

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**Vientiane, Lao PDR****Individual Consultancy: Individual contract to coordinate and support implementation of nutrition interventions through health system****Terms of Reference****1. Background:**

Lao PDR has made significant progress in reduction of child malnutrition in the last decade especially in stunting prevalence which has reduced from 44% to 33% as per Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS), conducted in 2012 and 2017, however acute malnutrition prevalence in children < 5 years has increased during the period from 6% to 9% posing threat to increased chances of morbidity and mortality. The prevalence of acute malnutrition varies widely across provinces, wealth quintiles, ethno-linguistic groups and education levels. The global evidence estimates that children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) are about 11 times more likely to die than healthy children. Moreover, a recent Lancet publication reveals that there will be an increase of 14.3% of acute malnutrition children due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of Lao PDR has recently taken significant efforts to combat the issue of malnutrition by enhancing infant and young child feeding practices through building capacity of frontline workers on IYCF counselling practices at the provincial level and launching of first cohort of the Breastfeeding Accreditation Course to create a pool of certified breastfeeding counselors to support and enhance counseling services for mothers at health facilities. However, further efforts are required to raise the caliber of training programs, investigate alternate delivery options, and identify new channels with application potential, such as mHealth services etc.

Investments have been made to develop the National program for the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM), which entails creating national guidelines, national training materials, and job aids for the program's different components, including community-based, outpatient, and inpatient identification, admission, treatment and management of children with moderate or severe acute malnutrition. Due to high staff turnover and focal point changes, training more individuals is still necessary, even though funding was extended to roll out trainings for province and district level personnel. UNICEF is also supporting in the development of an online course to help front-line workers to enhance their skills and expertise on management and treatment of SAM children through accessing online resources.

As the IMAM program advocates early detection and detection of children through community mobilization and involvement, as well as quick referral of SAM children to health facilities, it necessitates strong coordination among departments and staff. This is one of the ongoing IMAM program's challenges in the country. Another challenge is the regarding the management of the supply chain of nutrition commodities needed at health facility level to provide uninterrupted treatment and management of severe acute malnutrition. Although UNICEF has fully funded and supported procurement efforts since the program's conception, there are still problems with government bureaucratic procedures for custom clearance and transportation that need to be resolved as well as with the forecasting, distribution and monitoring of supplies to/at subnational level. Hence too prevent stock outs and supply expiration, the management of the supply chain for nutrition commodities by the Ministry of Health needs to be strengthened.

UNICEF intends to hire a senior consultant with strong liaison skills within key health departments who can support in facilitating IMAM/ IYCF technical working group meetings where department duties and responsibilities may be discussed and agreed upon to improve program coverage and outcomes. The consultant will also assist in the further development of National / Provincial level

IMAM Scale-up Plan and support in capacity building, monitoring and completion of online IMAM videos and pre-testing of e-learning wasting course for nutrition staffs. In addition, the consultant will also support in liaising and coordination with senior government health officers to develop consensus for strengthening nutrition intervention implemented through health system and platform.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to support the Ministry of Health strengthen the planning and implementation of nutrition intervention through health system.

3. Work Assignment:

The consultant shall work closely with the Ministry of Health, specifically Center of Nutrition & Department of HealthCare and Rehabilitation, to coordinate and assist in scaling up IMAM program in target provinces and health facilities with high case load of acute malnutrition. The support will include technical support to strengthened coverage, continuity, and quality of interventions for screening, identification, referral and management of children with severe acute malnutrition. The consultant will support Center of Nutrition (CN) & Department of Healthcare and Rehabilitation (DHR) in planning, implementation, monitoring and review of the Inpatient and Outpatient management of severe acute malnutrition children through building linkages and coordination with multiple department including of provincial and district level health departments, academic institutions and other development partners to accelerate implementation of nutrition programming for prevention and treatment of sever acute malnutrition children. Other support will include for the pretesting and adjusting modules for a recently developed of e- learning course of IMAM including support to provide trainings for program managers and frontline workers on the identification, admission, treatment and follow up for children with acute malnutrition including the scale up of the e- learning course. The consultant will also assist with IYCF programming efforts including the technical and operational support for new cohorts of the Breastfeeding Accreditation (BFA) course to increase the number of certified breastfeeding counselors and increase access to qualified counseling services for pregnant and lactating women. Support will also be required to support the government in delivering quality training on optimal infant and young child feeding practices.

More specifically, in consultation with the UNICEF Nutrition Team, the consultant shall support in:

- Technical Support to Center of Nutrition & DHR in scaling up of IMAM program in target provinces / facilities by strengthening regular screening, early identification and referral mechanism of acute malnourished children.
- Support in roll out of cascade level IMAM trainings for both community and facility based management programmes.
- Support coordination meetings to strengthen information management system of IMAM program to assess the outcome of program and report on key IMAM indicators.
- Support the pretesting, revisions and roll out of e- learning wasting course for nutrition workers.
- Support in organizing meetings with MPSC, Center of Nutrition, and DHR to make sure that nutrition supplies are integrated into the main supply chain system and that stock outs don't occur in the targeted facilities.
- Support in coordination and facilitating IMAM/ IYCF technical core group meeting to discuss issues, challenges and solution to improve coverage and outcome of program.
- Technical support to ensure that the upcoming batches of Breastfeeding Accreditation (BFA) course is organized with quality standards and lesson learned of previous session are taken into consideration.
- Support coordination meetings with the Center of Nutrition and MCHC department to strengthen and improve preventative nutrition interventions implemented through health system, especially vitamin A, iron, and programing to improve breastfeeding practices.

4. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

- Medical doctor with preferably pediatric background or similar qualification
- At least 10 years of proven experience of working with government health system and a good understanding of IMAM programming in the Lao context
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of training approaches, skills and expertise in leading trainings on both preventive and curative nutrition interventions.
- Familiar with global guidance and protocol of treatment and management of severe acute malnutrition programmes.
- Understanding of key OBGY/Pediatric/BF/EENC services and practices in Lao PDR
- In-depth understanding and knowledge of the government internal process and administrative procedures related to the IMAM programme
- Strong interpersonal communication, persuasion, and training skills;
- Good organization skills including advocacy and dialoging skills with the government officials at decision making levels.
- Strong Lao language skills
- Excellent written and spoken English, an advantage

5. Location:

Consultant shall be based in Vientiane (Nutrition Centre or UNICEF) with occasional travel to the field.

6. Duration:

The assignment is expected to be full time for 11.5 months from approximately **1st Oct 2022- 15th Sept 2023**

7. Reporting Requirements:

The consultant will be under contract to UNICEF Lao PDR and report to the Nutrition Specialist with support of Chief of Nutrition as well as the wider nutrition team for administrative arrangements.

8. Payment Schedule linked to deliverables:

Payment is against deliverables upon satisfactory completion of the activity and certified by the Nutrition Specialist - UNICEF

A direct payment will be made to the service provider upon submission of invoices and related reports

Payment will be made in USD within 30 days of submission of invoice as per UNICEF guideline.

Deliverables	Payment	Reporting Requirements for each deliverable
	(including business travel fee) be directly linked with satisfactory deliverables	
Deliverable: - 1 - Based on agreed priorities develop an Annual Work Plan of Activities for the contract period. Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Overview report Work priorities signed by the supervisor

Deliverable: - 2 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable:- 3 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 4 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract)	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 5 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 6 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 7 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 8- Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 9 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable :- 10 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable:- 11 - Monthly report summarizing the work undertaken. List of deliverables for the coming month agreed with and signed by the Supervisor	8% of total value of contract (\$ 5600)	Monthly Report, Work priorities signed by the supervisor
Deliverable:- 12 - Final Report of work planned and accomplished	12% of total value of contract	Final Report

9. Administrative Issues:

- The consultant will complete all her/his tasks as mentioned above on deliverables. Local travel will be part of this TOR for which appropriate reimbursement will be provided after approval of travel costs in advance for each trip by the UNICEF Laos Office.
- The applicants should provide medical insurance covering medical evacuation for the whole duration of the assignment -as part of the financial proposal submission.
- The consultant is expected to use his/her own computer/laptop for the duration of the assignment.
- The copy rights of all the deliverables to be produced through this assignment will remain with UNICEF.

10. Contract supervisor:

The Consultant shall work under the general supervision of Nutrition Manager of UNICEF. The consultant is always expected to observe the highest standard of professional ethics and integrity, promote a results-oriented approach in the area of his/her responsibility and accountability and report irregularities to his/her supervisor.

11. 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.

12. 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: All-inclusive lump-sum cost

The deadline for applications is **22th Sep 2022**

13. Assessment Criteria:

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

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

- Degree/ Education in (20 points)
 - Medical doctor with preferably pediatric background or similar qualification
 - Strong interpersonal communication, persuasion, and training skills
- Knowledge of (20 points)
 - Familiar with global guidance and protocol of treatment and management of severe acute malnutrition programmes.
 - Understanding of key OBGY/Pediatric/BF/EENC services and practices in Lao PDR
 - Excellent understanding of key OBGY/Pediatric/BF/EENC services and practices in Lao PDR
 - In-depth understanding and knowledge of the government internal process and administrative procedures related to the launching the course training
 - Strong Lao language skills
 - Excellent written and spoken English, an advantage
- Experience in..... (40 points)
 - at least 10 years clinical experience supporting IMAM program

- Excellent knowledge and understanding of training approaches, skills and expertise in leading trainings on both preventive and curative nutrition interventions.
- Quality of past work (e.g. understanding, methodology) (20 points)
 - Assessment of previous work including good organization skills including advocacy and dialoging skills with the government officials at decision making levels
 - Reference checks

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

14. Programme Area, Outputs and Specific Key Results Areas in the Rolling Work Plan:

Section Request: Nutrition

Programme Area:

Output 2: Government authorities and their partners have strengthened capacity to deliver convergent quality high-impact nutrition interventions and services

KI : 2.1 Scale up and improve the quality of the national IMAM programme

Included in approved AWP: Yes No