

**United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

**Vientiane, Lao PDR**

**Individual National Consultant to Support Risk Communication and Community Engagement  
Activities to Accelerate COVID-19 vaccination in Lao PDR**

**Terms of Reference**

## **1. Background**

For 75 years, UNICEF has been working on the ground in 190 countries and territories to promote children's survival, protection, and development. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations, and governments.

UNICEF Lao PDR is committed to support Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic in its efforts to promote and protect rights of all children and to ensure quality and equity in healthcare for all the citizens. In continuation with these efforts, UNICEF Lao PDR is glad to be supporting the Ministry of Health to promote COVID-19 vaccination and its safety and effectiveness.

In association with the National Immunization Program (NIP), Centre of Communication and Education for Health (CCEH) and with support from World Health Organization (WHO) along with other development partners, UNICEF has launched a nationwide campaign- #VaccinateLaos. The campaign was launched to align with the vaccination rollout in the country in 2021.

The campaign not only advocates for the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine but also aims at building trust and awareness and reiterates importance of following COVID appropriate behaviors (CABs) like hand washing, wearing mask and maintaining physical distance.

The campaign has been receiving positive response and active engagement from vaccine recipients resulting in spreading the positive message and encouraging more people to get vaccinated.

Along with the campaign on social media platforms, UNICEF is also working closely with CCEH and mass organizations in Lao PDR to implement risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) activities. These activities are aimed at ensuring ownership, accountability and responsibility of communities to increase uptake of vaccination.

## **2. Context on COVID-19 pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing unprecedented human and economic costs in all countries and societies across the world.

Based on the current and evolving situation in Lao PDR, COVID-19 cases are fluctuating, despite the ongoing rollout of its vaccination drive. However, the vaccination rollout has been facing few challenges in terms of ensuring communication of accurate and updated information. With the volatile nature of the situation, the information has been evolving and updating, globally as well as in Lao PDR.

It is the exact reason why there is a need to scale up the communication efforts by emphasizing on the importance to trust the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine, to get vaccinated and to continue practicing COVID appropriate behavior (CAB) irrespective of vaccination.

Along with these objectives to achieve, it is also vital to ensure routine immunization continues uninterrupted. Although children may not be at the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are one of its biggest victims as their very future is being threatened. Many children in the Southeast Asia region,

including those in Lao PDR, are now being deprived of access to life-saving vaccines due to the disruptions to key health services caused by COVID-19.

It is essential to strengthen communication around COVID-19 vaccination as well as routine immunization in Lao PDR. Only by doing so lives of families and children be restored from the damage caused by COVID-19 and ensure that no one is left behind.

### 3. Purpose

UNICEF Lao PDR plans to procure the services of a RCCE consultant. This would be a full-time consultancy which would involve timely coordination with the representatives of MOH and mass organization at central, province and district level for implementation and monitoring of various RCCE activities on-ground. The consultant will also facilitate organizing field visits as and when required and would also participate in these visits. The consultancy would also entail regular coordination with various implementing partners regarding dissemination of communication materials.

The consultant must be a mid-level professional and possesses good communication skills in Lao and English. The consultant is also expected to manage dissemination of various communication materials through the national and regional partners.

### 4. Work Assignment

Under the overall guidance of Chief of Health in UNICEF Lao PDR and Chief of NIP, the consultant will work closely with the CCEH and UNICEF Lao PDR to strengthen RCCE. In particular, the consultant will:

- Timely coordination with representatives from MOH and mass organizations at central, province and district level.
- Organize monitoring field visits in close coordination with CCEH and NIP.
- Reviewing reports from the provincial/ district representatives to understand challenges and barriers in conducting RCCE activities on-ground.
- Participating in field visits along with UNICEF and MOH representatives.
- Facilitate translations for non-Lao speakers.
- Support NIP Immunization Unit at the provincial and district level in organizing district level workshops, briefings and trainings on the need of strengthening risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), in which local government health officials, health workers, members of Village Development Committees, mass organization and local media would participate.
- Support the health center staff to conduct social mobilization and RCCE activities with the village chiefs, community leaders and Village Health Volunteers on the benefits of COVID vaccination and reaching zero-dose children for vaccination.
- Support the district and HC-level staff in implementing targeted messages in local languages using appropriate means of communication to reach underserved, hard-to-reach and remote communities.
- Perform generic tasks on the coordination role for dissemination of communication materials.

### 5. Expected Deliverables

Deliverables	Timeframe
1. Coordination with representatives of MOH and mass organizations	Throughout consultancy period
2. Reviewing reports from the field and organizing field visits with close coordination with MOH and UNICEF	Throughout consultancy period

3. Participating in field visits, communicating with key stakeholders in the field about COVID-19 vaccination and routine immunization; translating conversations for non-Lao speakers	Throughout consultancy period
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## 6. Competencies

### Professional

- Displays respect for diversity in terms of cultural, gender, religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, age sensitivity and adaptability.

### Functional

- Excellent communication skills in Lao and English
- Internet research skills, ability to handle and interpret data
- Good writing skills
- Be creative and proactive
- Ability to conceptualize, plan and execute innovative ideas
- Displays open, co-operative behavior with other team members
- Remains calm and in control, and good humored even under pressure
- Responds positively to critical feedback and differing points of view
- Sets priorities, produces quality outputs
- Flexibility to attend events during weekends, if needed
- Desire to work with and gain the confidence and respect of people with different language, national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- Respect for the principles of the Government of Lao PDR and United Nations
- Ability to multitask, respect timeframes and meet deadlines

## 7. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required

### Education

- Bachelor's Degree in communication, social work, community engagement or any other relevant qualifications.

### Experience

- At least 4 years of work experience with national or international development organization
- Experience should include working closely with MOH and/ or various stakeholders at province, district and village level.

### Language

- Native Lao individual with written and spoken proficiency in English
- Working knowledge of any other language is an asset

### Location and Duration:

The consultant is expected to be a Lao national. The duty station will be at the NIP office in Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR.

The contract will be effective from the date of signing the consultancy agreement up to 11.5 months, with the possibility of extension depending on the funding.

## **8. Reporting Requirements**

The consultant will submit progress reports and deliverables electronically and in writing to Immunization Officer, UNICEF Lao PDR.

## **9. Contract supervisor**

Immunization Officer, UNICEF Lao

## **10. 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.

## **11. Submission of applications**

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

- 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 breakdown by consultancy, fee, medical insurance covering medical evacuation (from provinces to the duty station) for the whole duration of the assignment and travel for this assignment as per work assignment.

The deadline for applications is August 11<sup>th</sup> 2022

## **12. Assessment Criteria**

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 a cover letter, updated CV, and copies of 2 relevant evaluations performed earlier by the consultant.
2. Financial Proposal: Lump-sum offer with the cost breakdown: Consultancy fee, and medical insurance covering medical evacuation (from provinces to the duty station) for the whole duration of the assignment.

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 Qualification (max. 100 points) weight 70 %
  - Degree Education in Communication, Health, Public Health, International Development, Social Science, International Relations (30 points)
  - Knowledge of Communication, Journalism, Community Development, Media Relation, Project Management (20 points)

- Experience in Communication, Health, Community Development (30 points)
- Quality of past work (e.g. understanding, methodology) (20 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 candidate obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, **subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview.**

### **13. Programme Area, Outputs and Specific Key Results Areas in the Rolling Work Plan**

Section Request: Health

Programme Area: 100

IR: 002

Milestone: 1 Strengthened immunization services to improve vaccination coverage and reach under-immunized children and missed communities

Included in approved AWP:  Yes  No