - h. farmer groups and cooperatives; and
 - i. development organisations.
5. Maintain stakeholder contact lists, appointment schedules, communication records, engagement trackers, and follow-up records.
6. Prepare stakeholder profiles and briefing notes before interviews, meetings, consultations, and field missions.

4.3 Research Tools and Primary Data Collection

The Consultant will:

1. Support the preparation and adaptation of:
 - a. key informant interview guides;
 - b. focus-group discussion guides;
 - c. stakeholder consultation guides;
 - d. questionnaires;
 - e. site-visit observation templates;
 - f. data-recording templates;
 - g. note-taking templates; and
 - h. consent and confidentiality materials.
2. Participate in interviews, focus-group discussions, consultations, workshops, site visits, and field missions.
3. Take accurate, complete, and systematically structured notes during research activities.
4. Prepare interview summaries, consultation records, workshop records, and field notes promptly after each activity.
5. Support transcription, translation, classification, and coding of qualitative information where required.
6. Document stakeholder perspectives relating to:
 - a. production and business constraints;
 - b. value-chain gaps;
 - c. market access;
 - d. buyer requirements;
 - e. access to finance;
 - f. technology and innovation;
 - g. standards and certification;
 - h. logistics and infrastructure;
 - i. institutional coordination;

- j. availability and quality of business-support services;
 - k. inclusion challenges; and
 - l. possible ecosystem solutions.
7. Follow the project's research protocols, consent requirements, confidentiality procedures, and data-management standards.

4.4 Data Management and Preliminary Analysis

The Consultant will:

1. Organize qualitative and quantitative information collected through desk research, interviews, focus groups, workshops, consultations, and field visits.
2. Enter, clean, classify, verify, and maintain research data using agreed templates and file-management protocols.
3. Assist in coding qualitative findings and identifying:
 - a. recurring themes;
 - b. stakeholder perspectives;
 - c. enterprise constraints;
 - d. ecosystem gaps;
 - e. service-delivery gaps;
 - f. institutional relationships;
 - g. emerging opportunities;
 - h. conflicting evidence; and
 - i. differences across provinces, stakeholder groups, enterprise types, and value chains.
4. Support the preparation of analytical tools, including:
 - a. stakeholder maps;
 - b. ecosystem maps;
 - c. value-chain maps;
 - d. institutional maps;
 - e. process maps;
 - f. problem trees;
 - g. service-gap matrices;
 - h. evidence matrices;
 - i. comparison tables; and
 - j. opportunity-assessment matrices.
5. Prepare preliminary tables, charts, diagrams, matrices, and visual summaries for review by the Lead Researcher.
6. Document data sources, assumptions, evidence limitations, conflicting findings, missing information, and issues requiring further validation.

4.5 Field-Mission Support

The Consultant will:

1. Support the planning and preparation of field missions in Northern Thailand.
2. Coordinate interview schedules, stakeholder appointments, site visits, venues, and required research materials.
3. Prepare:
 - a. stakeholder profiles;
 - b. fieldwork schedules;
 - c. interview packs;
 - d. briefing notes;
 - e. data-collection templates;
 - f. participant lists; and

- g. fieldwork trackers.
- 4. Participate in interviews, focus groups, consultations, workshops, site visits, and field observations.
- 5. Document observations relating to:
 - a. production systems;
 - b. raw-material sourcing;
 - c. processing facilities;
 - d. production technology;
 - e. product development;
 - f. quality management;
 - g. food safety;
 - h. standards and certification;
 - i. market access;
 - j. buyer relationships;
 - k. logistics;
 - l. infrastructure; and
 - m. ecosystem-support services.
- 6. Prepare daily field summaries and consolidate the evidence gathered during each mission.
- 7. Follow up with stakeholders to clarify information, verify findings, or obtain additional documents and data.

4.6 Reporting and Knowledge Products

The Consultant will:

- 1. Contribute to the preparation of:
 - a. project reports;
 - b. technical annexes;
 - c. stakeholder profiles;
 - d. institutional profiles;
 - e. case-study inputs;
 - f. field-mission summaries;
 - g. consultation summaries;
 - h. evidence tables;
 - i. presentations; and
 - j. validation materials.
- 2. Prepare structured summaries of:
 - a. interviews;
 - b. focus-group discussions;
 - c. stakeholder consultations;
 - d. workshops;
 - e. field missions;
 - f. site visits;
 - g. co-creation activities; and
 - h. validation sessions.
- 3. Contribute evidence and draft content relating to:
 - a. policy and institutional arrangements;
 - b. value-chain structures and constraints;
 - c. enterprise and cluster competitiveness;
 - d. stakeholder relationships and coordination;
 - e. access to finance, markets, technology, standards, logistics, and business-development services;
 - f. differences across provinces and value chains;
 - g. future competitiveness opportunities; and
 - h. possible policy experiments, sandbox mechanisms, or ecosystem-support pathways.

4. Assist in reviewing project documents for factual accuracy, completeness, internal consistency, proper citation, formatting, and clarity.
5. Support the preparation of materials for project meetings, validation sessions, workshops, and external presentations.
6. Incorporate comments and revisions received from the Project Manager, Lead Researcher, and technical team.

4.7 Research Coordination and Documentation

The Consultant will:

1. Prepare meeting agendas, minutes, briefing notes, and follow-up action lists as assigned.
2. Coordinate with project staff, consultants, technical experts, partners, and stakeholders to facilitate timely information exchange.
3. Track outstanding data, documents, stakeholder responses, decisions, and follow-up actions.
4. Maintain organized electronic project files and appropriate version control.
5. Perform other directly related research and project-support tasks agreed with the Project Manager or Lead Researcher within the scope of the assignment.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, WORKLOAD, AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The assignment is expected to require approximately **60 working days over six months**. The workload estimates below indicate the relative level of effort expected for each deliverable.

The total professional fee is **THB 120,000 gross**, payable in three instalments every two months upon satisfactory completion and acceptance of the relevant deliverables.

Deliverable	Expected Outputs	Indicative Timing	Estimated Workload	Indicative Fee Allocation
1. Mobilisation and Research Workplan	Detailed assignment workplan; research-support schedule; filing and document-management structure; initial evidence requirements; stakeholder-engagement plan; and agreed tracking templates.	Within two weeks of commencement	5 days	THB 10,000
2. Desk-Research and Stakeholder Evidence Package	Desk-research summaries; organised source register and evidence library; preliminary policy and institutional summaries; updated stakeholder database; initial stakeholder profiles; and evidence-gap list.	Months 1–2	10 days	THB 20,000
Payment Instalment 1	Payable upon satisfactory completion and acceptance of Deliverables 1 and 2.	End of Month 2	15 days	THB 30,000

3. Research Preparation and Stakeholder Coordination Package	Interview and focus-group guides; site-visit and note-taking templates; stakeholder appointment tracker; interview schedules; briefing notes; and stakeholder coordination records.	Months 2–3	8 days	THB 16,000
4. Primary Data Collection and Fieldwork Documentation Package	Interview and consultation records; structured summaries; focus-group and workshop records; site-visit notes; field summaries; stakeholder follow-up records; and supporting evidence collected from stakeholders.	Months 2–4	15 days	THB 30,000
Payment Instalment 2	Payable upon satisfactory completion and acceptance of Deliverables 3 and 4.	End of Month 4	23 days	THB 46,000
5. Data Management and Preliminary Analysis Package	Cleaned and organised datasets; coded qualitative findings; thematic summaries; provincial and stakeholder comparisons; stakeholder, value-chain, and ecosystem maps; analytical matrices; tables; charts; and evidence-limitation notes.	Months 4–5	12 days	THB 24,000
6. Reporting, Validation, and Final Handover Package	Draft report and annex inputs; stakeholder and institutional profiles; case-study inputs; evidence tables; presentation and validation materials; revised outputs; organised final research files; updated databases; and final handover note.	Months 5–6	10 days	THB 20,000
Payment Instalment 3	Payable upon satisfactory completion and acceptance of Deliverables 5 and 6 and submission of the complete final handover package.	End of Month 6	22 days	THB 44,000
	Total		60 working days	THB 120,000

Payment Summary

Payment	Deliverables Covered	Payment Timing	Amount
First Instalment	Deliverables 1 and 2	End of Month 2	THB 30,000
Second Instalment	Deliverables 3 and 4	End of Month 4	THB 46,000
Final Instalment	Deliverables 5 and 6	End of Month 6	THB 44,000
	Total	Six months	THB 120,000

Payment Conditions

Payments will be made every two months upon:

- satisfactory completion of all deliverables assigned to the relevant payment period;
- submission of all required outputs and supporting files;
- review and written acceptance by the Project Manager and/or Lead Researcher;
- completion of reasonable revisions requested by Kenan Foundation Asia; and
- submission of the required invoice or payment documentation.

The fee allocation assigned to each deliverable reflects its estimated workload. However, payment will be processed according to the three consolidated instalments above rather than separately for each deliverable.

The total professional fee of **THB 120,000 is the gross amount before withholding tax**. Detailed tax, invoicing, travel, and contractual conditions will be included in the consultancy agreement following selection of the successful candidate.

6. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, WORKLOAD, AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Deliverables should meet the following standards:

Completeness

All required components and supporting files have been submitted.

Accuracy

Names, organizations, dates, figures, data points, references, and institutional information have been checked.

Research Quality

Outputs demonstrate systematic evidence collection and clearly distinguish between:

- verified evidence;
- stakeholder views;
- preliminary interpretation;
- assumptions; and
- issues requiring further validation.

Organization

Files, datasets, notes, references, and supporting materials are clearly named, organized, and traceable to their sources.

Usability

Outputs can be used by the Project Manager, Lead Researcher, and technical team for analysis, reporting, presentations, and stakeholder engagement.

Consistency

Outputs follow the project's agreed terminology, templates, research protocols, and analytical approach.

Timeliness

Outputs are submitted according to the agreed assignment work plan.

Responsiveness

Comments and reasonable revision requests are addressed within the agreed timeframe.

Detailed acceptance and payment procedures will be specified in the consultancy agreement with the selected candidate

7. REPORTING AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Consultant will report to the **Project Manager and Lead Researcher**.

The Consultant will work closely with:

- the project coordination team;
- technical experts and consultants;
- fieldwork team members;
- Kenan Foundation Asia staff;
- project partners; and
- participating stakeholders.

The Consultant may be required to attend:

- project-planning meetings;
- research-design meetings;
- fieldwork briefings;
- internal analytical discussions;
- stakeholder coordination meetings;
- report-review meetings;
- validation sessions; and
- project presentations.

The Consultant is expected to communicate regularly regarding:

- progress against the workplan;
- stakeholder appointments and responses;
- evidence gaps;
- fieldwork arrangements;
- delays and risks;
- data-quality concerns;
- outstanding information; and
- support required from the project team

8. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates should possess the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in economics, public policy, development studies, business administration, agriculture, food science, social sciences, political science, statistics, or another relevant discipline.
- Up to two years of relevant employment, internship, academic research, consulting, or field-research experience.
- Strong recent graduates with relevant academic, research, or fieldwork experience are encouraged to apply.
- Demonstrated ability to conduct desk research and synthesise information from multiple sources.
- Basic knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Ability to organise, clean, classify, and conduct preliminary analysis of research data.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in Thai.
- Good working proficiency in English, particularly for reading research materials and preparing written summaries.
- Competence in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Ability to work systematically, manage deadlines, and handle several assignments at the same time.
- Willingness and ability to travel to project locations in Northern Thailand.

9. PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The following qualifications and experience will be considered an advantage:

- experience supporting key informant interviews, focus-group discussions, surveys, field research, or stakeholder consultations;
- experience preparing interview summaries, field notes, meeting minutes, or research reports;
- experience using qualitative data-management or analysis tools;
- ability to prepare basic charts, stakeholder maps, value-chain maps, matrices, or data visualisations;
- familiarity with reference-management tools and citation practices;
- knowledge of agriculture, food industries, MSMEs, regional development, cluster development, or business-support ecosystems;
- experience coordinating with government agencies, businesses, universities, communities, or development organizations;
- experience conducting research in Northern Thailand; and
- responsible use of digital or AI-enabled tools for research review, transcription, translation, data organization, or preliminary analysis.

10. CORE COMPETENCIES

The successful candidate should demonstrate:

- strong attention to detail;
- analytical and critical-thinking skills;
- clear and structured written communication;
- ability to organize complex information;
- professional communication with stakeholders;
- reliability and responsiveness;
- ability to work independently and collaboratively;
- willingness to learn and receive feedback;
- respect for confidentiality and research ethics; and
- ability to work in a changing project environment.

11. PROFESSIONAL FEE

The maximum available professional fee for the assignment is:

THB 120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand Baht Only)

The fee will be paid against satisfactory completion of agreed deliverables.

The detailed payment schedule, tax treatment, invoicing requirements, reimbursable expenses, and other payment conditions will be specified in the consultancy agreement with the selected candidate.

Approved project-related travel and fieldwork expenses will be handled separately in accordance with Kenan Foundation Asia's applicable policies and the approved project budget.

Interested applicants are invited to submit full resume indicating qualifications
And experiences, and cover letter to Natthal@kenan-asia.org (Khun Nattha – Senior Consultant)
With the subject line:

Application for TOR Junior Researcher Consultant - Candidate's name

Further information, please contact 02-260-0380