

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Vientiane, Lao PDR

Individual National Consultancy: National Education Consultant to support MoES in the development and implementation of Fundamental Quality Standards-based school development in Lao PDR

Terms of Reference

1. Background:

Since the start of the millennium the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) of the Government of the Lao PDR has made considerable progress in improving strategic policy planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation capacity in the sector of education. It recognizes, however, that much work remains to be done to further enhance the effectiveness of management and administration of the sector, including the strengthening sector monitoring and evaluation.

Against this backdrop, UNICEF is supporting MoES in the strengthening the planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation of the education sector through various activities under the EU-supported programme Partnership for Strengthening the Education System in Lao PDR (PSES). This includes the support provided to the MoES Department of Legal and Education Quality Assurance (LEQA) for the development and implementation of the ICT-enabled, Fundamental Quality Standards (FQS)-based school development process that informs district education action planning and targeting of support to schools.

The UNICEF Education Programme is seeking the support a National Education Consultant to provide hands-on, daily technical support to LEQA in the trialing and implementation of the FQS-based school development process at primary school-level, and the development of similar school development process at pre-school/early childhood education (ECE) and secondary levels. In addition, the national education consultant is to support LEQA and UNICEF with the development and trialing of FQS for District Education and Sport Bureaus (DESBs). The envisaged participatory FQS-based self-assessment of DESBs aims to help DESBs define actions for optimization of organizational structures, processes and practices, as well staff profiles and competencies; aimed at empowering them to effectively support improvements in teaching and student learning in all the schools and ECE centres/pre-schools of their districts.

2. Purpose:

Under the supervision of the Director General/assigned Deputy Director General and the UNICEF Education Manager, the National Education Consultant is responsible for giving technical assistance and support to LEQA and the UNICEF Education Programme team for the development and implementation of two clusters on interventions: i.e. 1) development and implementation of FQS-based school development at primary, secondary and ECE/preschool levels; and 2) development and trialing and FQS for DESBs aimed at empowering them to effectively support improvements in teaching and student learning in all the schools and ECE centres/pre-schools of their districts.

3. Work Assignments:

The consultant will be supporting the UNICEF Education Programme team and LEQA by providing technical inputs for key programme interventions. These include:

Development and implementation of the FQS-based school development process at primary, secondary and ECE/pre-school levels

- Supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new Primary School FQS-based school development guidelines in UNICEF target districts included providing technical inputs;

support coordination with DLEQA-UNICEF, DESBs, PESS; supporting translation as needed; supporting organization of workshops and meetings, including online consultations and prepare meeting minutes; supporting monitoring of implementation and preparing documentation about the initiatives, including lessons learned

- Informed by the lessons learned of the trial, support the review of the School development guidelines by taking the lead in updating (i.e. editing) of the guidelines, as well as the corresponding guidelines for DESB staff.
- Supporting the development and implementation of blended learning training courses on FQS-based school- development for principals and DESB staff by providing technical inputs, reviewing and quality assuring of course content, serving as a “Master trainer”, and leading the coordination with institutional consultants supporting development of blended learning courses.
- Supporting the development of early childhood education (ECE)- and secondary school Fundamental Quality Standards and corresponding school development guidelines by taking the lead in drafting of the standards and guidelines, in close coordination with UNICEF and key MoES departments, in particular the Department of Early Childhood Education and the Department of General Education.
- Supporting the development and implementation of blended learning training courses on FQS-based school- development for principals and DESB staff working at ECE and secondary levels by providing technical inputs (written and verbal), reviewing and quality assuring of course content, serving as a “Master trainer”, and leading the coordination with institutional consultants supporting development of blended learning courses, and supporting DLEQA in the trailing of these courses in target districts.
- Carry out other tasks linked to the development and implementation of the FQS-based school development process at ECE-, primary- and secondary levels as needed.

Development and trailing of FQS for District Education and Sports Bureaus

- Supporting the development and trailing of FQS for District Education and Sports Bureaus (DESBs) in target districts. This includes supporting the development and trailing of the self-assessment and planning methodology and tools; supporting the documentation of the trial and processes; and action plans that are to form an integrated part of the DESB Annual Costed Action Plans (ACSEPS), as well as (on behalf DLEQA), leading the coordination with the to be recruited institutional consultants.
- Carry out other tasks linked to the development and trailing of FQS for DESBs as needed.

4. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

Qualifications, experience and technical requirements

- A first-level university degree (bachelor’s degree or equivalent) in education, economics, public administration or related field.
- A minimum of 5 years of progressively professional experience in programme planning and management is required; of which at least three years in the education sector.
- Experience in school self-assessment and development planning is considered an advantage.
- Experience in organising multi-stakeholder consultation meetings/workshops and drafting of training materials is an advantage.
- Working experience in a UN system agency or other international organisations is an advantage.
- Fluency (spoken and written) in English and Lao is required.

Competencies

- Drafting skills.
- Ability to work independently in a timely manner.
- Drive to achieve results for impact.
- Works collaboratively with others.
- Innovates and embraces change.

5. Location:

The Consultant will be working from the MoES DLEQA office in Vientiane Lao PDR as well as work from home in case of restriction in movements because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is foreseen that this assignment will involve regular travelling to the provinces, districts and schools.

6. Duration:

From 15 July 2021 until 30 June 2022 (11,5 months), with a possible extension, based on satisfactory performance.

7. Deliverables:

Deliverables	Time (working days)
1st Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written inputs provided to the draft FQS-based school development planning guidelines for DESB staff.• Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the implementation i.e. trialing of the training course workshops for school principals in target districts, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation.• Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for school principals in target districts.	July 2021
2nd Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written inputs provided to the course content of the school development planning course for DESB staff.• Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for school principals in target districts.• Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA in the organization of a review meeting for the FQS-based primary school development guidelines and corresponding blended learning course for principals, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation.	August 2021
3rd Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short review note (max 5 pages) summarizing key findings and “lessons learned” from the implementation (trial) of the training course for school principals.• Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the implementation i.e. trialing of the training course workshops for DESB staff, including taking the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation.• Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for DESB staff in target districts.	September 2021
4th Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of monthly report• Logistical and organizational support provided to DLEQA in the organization and implementation i.e. trialing of the training course	October 2021

<p>workshops for DESB staff, including taking the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for DESB staff in target districts. 	
<p>5th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short review note (max 5 pages) summarizing key findings and “lessons learned” from the implementation (trial) of the training course for DESB staff. • Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA in the organization of a review meeting for the FQS-based primary school development guidelines and corresponding blended learning course for DESB staff, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation. 	November 2021
<p>6th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written inputs and verbal feedback provided in support of the review of the course content of the school development planning course for DESB staff. • Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the implementation of the training course workshops for school principals and DESB staff in target districts (refresher training) and additional districts, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation. 	December 2021
<p>7th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for school principals and DESB staff in target- and additional districts. 	January 2022
<p>8th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft guidelines for FQS-based development planning at ECE level, including FQS for ECE. • Written comments and verbal feedback provided to the draft paper/guidelines on FQS for DESBs prepared by institutional consultants. • Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the trailing of the FQS-based self-assessment methodology for DESBs in target districts, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation. 	February 2022
<p>9th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft guidelines for FQS-based development planning at Secondary level, including FQS for secondary schools. • Co-facilitated the implementation of FQS-based self-assessment methodology for DESBs in target districts. 	March 2022
<p>10th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to:</p>	April 2022

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-facilitated the implementation of FQS-based self-assessment methodology for DESBs in target districts. Informed by feedback provided by MoES, UNICEF and other possible stakeholders, updated guidelines for FQS-based development planning at ECE level. Informed by feedback provided by MoES, UNICEF and other possible stakeholders, updated guidelines for FQS-based development planning at Secondary level. 	
11th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written inputs and verbal feedback provided in support of the development of the training course content of the FQS-based development planning courses for principals and DESB staff working at ECE level. Written inputs and verbal feedback provided in support of the development of the training course content of the FQS-based development planning courses for principals and DESB staff working at secondary level. Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the implementation of the FQS-based development planning courses for principals and DESB staff working at ECE level, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation. Logistical/organizational support provided to DLEQA for the implementation of the FQS-based development planning courses for principals and DESB staff working at secondary level, including by having taken the lead in the preparation and liquidation of Direct Cash Transfer documentation. 	May 2022
12th Deliverable: Submission of monthly report, including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-facilitated (as Master Trainer) the training course workshops for school principals and DESB staff working at ECE- and secondary levels in target- and additional districts. 	June 2022

8. Reporting Requirements:

The consultant will be supervised by the Director General/assigned Deputy Director General and UNICEF Lao PDR Education Specialist, under the overall guidance of the UNICEF Lao PDR Chief of Education. Reporting requirements are as per the deliverables and timeframes mentioned above with acceptable quality in a timely manner (monthly report).

9. 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
4 th Payment:	Submission of fourth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
5 th Payment:	Submission of fifth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
6 th Payment:	Submission of sixth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
7 th Payment:	Submission of seventh deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
8 th Payment:	Submission of eighth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
9 th Payment:	Submission of ninth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
10 th Payment:	Submission of tenth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
11 th Payment:	Submission of eleventh deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
12 th Payment:	Submission of twelfth deliverable and planned activities for next month	Submission of word document on deliverables
In-country travel costs based on actuals (using UN standard DSA and travel rates)	Upon completion of travel	

** 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.*

10. Administrative Issues:

The consultant is to use his/her own laptop. Working space at the MoES DLEQA office and access to facilities such as internet connection, access to printers will be provided by MoES DLEQA. 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.

- i) travel cost shall be calculated based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel
- ii) costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)

The consultant is required to obtain his/her own medical insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation, for the whole duration of the assignment. UNICEF will not cover the costs of the medical insurance for the consultant.

11. Contract supervisor:

The consultant will report to and be supervised by the Director General/assigned Deputy Director General and the UNICEF Education Specialist, under the broader supervision of the UNICEF Chief of Education.

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: All-inclusive lump-sum cost, including a breakdown of travel costs and daily allowance, for this assignment as per work assignment.

The deadline for applications is 15 June 2021.

14. Assessment Criteria:

As part of the evaluation and selection, a Cumulative Analysis Method (weight combined score method) shall be used for this recruitment. This involves a technical evaluation and an assessment of the financial proposal:

a) Technical evaluation of the candidates' qualifications, experience and expertise (max. 100 points) weight 70%:

Qualifications (20 points)

- A first-level university degree (bachelor's degree or equivalent) in education, economics, public administration or related field (20 points).

Experience and expertise (80 points)

- A minimum of 5 years of progressively professional experience in programme planning and management is required; of which at least three years in the education sector (20 points).
- Experience in school self-assessment and development planning is considered an advantage (20 points).
- Experience in organising multi-stakeholder consultation meetings/workshops and drafting of training materials is an advantage (20 points).
- Working experience in a UN system agency or other international organisations is an advantage (10 points).
- Fluency (spoken and written) in English and Lao is required (10 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 the candidate obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview, if required.

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.