



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NATIONAL CONTRACTS

Requesting Section: WASH

Title: Individual National consultancy to support Impacts of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation on Children in Lao PDR and priority mitigation options

1. Background and rationale

Climate change and environmental degradation are threatening to undermine many of the gains made in child survival and development. Over a billion children are already at extremely high risk of environmental and climate hazards including heat waves, droughts, floods and cyclones. The climate crisis is a child rights crisis, a concern iterated by H.E Mme Bounkham Vorachit, the Lao PDR Minister for Natural Resource and Environment, to the Global Forum for Children and Youth in December 2021. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Environment stated that “no group is more vulnerable to environmental harm than children. Air pollution, water pollution and exposure to toxic substances, together with other types of environmental harm, cause 1.5 million deaths of children under the age of 5 every year, and contribute to disease, disability and early mortality throughout their life. In addition, climate change and the loss of biodiversity threaten to cause long-term effects that will blight children’s lives for years to come. Making matters worse, children are often not able to exercise their rights, including their rights to information, participation and access to effective remedies”.

Children in Lao PDR are highly vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. Access to social services (nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, education, protection and shelter) is challenged for many children, with 70% of children in the country suffering from multidimensional poverty. Impacts of climate change and environmental degradation have the potential to worsen these challenges, contributing to increased child poverty nationally.

Lao PDR faces projected warming of 3.6°C by the 2090s against the baseline conditions over 1986–2005, under the highest emissions pathway. Rises in annual maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to be more rapid than the rise in average temperature and will likely amplify pressure on human health, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Increased incidence of extreme heat represents a major threat to human health, particularly for urban populations. Without action, the population annually exposed to river flooding is projected to double to over 80,000 people by the 2030s. However, flooding impacts could be even greater as the potential for increased loss and damage from flash flooding and landslides are poorly understood. The impacts of climate change are likely to fall disproportionately on the poorer and more marginalized communities. Inequality is widening in Lao PDR and evidence suggests that this may further amplify the impacts of climate-related disasters.

Regional climate change projections indicate increases in temperatures and in the frequency and intensity of floods and droughts, all of which have implications for health and health system responses and food security. Floods and droughts commonly affect children’s schooling, and health and food security

challenges further exacerbate their capacity to attend school and to learn. The disruption caused by floods also places children in far more vulnerable situations, particularly those displaced.

There are 7 million deaths every year due to exposure to air pollution alone. It is a key environmental issue affecting children in nearly every country, with more than 90% of the world's children breathing toxic air every day. Vientiane City experienced the worst air quality in the world in April 2020. Clean air is one of the fundamental rights of every child as it affects many aspects of child survival, health and development throughout the course of their life. Pollution of water resources has resulted in only 14% of children in Lao PDR having access to drinking water unpolluted by fecal wastes. Recent studies indicate that the average lead concentration in children in Lao PDR are above 5 µg/dL, a level at which WHO associates with decreased intelligence in children, behavioral difficulties and learning problems. Sources of lead include residual soil and dust contamination from the recent phasing out of leaded fuels in Lao PDR; lead plumbing fixtures; lead-based paints; lead-acid batteries; burning of wastes and small- and large-scale industrial processes.

Lao PDR has recognized climate change as one of the key challenges affecting communities' health, livelihoods and economic growth in the 9th NSEDP, which prioritizes Green Growth and climate adaptation. However, existing climate policies and plans seem to have limited recognition and inclusion of children's environmental rights and their unique vulnerabilities and needs. For instance, there is limited reflection and prioritization of climate vulnerability and adaptation needs of key social sectors such as education and social protection systems that are critical for children's climate resilience. At the same time, proposed measures and actions in the country's ambitious climate plans and policies will need to address significant challenges and barriers including high upfront investment costs, technical capacity, effective coordination and public support. There are also challenges related to uncertainties of climate change and its impacts, lack of data and research on coping capacities and vulnerabilities in sectors and local area and lack of tools to support implementation, as identified in the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

UNICEF as the UN agency mandated to protect the rights of every child, including children's environmental rights, intends to launch a comprehensive assessment on children and climate change as part of its contribution to national climate and environmental efforts, with a focus on children's unique vulnerabilities, needs and perspectives in Lao PDR.

2. Objective of consultancy assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to assist and support Institutional Consultants by providing required data and evidence on the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on children. This will also include providing inputs, coordination with stakeholders towards data collection, support in synthesizing reports, policies and other relevant materials available in Lao and English.

The National consultant for climate change will also support Institutional consultants in timely preparation of all reports and documentation, with all mandatory and research specific Annexes and supporting documentation. The national consultant will provide expert analysis and written submission of parts of the project document related to the area of climate change expertise.

3. Expected outputs

The following key deliverables are expected:

- i. Prepare inputs and support the required analyses/studies, as agreed with the Institutional Consultant Team Leader. This include but not limited to preparing inputs for the secondary research, analysis of policies and negotiations with line ministries to share research and documents and if required coordinate to conduct interviews with ministries and stakeholders, support in conducting Focus Group Discussions and one to one interviews.
- ii. Prepare inputs and support the development of final deliverables, as agreed with the direct supervisor.
- iii. Contribute to the validation workshop and support all necessary revisions that arise during the workshop, as appropriate.
- iv. Develop a workshop report with key findings from the different workshop sessions.
- v. Support and coordinate towards inception report on the assignment methodology, process and timelines
- vi. Collaborate with the Institutional consultants to report on the projected impacts of climate and environmental policies and measures on children.
- vii. Assist with preparing Policy briefs, presentations, technical notes, fact sheets on the key findings of the assignment, recommendations and work as a team member to share this assignment experience with UNICEF country offices, regional offices and HQ.

4. Duration

Tentative contract duration is 3 months starting from July 22 – October 22, 2022. Bidders may propose a realistic timeline for the implementation of tasks and deliverables.

Reports will be prepared according to the UNICEF Style Guide and UNICEF Brand Toolkit (to be shared with the awarding company). All deliverables must be in professional level standard English.

Copyright of all the deliverables to be produced through this assignment will rest with the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MoNRE) and UNICEF.

5. Deliverables:

Deliverables	Time (working days)
<p>1st Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs into the inception report on the assignment methodology, process and timelines • Inputs and support for the analyses/studies, as agreed with the Institutional Consultant Team Leader, including preparing inputs for the secondary research, analysis of policies and negotiations with line ministries to share research and documents and if required coordinate to conduct interviews with ministries and stakeholders, support in conducting Focus Group Discussions and one to one interviews 	<p>Month 1 (21 working days)</p>

<p>2nd Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs and support the required analyses/studies, as agreed with the Institutional Consultant Team Leader, including preparing inputs for the secondary research, analysis of policies and negotiations with line ministries to share research and documents and if required coordinate to conduct interviews with ministries and stakeholders, support in conducting Focus Group Discussions and one to one interviews • Collaboration with the Institutional consultants to report on the projected impacts of climate and environmental policies and measures on children. 	<p>Month 2 (21 Working days)</p>
<p>3rd Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs and support to the development of final deliverables, as agreed with the Institutional Consultant Team Leader. • Contributions to the validation workshop and necessary revisions that arise during the workshop, as appropriate. • Input into the workshop report with key findings from the different workshop sessions. • Assistance with preparing Policy briefs, presentations, technical notes, fact sheets on the key findings of the assignment and recommendations 	<p>Month 3 (21 Working days)</p>

6. Payment Schedule linked to deliverables:

Payment will be made in accordance with UNICEF financial rules and regulations and based on the deliverables below:

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Payment (including business travel fee) be directly linked with satisfactory deliverables</i>	<i>Reporting Requirements for each deliverable</i>
1 st Payment:	Submission of first deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
2 nd Payment:	Submission of second deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
3 rd Payment:	Submission of third deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables

** The fees shall be calculated based on the days estimated to complete the assignment in the Terms of Reference and shall be considered the maximum compensation as part of a lump sum contract and agreed on a work plan for submission of deliverables. No additional fees shall be paid to complete the assignment. Payment will be made upon delivery of all final products and full and satisfactory completion of the assignment.*

7. Reporting requirements

The research will be managed by UNICEF Lao PDR Country Office (CO) Chief of WASH who will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and management of the assignment. The assignment lead will ensure the quality and independence of the assessments and guarantee its alignment with Research, Study and Evaluation Standards and Ethical Guidelines and other relevant procedures and provide quality assurance on the relevance of the findings and conclusions, and the implement ability of recommendations.

The assignment lead will work in collaboration with relevant sections of UNICEF CO and the UNICEF Lao PDR Climate Consultant. Additional quality assurance will be provided as needed by Regional Advisers and HQ technical staff. The Final Report will need to be rated as satisfactory by UNICEF's external quality assurance facility.

Reference group

A Reference Group composed of government, academic, private sector, youth experts and young people will be established and coordinated by Government with support from UNICEF to act as an advisory body and provide inputs on all main research deliverables. The Reference Group is expected to provide feedback during the research process and on the deliverables; comment on the approach and methods and facilitate access to data and information. Representatives of the Reference Group will participate in elaboration of recommendations through active contribution during debriefing meetings and by providing feedback to the draft inception and final reports.

8. Location and Duration

The indicative starting date for this work is 22 July 2022, with completion 22 October 2022. The work assignment will be done from the consultant's premises in Lao PDR, but will involve also working in person at Government premises, the UNICEF Lao Country Office and some fieldwork in locations across Lao PDR.

9. Qualification and experience requirements

The National Consultant should have substantive expertise in coordinating with different stakeholders and conducting similar research and should not have any conflict of interest with respect to UNICEF.

The research will have to be conducted by a consultant covering the below requirements:

- Documented extensive experience (at least 2-3 full years) in conducting similar research (having conducted similar climate-related research for UNICEF and UN agencies is an asset).
- Proven expertise in one or more of and at least sound knowledge of all of the following areas: environmental management, environmental economics, climate change, social policy and public finance, governance, private sector engagement;
- Proven extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
- Sound knowledge on child rights, Human Rights Based Approach and gender equality;
- Excellent report writing skills in Lao and English;
- Good communication skills

The consultant must remain in strict adherence with UNICEF Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct.

10. Administrative issues

The selected Research Consultant will undertake the work in Lao PDR. UNICEF will help arrange meetings with MoNRE. Reasonable administrative support will be provided to the agency, although translation of Lao documents for the purpose of this study is a responsibility of the service provider.

The consultant may be asked to undertake regular in-country travel to provinces and districts as part of this assignment for which UNICEF will cover the costs in accordance with UNICEF regulations.

Copyright of all the deliverables to be produced through this assignment will rest with the MoNRE and UNICEF.

The cost of medical insurance, including Medical Evacuation (required for consultants who are not working from their home) should be included in the proposal.

11. Contract Supervisor

The Consultant will report to and be supervised by the Chief of WASH. The Consultant will also be guided by the Institutional Consultancy supervisor in his/her work.

12. Nature of 'Penalty Clause' to be Stipulated in Contract:

Unsatisfactory performance: In case of unsatisfactory performance the contract will be terminated by notification letter sent five (5) business days prior to the termination date in the case of contracts for a total period of less than two (2) months, and ten (10) business days prior to the termination date in the case of contracts for a longer period.

Performance indicators: Consultants' performance will be evaluated against the following criteria: timeliness, quality, and relevance/feasibility of recommendations for UNICEF Lao PDR.

13. Submission of applications:

Interested candidates are kindly requested to apply and upload the following documents to:

<http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/>

- Letter of Interest (cover letter)
- CV or Resume
- Performance evaluation reports or references of similar consultancy assignments (if available)
- Financial proposal: Lump-sum offer with the cost breakdown: Consultancy fees and medical insurance.

The deadline for applications is 21 July 2022.

14. Evaluation process and methods

A two-stage procedure shall be utilized in evaluating proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal being compared. Applications shall therefore contain the following required documentation:

1. Technical proposal including most updated CV, a cover letter and work samples of previous formative studies done.

2. Financial Proposal: Lump-sum offer with the cost breakdown: Consultancy fees and medical insurance.
No financial information should be contained in the technical proposal.

For evaluation and selection method, the Cumulative Analysis Method (weight combined score method) shall be used for this recruitment:

a) Technical Proposal (max. 100 points) weight 70%

- Service provider should have an advanced university degree in Social Sciences, Climate or Environmental Sciences, Statistics, Development or a similarly relevant discipline – 15 points
- At least 5 years of experience in working in the field of Climate or Environment and Development – 15 points
- Specific experience in climate or environmental studies – 20 points
- Demonstrated experience working with Government on climate and environment in Lao PDR – 15 points
- Excellent strategic vision and communication skills, substantive facilitation skills – 10 points
- Work samples - 25 points

b) Financial Proposal (max. 100 points) weight 30%

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 70 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 institution obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview.

The applicants should provide evidence of medical insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation, for the whole duration of the assignment as part of the financial proposal submission.