

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

| Title: | Funding Code: | Type of engagement: | Duty Station: |
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| International Consultancy for Nutrition Advocacy | WBS: SC 220013 (2460/A0/06/200/001/002) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Part-Time* <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Full-Time * | UNICEF Lao PDR Office, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| <p>Purpose of Activity/Assignment:</p> <p>The nutrition situation in Lao PDR remains concerning, with key indicators showing minimal improvement. Stunting rates among children remained stagnant, from 33% in 2017 to 32.8% in 2023, indicating ongoing issues with chronic undernutrition. Wasting has worsened, rising from 9% to 10.7%, signaling an increase in acute malnutrition. Poor feeding practices are a significant challenge, as only slightly more than one in four children receive adequate nutrition for healthy growth and development. The current economic crisis has exacerbated these issues, disproportionately affecting children and further straining household resources.</p> <p>The management and allocation of funding for nutrition programs in Lao PDR face significant challenges due to inadequate financial oversight. Nutrition is not designated as a separate sector in the national budget, leading to its funds being dispersed among various sectoral ministries. This fragmentation complicates budget transparency and efficiency, making it difficult to track investments aimed at achieving critical nutrition targets. As a result, nutrition objectives are not effectively integrated into sectoral budget plans or reflected in proposals submitted to the Ministry of Finance. This lack of earmarked and ring-fenced funding creates a major barrier to improving nutrition outcomes.</p> <p>Current nutrition policies and strategies in Lao PDR also face several shortcomings. The limited integration and coordination across sectors hinder the effective implementation of nutrition interventions. Additionally, the absence of clear budget lines and financial commitments specifically for nutrition makes it challenging to monitor and allocate resources effectively. Existing strategies often fail to address the underlying socioeconomic determinants of malnutrition, reducing their long-term impact.</p> <p>To address these issues, efficient monitoring and tracking of nutrition investments are crucial. With dwindling resources, improving operational efficiency and effectiveness in strategy is necessary. Evidence-based programming and decision-making are essential for this. The National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN) plays a critical role in this regard by consolidating data from various sectors to support evidence-based policies and strategies. Supported by the EU Delegation and UNICEF, NIPN facilitates multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder dialogue, contributing to the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Nutrition (2021-2025) and aiming to improve human nutrition through a coordinated, data-driven approach.</p> <p>UNICEF currently supports the implementation of nutrition programmes in the country using the systems approach. This involves capacitating sectors to design and implement evidence-based nutrition actions across the country. In line with this, UNICEF supports the Socio-economic Policy Research Institute (SPRI), of the Lao Academy of Social and Economic Sciences (LASES) in generating evidence through data analysis and research to influence nutrition policy formulation in the country. This is impacting on planning, budgeting and implementation of nutrition interventions in the country as well as advocacy for an increased public financing in nutrition.</p> <p>As part of the ongoing system strengthening efforts on policy support, UNICEF seeks to hire an international consultant to conduct regular and ongoing evidence-based policy analysis, strategy development and advocacy in relation to Nutrition.</p> <p>The Consultant shall be based in Laos at Socio-economic Policy Research Institute (SPRI), Lao Academy of Social and Economic Sciences (LASES) with frequent travel to provincial level. She/he supports various streams of work at the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU), hosted by the SPRI, LASES. The consultant will work closely with the Data Analysis Unit (DAU) hosted by the Development Research Institute (DRI), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and the UNICEF Nutrition team. This shall include the following:</p> <p>a. Policy analysis and strategic planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide technical support to the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) in strengthening stakeholder capacity in nutrition governance, advocacy, policy analysis, financing and evidence-based decision-making. | | | |

- ✓ Utilize and update policy landscape analysis of nutrition, existing financial and sectoral programme data to identify gaps and opportunities.
- ✓ Assist the government in prioritize key nutrition issues based on evidence and develop strategic solutions for integration into national and subnational development plans.
- ✓ Support the government in developing a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy, aligned with national nutrition priorities to secure sustainable financial and technical resources for nutrition.
- ✓ Facilitate the nutrition-sensitive policy integration workshop at central level to support the key sectors in the inclusion of nutrition objectives in their broader sector policies and strategies.

b. Advocacy and communication

- ✓ Support the SPRI in design and execute advocacy matrix with targeted audiences for nutrition, focusing on key objectives, messages, channels and desired outcomes.
- ✓ Technical support in producing and disseminating advocacy materials such as budget briefs, infographics, fact sheets, and analytical reports tailored to different audiences.
- ✓ Support the government in facilitate regular multi-stakeholder platforms that bring together Government sectors, donors, UN agencies, academia, private sector stakeholders, and civil society to promote inclusive public debates and nutrition policy adoption.
- ✓ Strengthen the capacity of PAU in communicating findings and recommendations to a broad audience, including national and subnational stakeholders, using various platforms to advocate for improved public investments in nutrition.
- ✓ Support the UNICEF nutrition team in conducting targeted advocacy campaigns and preparing for high-level meetings to influence policy makers, emphasizing the importance of nutrition in national development and urging for stronger policies and legislations.

c. Research and evidence generation

- ✓ Support the SPRI in conducting secondary research and generating data on nutrition indicators, policies and budget allocations to inform policy decisions and advocacy efforts.
- ✓ Support the NIPN team in developing and presenting evidence-based recommendations to National Nutrition Committee to address identified nutrition challenges and ensure alignment with national priorities.
- ✓ Assist the PAU in creating knowledge products such as research reports and policy briefs highlighting critical nutrition issues and proposing practical solutions.
- ✓ Support the SPRI in using research findings and data to raise awareness of key budget policies, advocating for inclusive and improved budget, tax policies and public investments in nutrition.

Undertake other relevant tasks to support the work of the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) as requested by the Head of the PAU and the UNICEF nutrition team.

The consultant will be working from the designated government office at the Socio-economic Policy Research Institute (SPRI), LASES, where she/he will be based for the duration of the assignment.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES NO If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

10 months (i.e. youth advocates aged 17+)

Child data role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

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| Budget Year: 2024/25 | Requesting Section/Issuing Office: Nutrition Section, Lao PDR | Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff: This assignment is part of the system strengthening interventions of the Nutrition Section where specialized technical assistance is provided to partner institutions to build their capacity through skills transfer. The Section currently lacks the capacity to undertake the identified streams of work. The activities are tied to donor funds which are time bound. |
| Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify: All the activities are contained in the 2023/24 rolling workplan of the section. | | |
| Consultant sourcing: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both Competitive Selection: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Roster Single Source Selection <input type="checkbox"/> (Emergency - Director's approval) | | Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA – Individual Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment |
| If Extension, Justification for extension: | | |
| Supervisor: Kovalan Kumaran, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF Lao PDR | Start Date: 01/11/2024 | End Date: 31/10/2025 Period: 12 months |

| Work Assignments Overview | Deliverables/Outputs | Delivery deadline |
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| <p>Provide technical support, training and guidance to the staff and team working with the NIPN Policy Analysis Unit at the SPRI, to conduct regular and ongoing evidence-based policy analysis, strategy development and advocacy in relation to nutrition.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop training modules on policy analysis and advocacy for nutrition. - Organize and deliver a central training session for stakeholders on policy analysis and advocacy. (Field visit for 4 days) - Update and utilize the policy landscape analysis, existing budget and sectoral data on nutrition to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. - Support SPRI in designing an advocacy matrix with targeted audiences including policy makers for nutrition, focusing on key objectives, messages, channels and desired outcomes and prepare for initial implementation. - Review and finalise the sustainability plan for NIPN aligned with national priorities for nutrition. - Support the SPRI in one subnational dissemination meeting for sharing nutrition key findings with provincial assembly. (Field visit for 4 days) - Support the PAU in drafting objectives, literature review and methodology for two research topics. - Related tasks that may be agreed on with supervisor and section chief. | <p>31 December 2024</p> |
| <p>Provide technical support, training and guidance to the staff and team working with the NIPN Policy Analysis Unit at the SPRI, to conduct regular and ongoing evidence-based policy analysis, strategy development and advocacy in relation to nutrition.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce and distribute key advocacy materials, such as budget briefs and infographics, tailored to different stakeholders. - Support the PAU in performing statistical analysis, conclusions and recommendations for two research papers. - Conduct analysis on the current funding landscape for nutrition including existing donors, funding mechanisms and gaps in financial resources. - Technical inputs to SPRI in drafting the resource mobilization strategy outlines objectives, strategies and implementation plan for securing financial resources for nutrition. Support the annual nutrition research conference to present and discuss research findings with stakeholders. - Update and distribute advocacy materials based on new advocacy matrix and conduct one targeted high-level meeting to influence policymakers (Field visit for 2 days). - Conduct two structured training sessions for targeted provinces in policy analysis, strategy development and evidence-based decision making for nutrition. (Field visit for 8 days) - Support the DAU in training of provinces in policy analysis and evidence-based action plans. (Field visit for 4 days) - Related tasks that may be agreed on with supervisor and section chief. | <p>31 March 2025</p> |
| <p>Provide technical support, training and guidance to the staff and team working with the NIPN Policy Analysis Unit at the SPRI, to conduct regular and</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop training modules on strategy development for nutrition. - Conduct a workshop on basic concepts and steps for strategy development targeting central officials. (Field visit for 5 days) | <p>30 June 2025</p> |

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| <p>ongoing evidence-based policy analysis, strategy development and advocacy in relation to nutrition.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the PAU in writing two policy briefs based on research studies. - Support SPRI in producing and distributing advocacy materials based on new advocacy matrix and organize one high-level meeting to influence policymakers. (Field visit for 2 days) - Support 2 targeted provinces in developing localized nutrition evidence-based action plan matrix templates (not more than 5 pages) that align with national policies. (Field visit for 5 days) - Related tasks that may be agreed on with supervisor and section chief. | |
| <p>Provide technical support, training and guidance to the staff and team working with the NIPN Policy Analysis Unit at the SPRI, to conduct regular and ongoing evidence-based policy analysis, strategy development and advocacy in relation to nutrition.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile and produce an annual report summarizing achievements, lessons learned, best practices, challenges and recommendations in policy analysis, strategic planning, and advocacy efforts. - Document and develop one case study highlighting successful subnational implementation of NIPN, capturing key lessons and best practices. (Field visit for 5 days) - Support SPRI in producing and distributing advocacy materials based on new advocacy matrix and organize one high-level meeting to influence policymakers. (Field visit for 2 days) - Support two targeted provinces in developing localized nutrition evidence-based action plan matrix templates (not more than 5 pages) that align with national policies. (Field visit for 5 days) - Prepare key messages on nutrition to support the Government in advocacy and dissemination of nutrition findings at provincial level. - Related tasks that may be agreed on with supervisor and section chief. | <p>30 September 2025</p> |

United Nations Children's Fund

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| Estimated Consultancy fee | | |
| Consultancy fee | | |
| Travel International (if applicable) | | |
| Travel Local (please include travel plan) A total of 46 days travel | | |
| DSA (if applicable) | | |
| Health insurance | | |
| Total estimated consultancy costs¹ | | |
| Minimum Qualifications required*: | Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required *: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Master's or an advanced university degree in public health, nutrition, economics, development studies, international affairs, political science, social sciences, public policy or other relevant discipline ▪ Minimum of 8 years of experience in development of policies, strategies and advocacy for nutrition and delivery of similar products and materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proven experience in conducting policy analysis and advocacy, development of strategies, particularly in nutrition, with a deep understanding of how to influence and shape policy decisions. ▪ Extensive knowledge of challenges and opportunities in the nutrition sector, including familiarity with global, regional and national nutrition policies, frameworks and strategies. ▪ Exceptional communication skills, both written and oral, with the ability to craft compelling advocacy messages and materials, and experience in engaging and building relationships with diverse stakeholders. ▪ Knowledge in data analysis and evidence-based advocacy including interpreting data and using it to create compelling, evidence-driven arguments for effective policy influence and decision making. ▪ Ability to conduct rigorous research, analyze complex data, and generate evidence-based recommendations for policy and advocacy work, with experience in using data to inform strategy and decision-making processes. ▪ Strong project management skills, including planning, implementation and monitoring of advocacy initiatives, with experience in developing and executing strategic plans to achieve measurable impact in nutrition policy and programming. ▪ Excellent skills in diplomacy, facilitation, institutional change and dialogue creation to achieve consensus. ▪ Experience in convening multiple governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and facilitating a dialogue and creating a debate. | |
| Submission of applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letter of Interest (cover letter) ▪ CV or Resume | | |

- Performance evaluation reports or references of similar consultancy assignments (if available)
- Financial proposal: All-inclusive lump-sum cost, including travel, accommodation cost and insurance with Medevac for this assignment as per work assignment

Evaluation Criteria (This will be used for the [Selection Report](#) (for clarification see [Guidance](#)))

A) Technical Evaluation (minimum 50 and maximum 80 Points), 80 points

Degree Education in (10 points)

- ✓ Master's or an advanced university degree in public health, nutrition, economics, development studies, international affairs, political science, social sciences, public policy or other relevant discipline

Knowledge of (20 points)

- ✓ Extensive knowledge of challenges and opportunities in the nutrition sector, including familiarity with global, regional and national nutrition policies, frameworks and strategies.
- ✓ Knowledge in data analysis and evidence-based advocacy including interpreting data and using it to create compelling, evidence-driven arguments for effective policy influence and decision making.

Experience in (40 points)

- ✓ Minimum of 8 years of experience in development of policies, strategies and advocacy for nutrition and delivery of similar products and materials.
- ✓ Proven experience in conducting policy analysis and advocacy, development of strategies, particularly in nutrition, with a deep understanding of how to influence and shape policy decisions.
- ✓ Ability to conduct rigorous research, analyze complex data, and generate evidence-based recommendations for policy and advocacy work, with experience in using data to inform strategy and decision-making processes.
- ✓ Strong project management skills, including planning, implementation and monitoring of advocacy initiatives, with experience in developing and executing strategic plans to achieve measurable impact in nutrition policy and programming.
- ✓ Exceptional communication skills, both written and oral, with the ability to craft compelling advocacy messages and materials, and experience in engaging and building relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- ✓ Experience in convening multiple governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and facilitating a dialogue and creating a debate.
- ✓ Excellent skills in diplomacy, facilitation, institutional change and dialogue creation to achieve consensus.

Quality of past work (e.g. understanding, methodology) (10 points)

- ✓ Assessment of previous work including written and analytical skills
- ✓ Reference checks

B) Financial Proposal (maximum 20 and minimum 10 Points), 20 points

The maximum number of points shall be allotted to the lowest Financial Proposal that is opened /evaluated and compared among those technical qualified candidates who have attained a minimum 50 points score in the technical evaluation. Other Financial Proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price.

The Contract shall be awarded to the candidate obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview.

Administrative details:

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| <p>Visa assistance required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based: The consultant will be working from the designated government office at the Socio-economic Policy Research Institute (SPRI), LASES, where she/he will be based for the duration of the assignment.</p> | <p>If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Internet access required: <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
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¹ Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

Text to be added to all TORs:

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.

UNICEF offers [reasonable accommodation](#) for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.
