

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Vientiane, Lao PDR

Individual International Consultancy: Education Technology for Development (T4D) Consultancy

Terms of Reference

1. Background:

In recent years, the Lao Ministry of Education and Sports has placed considerable focus on strengthening its education system including through strategic policy planning, careful budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation of the sector, leading to increased enrolments at all levels of education. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic – which caused prolonged school closures and a knock-on economic crisis for Lao PDR - has unraveled much of the progress already made in education with increasing dropout rates especially at the secondary level.

At the same time, COVID-19 has provided new opportunity for strengthening the education provided to all children nationwide through new approaches. For example, the Ministry is upgrading its management information systems introducing increasingly sophisticated software and ICT infrastructure, is introducing a new digital learning platform, distribution of ICT equipment to schools and is investing in an ICT in Education Strategy to guide development of digital learning and digital upskilling across the sector. Collectively, it is hoped these efforts support the digital transformation of education and new opportunities for an improved education system for all children.

UNICEF is supporting MoES in these efforts through various activities under the EU-supported Partnership to Strengthen the Education System (PSES) in Lao PDR programme. These include the development of an online Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) and the strengthening of the Lao PDR Education and Sports Management Information System (LESMIS) in line with the LESMIS Strategic Development Plan 2018-2022.

Furthermore, and as part of the support to MoES to the COVID-19 education response and recovery, UNICEF Lao PDR has also been supporting MoES with the roll out of its first ever national digital teaching and learning platform, Khang Panya Lao. Khang Panya Lao is based on the Learning Passport, a partnership between UNICEF and Microsoft. The platform provides all official MoES curriculum textbooks as well as a large suite of national and international learning resources all translated to Lao language. The platform is used by an estimated 300,000 users across all provinces of Lao PDR and is growing rapidly.

These activities all link to MoES' commitment for developing an ICT in Education Strategy. Such a strategy would help guide the sector in expanding access to digital learning for all children in Lao PDR, improve the ICT capacities of teachers and teacher trainees and also support the internal upskilling of MoES in ensuring an increasingly sophisticated management and administration of the sector, including in policy development, budgeting, and monitoring.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to provide technical support to UNICEF and MoES in:

- 1) The expansion of LESMIS and online PMIS, including additional functionalities and connectivity with other government management information systems

2) The consultant will also support UNICEF and MoES in monitoring progress and quality assurance of the work conducted by the international service provider that has been contracted to develop the LESMIS and online PMIS.

3) Scale-up of the MoES Teaching and Learning Platform Khang Panya Lao.

4) Development of the MoES ICT in Education Strategy in coordination with the Ministry of Technology and Communication

3. Work Assignments:

The scope of assignments are as follows:

3.1. Technical support for the expansion of LESMIS and online PMIS, including additional functionalities and connectivity with other government management information systems

Main tasks:

- Support the finalisation of the MoES GIS-enabled monitoring platform for Education in Emergency response that will be integrated into LESMIS, including training of MoES technical teams (particularly ICT Center) in coordination with an international service provider responsible for setting up the platform (Beyond Essential Systems).
- Add additional questionnaires to the monitoring App that is linked to the COVID-19 GIS-enabled platform for use in monitoring of the Education in Emergencies response.
- Support MoES in the remote/distance support from BES to set-up LESMIS by providing technical support in remote access to the EMIS and other management information systems and facilitating data transfers as needed.
- Facilitate and where needed technically support the development of an integrated online GIS enabled LESMIS system that connects the various MoES databases and allows for importing and exporting of data in Unicode format.
- Supporting MoES, UNICEF and BES in “translating” identified data needs of key stakeholders into automatically generated, user-friendly reporting templates (e.g. School Report Card).
- Support the identification of training needs and the development and delivery of training for MoES technical teams on using the LESMIS platform and online PMIS as part of capacity development
- Provide quality assurance support short term and long-term capacity development plane for MoES MIS Core Team

3.2. Technical support to MoES for strengthening data collection and validation processes by developing and trialing online data collection and reporting tools that are to be integrated in the LESMIS

Main tasks:

- Support MoES with the development and trialing of online data collection and reporting tools and corresponding validation processes, including tools for monitoring and reporting on education in emergencies, school self-evaluations, school development planning and budgeting, and classroom observations, and integrating these into LESMIS.
- Provide technical support to the UNICEF Education Programme and Operations Unit for the procurement of ICT hardware and software as needed.
- Support the training of MoES technical teams on using of these tools as part of capacity development.
- Provide quality assurance support.

3.3. Technical support for the scale-up of the MoES Khang Panya Lao Teaching and Learning Platform

Main tasks:

- Post launch, support MoES Research Institute for Educational Sciences (RIES) team, MoES Khang Panya Lao team and UNICEF in the scaling of the Teaching and Learning Platform, Khang Panya Lao, providing technical assistance in localising the technology, incorporating new features and functionalities of the Learning Passport, curating content for compatibility to the platform, coordinating various actors, and providing regular reports to UNICEF Lao PDR and the HQ and EAPRO Learning Passport team. This includes key support to the roll out of the updated application with new features.
- In line with new platform features, support the training of MoES technical team on using Khang Panya Lao, particularly MoES RIES and other key departments including in building interactive content on the platform.
- Provide support to the functionality testing of ICT equipment including piloting of solar powered media systems in schools and offline device hubs.
- Provide quality assurance support, including in monitoring of the implementation of the platform and its effective use in classrooms as well as the utilization of digital equipment provided to schools. This includes coordination with third parties in the collation of user feedback.
- Support the identification and development of new partnerships for scaling the platform, particularly from the private sector, among development partners and civil society organisations. This includes supporting technical discussions with internet service providers and other potential partners.
- Provide ongoing technical support to UNICEF Lao PDR in procuring new digital equipment (e.g. identification and specification of suitable smart tablets/notebooks and related devices procured for the MoES and schools, solar powered devices etc) and quality assuring their deliverables from a technical perspective.
- Linked to this, scope complementary ICT for learning and Edtech tools that could be integrated to support the Teaching and Learning Platform as part of related technology efforts.
- Provide ongoing coordination with the HQ Learning Passport team as well as the MoES team leading the development of the MoES Teaching and Learning Platform
- Provide ongoing advisory support to UNICEF and MoES staff in troubleshooting any technical issues that arise in the expanded roll out of the teaching and learning platform, in coordination with the HQ Learning Passport team as part of capacity development.

3.4 Development of the MoES ICT in Education Strategy in coordination with the Ministry of Technology and Communication (MTC)

- Provide technical guidance to the MoES ICT Centre and ICT Strategy Steering Committee and MTC in the review and development of an ICT in Education Strategy
- Support coordination with MoES, partners and UNICEF technical assistance provided to support development of the strategy. This includes development of the inception report, situation analysis, workshops and draft development, providing technical inputs throughout.
- Support coordination of a final draft version of the strategy for finalization and approval by MoES

4. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

- Advanced university degree in engineering, information technology or other related field, ideally complemented with a degree in the field of education.
- At least 8 years of professional work experience in Technology for Development (T4D) and/or information system development, IT system integration development, including web-based applications. Specific experience on GIS enabled platforms and/or ICT for learning is an advantage.
- ICT equipment and procurement planning, monitoring and evaluation experience.
- ICT systems training planning and implementation experience is considered an advantage.
- Experience in the design and implementation of ICT enabled data collection and reporting systems. Solid technical understanding of ICT systems in the education sector is a clear advantage.
- Demonstrated ability and experience in coordination, and ability to work under pressure is required.
- Previous working experience in ASEAN countries is desirable. Experience on ICT projects in Lao PDR is a clear advantage.
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills in English language.

5. Location:

The Consultant will be working from home but is expected to participate in regular meetings at UNICEF Lao PDR Office and/or MoES in Vientiane, Lao PDR. It is foreseen that this assignment will involve some travel to the provinces. The consultant is expected to provide his/her own computer for the duration of the assignment.

6. Duration:

- 11.5 months

7. Deliverables:

Deliverables	Time (working days)
1. First deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	December 2022
2. Second deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates 	January 2023

<p>content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	
<p>3. Third deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	February 2024
<p>4. Forth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	March 2024
<p>5. Fifth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	April 2024
<p>6. Sixth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. 	May 2024

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	
<p>7. Seventh deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	June 2024
<p>8. Eighth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	July 2024
<p>9. Ninth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	August 2024
<p>10. Tenth deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. 	September 2024

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	
<p>11. Eleventh deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of monthly report detailing programme contribution achievements and key priorities for the following month • Provision of support to MoES in the going development of the LESMIS and PMIS platforms including in trainings, testing and deployment, troubleshooting, coordination with the service provider and system updates. • Provision of support to Khang Panya Lao platform development and scaling including in managing and communicating key system updates content development, IT and system updates, coordination with the UNICEF EAPRO and HQ technical focal points, trainings and testing. • Technical support to the development of an ICT in Education Strategy. 	October 2024

8. Reporting Requirements:

The consultant is expected to produce monthly status reports in line with the deliverables and timeframes set (See Section 7). These reports should be submitted by email to the relevant supervisor/s within the UNICEF Lao PDR office.

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>Reporting Requirements for each deliverable</i>
1 st payment	Submission of First deliverable and planned activities for next month
2 nd payment	Submission of Second deliverable and planned activities for next month
3 rd payment	Submission of the Third deliverable and planned activities for next month
4 th payment	Submission of the Forth deliverable and planned activities for next month
5 th payment	Submission of the Fifth deliverable and planned activities for next month
6 th payment	Submission of the Sixth deliverable and planned activities for next month
7 th payment	Submission of the Seventh deliverable and planned activities for next month
8 th payment	Submission of the Eight deliverable and planned activities for next month
9 th payment	Submission of the Ninth deliverable and planned activities for next month
10 th payment	Submission of the Tenth deliverable and planned activities for next month
11 th payment	Submission of the Eleventh deliverable and planned activities for next month
In-country travel costs based on actuals (using UN standard DSA and travel rates)	Upon completion of travel, based on actuals

10. Administrative Issues:

The consultant is expected to use their own IT equipment including their own laptop computer. Field visits may be required and transportation will be provided by UNICEF. Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for field trips will be paid according to UNICEF guidelines and calculated based on UN rate at the time of

travel. The consultant is required to obtain his/her own health insurance including medical evacuation for the whole duration of the assignment.

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

11. Contract supervisor:

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

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 and support provided to 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 breakdown by consultancy fee, medical insurance covering medical evacuation for the whole duration of the assignment excluding travel for this assignment as per work assignment.

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)

- Advanced degree (Master preferred) engineering, information technology or other related field (20 points).

Experience and expertise (80 points)

- At least 8 years of professional work experience in Technology for Development (T4D) and/or information system development, IT system integration development, including web-based applications. Specific experience on GIS enabled platforms and/or ICT for learning is an advantage. (20 points).
- ICT equipment and procurement planning, monitoring and evaluation experience (10 points).

- ICT systems training planning and implementation experience is considered an advantage (20 points).
- Experience in the design and implementation of ICT enabled data collection and reporting systems. Solid technical understanding of ICT systems in the education sector is a clear advantage (10 points).
- Previous working experience in ASEAN countries is desirable. Experience on ICT projects in Lao PDR is a clear advantage (10 points).
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills in English language (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 candidate obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview.

For the technical assessment, candidates will have to be awarded at least 60 points out 100 to be considered for the assignment.

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

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

Section Request: Education Programme Section

Programme Area: Education

Section Request: Education

Programme Areas:

Output 1, Activity 6: *Expansion of the Lao Education and Sports Management Information System (LES MIS) and strengthen capacity on data collection, verification and use of data down to the school level and support effective monitoring of the ESSDP*

Output 1, Activity 7: *Support development of an **online Personnel Management Information System (PMIS)** that links to LES MIS and relevant government information systems*

Output 1, Activity 8: *Support the development of an **online Accounting System** that links to PBMIS and relevant government financial management systems*

Output 2, Activity 5: *Strengthening capacity of PESS, DESBs, school leaders and schools in school development, planning and quality assurance in basic education (primary and lower secondary) using FQS (Linked to Output 1 activity 2: pre-primary FQS)*

Output 2, Activity 7: *Strengthening the capacity of MoES, TTCs, PESS, DESBs and teachers to deliver **remote and digital learning**, content development and delivery of blended learning for students and teachers including the use of the MoES Khang Panya Lao for teaching-learning*

Output 3, Activity 4: *Digital learning support: Expansion of contents and reach of MoES Teaching & Learning Platform Khang Panya Lao, including development of more inclusive contents focusing on 21st century skills and STEM, including for girls*

Milestone:

Included in approved AWP: Yes

No