

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**Vientiane, Lao PDR****Individual International Consultancy: Parenting Package Rollout Support****Terms of Reference****1. Background:**

The main mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child everywhere. More specifically UNICEF's programmes promote equity and target the children and families who are most disadvantaged and excluded. UNICEF Lao PDR Country Office works with government and civil society organisations to ensure that the child rights and the mandate as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child is fulfilled and contributes towards the country's development programmes.

Early childhood development (ECD) is one of key programme areas of the current UNICEF Lao PDR country programme cycle 2022-2026. While Laos has made significant advances in health and social outcomes for children over the past decade, challenges still exist. Twenty-seven percent of children under the age of 5 years are underweight, and 36% are stunted.¹ Child mortality remains high at 88 deaths per 1,000 live births, and immunization coverage remains low.² Over three quarters of children aged 2 to 14 years are subject to at least one form of psychological or physical aggression from an adult in their household,³ and almost 40% of the population has no sanitation facilities.⁴ Only 51% of children aged 3-4 years are enrolled in early childhood education (ECE) programmes while enrolment among 5-year-olds is 82.8%.⁵ This puts children at risk of repeating Grade 1 and dropping out. Moreover, aggregate data hide substantial geographical, gender, social and ethnic disparities. Children from rural areas, girls and children from non-Lao-Thai ethnic groups fare more poorly than other children across health, nutrition, education and protection indicators; social exclusion is an ongoing barrier for children and families affected by disability.^{6 7}

In response to this situation, UNICEF has been working with relevant ministries of the Lao PDR Government to develop and support parenting education and ECD programmes. Recognizing the impact that parents and caregivers can have on the first years of their children's lives and their future cognitive, social and emotional development, UNICEF Laos has committed to working with the Lao Women's Union (LWU) and other Government counterparts and development partners to develop and deliver a parenting education package Love and Care for Every Child (LCEC) that empowers and motivates parents to adopt healthy behaviours that contribute to their children's optimal development.

2. Purpose:

Working with the related sections, the consultant will provide high quality technical guidance and support programme management and monitoring of the Parenting Education Programme "Love and Care for Every Child" as well as support broader ECD activities of UNICEF Laos. Under the guidance of the Social and Behavior Change Specialist, the consultant will work closely with the

¹ Lao <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR268/FR268.pdfChild> Anthropometric Assessment Survey (2015)

² UNICEF (2013) Laos PDR Country Kit: Health

³ Lao Social Indicator Survey, *op.cit.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ EMIS 2020-21

⁶ Lao Social indicator Survey, *op. cit*

⁷ UNICEF (2017) Violence Against Children Survey in Lao PDR. Full Report (not for circulation yet)

LWU and its partners to roll out the LCEC Parenting Education initiative, and with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to improve ECE services in the country. The Consultant will also be involved in advocacy around ECD and the preparation of proposals to support ECD activities.

3. Work Assignments:

Under the supervision of the Social and Behavior Change Specialist, and working closely with the Chief of Education and the Education Specialist-ECE, the consultant will have the following key tasks:

3.1 Support the implementation of the LCEC parenting education package

- Provide coordination support and technical guidance to LWU and other government counterparts in implementing the LCEC parenting initiative, working closely with the UNICEF Laos parenting task team
- Support the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the LCEC parenting initiative, including the integration of the use of ICTs/technology, baseline data collection and regular monitoring activities
- Support the LWU and other government counterparts to gather, analyse, package, maintain and promote the use of evidence on parenting, especially on the social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) indicators to all stakeholders.
- Support the timely sharing of quality reports on LCEC parenting package implementation progress internally to the UNICEF Laos parenting task team, and externally to implementing partners and donors
- Support preparation of proposals, donor reporting and tracking of funding and fund utilization related to the LCEC parenting initiative
- Support coordination with other sectors to integrate the LCEC parenting package across the different sectors: Communication, Education, Child Protection, Social Policy, Nutrition and Health.
- Support knowledge management for the LCEC parenting education package, including documentation of good practices, preparation of advocacy briefs and human interest stories and facilitate learning from other countries, including regional and cross-country coordination calls
- Support LCEC government counterparts (e.g. LWU) prepare and process funding and supply requests to UNICEF for LCEC implementation in line with the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)

3.2 Support the implementation of the ECE programme, including integration of the LCEC parenting package

- Support monitoring and documentation of the integration of the LCEC parenting package into the ECE programme, including the UNICEF-supported community-based school readiness programme and pre-primary classes
- Support monitoring and documentation of the ECE programme, including transition of children from ECE to primary education Grade 1
- Support the preparation of proposals and reporting for the ECE programme
- Support knowledge management for the ECE programme, including documentation of good practices, preparation of advocacy briefs and human interest stories and facilitate learning from other countries
- Support MoES counterparts prepare and process funding and supply requests to UNICEF for LCEC integration to ECE in line with the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)

3.3 Support broader ECD advocacy, fundraising and knowledge management

- Support the coordination of ECD related events and advocacy, including the Human Capital Conference
- Support the drafting of proposals for ECD related interventions

- Support knowledge management for ECD, including documentation of good practices, preparation of advocacy briefs and human interest stories and facilitate learning from other countries, including regional and cross-country coordination exchanges

4. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced University Degree in Early Childhood Development, Education or related.
- Five years of progressively responsible work experience in ECD and ECE.
- Experience in supporting the development and implementation of parenting education programmes an advantage
- Familiarity with Lao social and cultural context for ECD/ECE at the national and local level is an asset.
- Relevant experience in programme management in ECD/ECE related areas in a UN system agency or international organization.
- Experience in both development and humanitarian contexts.
- Proven previous experience in writing high quality project proposals and reports.

Knowledge and Skills

- Solid knowledge of ECD, including on ECE and parenting education
- Knowledge of the social, political and cultural context of Lao PDR and experience in working in Lao PDR, an asset
- Ability to produce high quality write ups efficiently with excellent writing skills in English
- Strong knowledge and skills using MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and SharePoint.

Competencies

- Analyzing (3)
- Deciding and Initiating action (2)
- Applying technical expertise (3)

Languages

Excellent writing and communication skills in English. The ability to understand/communicate in Lao language is an asset.

5. Location:

The primary work location is Vientiane Capital City, Lao PDR. Remote working will be allowed based on the situation of COVID-19 and in consideration of flexible working methods allowed as per the UNICEF rules and regulations. Programme visits and participation in coordination meetings at sub-national levels will take place based on the request of the Government, UNICEF and donors.

6. Duration:

10 months from May 2022 to February 2023.

7. Deliverables

Deliverables	Timeframe
1. Coordination facilitated internally with UNICEF and with Government partners facilitating smooth implementation, monitoring, and documentation of the LCEC Parenting	Throughout consultancy period

Package rollout, including integration to ECE. This includes support to coordination with UNICEF EAPRO, HQ, other UNICEF Country Offices, and donors.	
2: Timely inputs and data/information for LCEC online SBCC monitoring platform, and for ECE and broader ECD data needs.	Throughout consultancy period
3. Relevant documents with technical inputs from the consultant, including monitoring reports, donor reports, proposals, case studies, documentation of good practices, human interest stories, etc.	Throughout consultancy period
4. Participation in relevant meetings, events, and monitoring visits with brief updates/reports provided on the meetings, events, and monitoring visits.	Throughout consultancy period
5. Timely inputs to funding and supply requests and liquidation reports from Government counterparts for UNICEF (related to the LCEC parenting package implementation) contributing to its on time processing	Throughout consultancy period

8. Reporting Requirements:

The consultant is expected to prepare a brief monthly report identifying key tasks and deliverables completed, and key tasks for the next month. This report will be submitted to UNICEF along with the deliverables for the specific reporting period.

9. Payment Schedule linked to 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.*

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Payment must be directly linked with satisfactory deliverables</i>	<i>Reporting Requirements for each deliverable</i>
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 1	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 2	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 3	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 4	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report

Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 5	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 6	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 7	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 8	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 9	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report
Monthly report and deliverables linked to Outputs 1-5	Payment 10	Agreed Monthly Activity Plan Monthly status report

10. Administrative Issues:

UNICEF will provide a desk within the office for the consultant. The consultant should provide medical insurance, including medical evacuation for the whole duration of the assignment. The consultant will use one own computer or laptop for the entire assignment. However, in the case of an urgent need of laptop replacement, UNICEF will provide a laptop to the consultant (subject to availability). Translation/interpretation support will be provided by UNICEF, as needed.

In-country travel will be required as part of this consultancy. If the consultant needs to travel, a daily subsistence allowance will be provided based on approved UN rates at the time of travel. Copyright of all the deliverables to be produced through this assignment will rest with UNICEF and the respective Lao PDR Government counterparts, e.g. LWU, MoES, etc.

11. Contract supervisor:

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Social and Behavior Change Communication Specialist. The consultant will also work closely with the Chief of Education and the Education Specialist-ECE, as well as coordinate with the UNICEF Laos parenting education task team.

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 travel and accommodation cost for this assignment as per work assignment.

The deadline for applications is *6 April 2022*.