

Consultant to support the development of a MoEYS scholarship transition strategy



UNICEF Cambodia

1. Background

To address inequitable access to education and student drop-out due to poverty, Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has created scholarship programmes for primary (grades 4-6, extended to grades 1-3 from school year (SY) 2019/20) and secondary students (grades 7-12). These nationwide scholarship programmes aim to enable students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access quality education. MoEYS' scholarship programmes are an important pillar of Cambodia's National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016/25.

The composition of MoEYS' national scholarship programmes is outlined in the sections below:

Primary education scholarship: The primary education scholarship programme for grades 4 to 6 was started by the government initially with Global Partnership for Education (GPE) support in SY2014/15. The programme is implemented by MoEYS' Primary Education Department, within the Directorate General of Education. In this programme, each beneficiary receives US\$60 per year through three payment tranches. In this programme, each beneficiary receives US\$ 60 per year through three payment tranches. In SY 2018/19, the programme benefited 105,156 students across 4,951 schools (approximately 5 per cent of the total number of students enrolled), of which 53 per cent of the beneficiaries were female. MoEYS is currently considering the opportunity to expand the scope of the programme to children in grades 1 to 3 in SY 2019/20. In SY 2019/20, estimated number of scholarships for G1-6 is 123,248. The financing of the programme is agreed with Cambodia's Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) as part of MoEYS annual budget process.

Secondary Education Scholarship: The scholarship programme for poor students in secondary education was launched in the SY 2003/04 in lower secondary education under the name 'Priority Activity Program 12' (PAP 12). This programme focuses on students in lower secondary education (grades 7 to 9), and in upper secondary education (grades 10 to 12). In SY 2018/19, MoEYS scholarships at the lower secondary level benefited 72,418 students across 812 schools (approximately 12 per cent of the total number of students enrolled), of which 60 per cent of the beneficiaries were female. Each lower secondary scholarship student receives US\$ 60 per year. MoEYS's upper secondary scholarship programme benefitted 29,035 students across 123 schools in SY 2018/19 (approximately 9 per cent of

the total number of students enrolled), of which 60 per cent of the beneficiaries were female. Each upper secondary scholarship is valued at US\$ 90 per year and is paid in three tranches. The secondary scholarship programme is entirely funded through MoEYS' own programme budget, and is administered by the General Secondary Education Department, under the Directorate General of Education. The financing of the programme is agreed with MoEF as part of MoEYS annual budget process.

The following legislation governs the implementation of the MoEYS scholarship programmes. It foresees the provision of scholarships to poor and disadvantaged students studying in public education institutions at primary and secondary education levels. It sets the financial amount, and similar provisions for both primary and secondary scholarship schemes.

- Anukret 34 on the Provision of Scholarships for Poor Students in Primary and General Secondary Education (March 2015);
- Prakas 2457 of MoEYS on Criteria and Procedures for Providing Scholarships to Poor Students at Primary and General Secondary Education Levels (August 2015);
- Inter-Ministerial Prakas 1245 on Scholarship Provision to Poor Students in Grades 1, 2 and 3. MoEF and MoEYS (November 2018);
- Letter 243 to allow MoEYS to transfer scholarship budget for both primary and secondary directly to school bank account (January 2019) MEF; and
- Prakas 1240 on the establishment, roles and responsibilities of the scholarship committee for both primary and secondary education from national down to school level (July 2019) MoEYS.

In early 2019, an independent evaluation of MoEYS' scholarship programmes was completed. The evaluation's main objective was to foster learning and improvement within the MoEYS scholarship programmes for primary, and lower and upper secondary levels. It also produced credible, reliable and useful evidence from the current scholarship programmes: (i) on what is working, what is not working, how and why; and (ii) to inform the preparation of an Equity-focused Primary Scholarship Framework, which forms part of MoEYS' commitment under the Variable Part of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Phase 3 programme.

The evaluation concluded that the scholarship programmes are highly relevant to the needs of Cambodians and the priorities of the RGC and its partners, demonstrating high level of ownership by the ministry. Overall, the evaluation indicated sustainability is strong, given the use of Cambodian financial and human resources to run the programmes. The programmes are also well aligned with the Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025 and National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018. The scholarships are viewed by recipients as being very effective. Recipients were found to be universally very satisfied with the scholarships. The size and frequency of payments is approximately appropriate, but operating expenses are too low to be efficient. Monitoring and feedback processes leave room for substantial improvement. Transfers have rarely been made on time due to: i) a mismatch between the school and fiscal years, which has recently been solved; and ii) the duration of selection processes remains an issue. Furthermore, an important finding, which forms the basis for this assignment, is primary and secondary programmes are poorly coordinated.

Based on the evaluation findings, and other evidence available to MoEYS, MoEYS developed an equity-focused scholarship framework for primary grade level and endorsed it in May 2019. The framework further strengthens the equity dimensions of the scheme, by adjusting and reinforcing implementation

modalities and mechanisms to address challenges that were identified. Some bottlenecks/challenges that have been addressed in the framework include: (i) timely selection of, and payment to, beneficiaries; (ii) operational costs for implementation and monitoring of the programme; (iii) strengthening of monitoring and operational aspects of the programme; and (iv) strengthening communication and feedback mechanisms. Furthermore, the framework aims to refine the targeting criteria (both geographical and student selection) and emphasizes coordination between the primary and lower secondary scholarship programmes, and thereby the transition of beneficiaries from primary to lower secondary levels. Although this framework focuses on the primary scholarship programme, it will also have substantial implications for the lower secondary scholarship programme, in ensuring the complementary between the two programmes. The operating guidelines/manual for the primary scholarship programme has now been revised, and all scholarship administrators will be trained by December 2019 on the implementation of new guidelines which incorporate recommendations from the evaluation and framework. The operating guidelines/manual for the secondary scholarship programme will also be revised in 2020. It is expected that this assignment will also form the basis of further work to be undertaken by the General Secondary Education Department to revise the operating guidelines for the secondary scholarship programme.

This work will be supported by The Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), a long-running partnership between the Royal Government of Cambodia, the European Union, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and UNICEF. In 2018, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) joined the partnership. The purpose of the CDPF is to support the realization of two policy priorities identified in MoEYS's Education Strategic Plan including: (i) to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and (ii) to ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels. The CDPF has provided both technical and financial support to MoEYS to complete an independent evaluation of its' scholarships programme. It has also supported MoEYS to develop an equity-focused primary scholarship framework which forms part of MoEYS' commitments under the Variable Part of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Phase 3 programme. More recently, it is supporting the revision of the primary scholarship programme manual and related capacity development efforts by MOEYS.

2. Purpose of the assignment

Based on the findings from the evaluation, and further to the recommendation in the equity-focused primary scholarship framework, there is a need to **develop and implement a more consistent basis for the allocation of scholarships to provinces, districts and schools across primary and secondary scholarship programmes**. MoEYS has now issued Prakas #1240 on the establishment, roles and responsibilities of the scholarship committee for both primary and secondary education from national to school levels. Further to the issuance of the prakas, MoEYS has recently developed a unified governance structure to oversee scholarship at all levels – national, and sub-national levels. A further objective of this assignment is to **support MoEYS to translate these prakas into improved central and provincial organization and coordination of scholarship allocation and monitoring**.

Currently, there is no consistency between selection criteria at primary and secondary levels. At central level and in databases there is no data linking primary feeder schools to their secondary schools. Furthermore, there is no centralized management information system to consolidate information on primary and secondary scholarships. As a result, the primary and lower secondary scholarship

programmes have been unable to effectively and purposefully support transition from primary to lower secondary education.

3. Assignment tasks

With UNICEF as the contract manager, and under the overall strategic guidance of the Director General of Directorate Basic Education, the consultant is expected to collaborate closely with the Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department, Department of EMIS, Department of Policy, and Department of Finance to achieve the assignment objectives. The consultant will also be expected to work with other relevant line ministries such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), the Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Interior, to access relevant information. The consultant will also be required to work closely with UNICEF Education and Social Policy Specialists.

To achieve the outputs of this assignment, the key activities that have to be undertaken include:

1. **Inception report and work plan (of approximately 20 pages, excluding annexes).** The report will include a methodology, data collection tools, list of stakeholders to be consulted, and a detailed work plan (including local travel) among other items. The report will also include a comprehensive risk assessment that spells out risk mitigation issues the assignment will address and specify both design features and tactical actions that will be employed to address them.
2. **Desk review** of all relevant documents including but not limited to legislative frameworks governing social protection programmes in Cambodia, MoEYS scholarship evaluation, MoEYS scholarship framework, programme documents from other similar social protection schemes in Cambodia and regionally, and scholarship operating manuals to obtain a contextual understanding of the operating context in Cambodia. The desk review should also include analysis of quantitative data from different Ministry sources.
3. **Analytical report on the findings, with changes to the operational manual on the targeting and allocation criteria of scholarships at both primary and lower-secondary levels to promote transition from primary level**
 - Analyze current targeting criteria for primary and lower secondary level, across geographies and grade levels to improve harmonization, and ultimately student transition with scholarship support, between primary and secondary education levels. Different selection parameters such as number of ID poor families, percentage of ID poor households, priority education indicators, and/or a combination of the parameters will have to be thoroughly analyzed to arrive at practical allocation options for MoEYS to consider and operationalize. Furthermore, each of the options proposed must include analysis on the implications in terms of proposed reallocation of scholarships, and propose transition planning strategies that limit disruption to the existing cohort of scholarship recipients;
 - Based on the current allocation mechanism, further analyze how the geographical targeting criteria and allocations can be gradually applied across different administrative levels – from national level to provinces, districts, and schools, without adversely impacting the scholarship allocation at primary education level.;

- Review complementarity with other social assistance programmes by the RGC, and also identify how provincial assessments of IDPoor cards every three years can inform the targeting approach in the medium term.
- Analyze the current data management systems for scholarships at both primary and secondary levels, and identify how they can be further refined to promote coherence in the way data is collected, managed, and analyzed to promote consistency between the two programmes;
- Develop a simple user-friendly simulation model that will allow MoEYS' scholarship program managers in MoEYS to modify the selection parameters at different levels and arrive at alternate allocation approaches/strategies. The simulation model should be flexible and broad-enough to be applied for scholarship programmes at all levels, e.g. – primary, lower secondary and upper secondary;
- Develop an analytical report (of no more 15 pages excluding annexes) summarizing the key findings, and recommendations for modifications to the targeting and allocation criteria of scholarships at primary and lower-secondary levels; and
- Support GSED to revise relevant sections of the operational manual for secondary scholarship programme based on recommendations proposed in the analytical report, primarily in the areas of allocation of scholarships and geographic targeting.

4. Training Manual and training report on capacity development of MoEYS scholarship programme managers on simulation model

- Develop a simple user manual on using the simulation model for all departments engaged in implementing MoEYS scholarship programme (both primary and secondary levels) ;
- Build capacities of all relevant stakeholders at central level on operating the simulation model; and
- Develop a training approach for core trainers at central level to further train sub-national scholarship administrators on the use of this simulation model.

4. Expected deliverables

The expected deliverables follow a timeline that has been proposed by MoEYS, to align with other complementary processes and priority activities undertaken by the Ministry. It is expected that the Consultant will include a detailed operational plan in his/her inception report with a clear articulation of the number of days he/she will commit to achieve the different deliverables. This is however subject to review and approval by MoEYS.

Deliverable	Estimated number of working days	Deliverable Completion Time Frame
1. Inception report and work plan	5 days	10 th of January 2020
2. Desk Review	5 days	30 th of January 2020

3. Analytical report on the findings, simulation model and revised lower secondary operational manual incorporating findings from the report	20 days	15 th of March 2020
4. Training Manual and training report on capacity development of MoEYS scholarship programme managers on simulation model at central level	10 days	15 th of April 2020
Total number of working days	40 days	

5. Payment schedule linked to satisfactory deliverables

Deliverables	Payment directly linked with satisfactory deliverables	Reporting Requirements for each deliverable
Payment after completion of deliverables # 1 and 2	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception report and work plan in English in Word and PDF formats • Desk review report in English in Word and PDF formats • Annexes to the reports in Word and PDF formats • Payment invoice
Payment after completion of deliverable #3	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical report in English in Word and PDF formats • Annexes to the analysis in English in Word and PDF formats, and Excel/other applications where necessary • Revised lower secondary operational manual in English in Word and PDF formats • Succinct presentation in PowerPoint • Payment invoice
Payment after completion of deliverable #4	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training manual and training report in English in Word and PDF Formats • Annexes to the training manual and report in English in Word and PDF formats • Succinct presentation of the recommendations, and training/capacity development in PowerPoint • Payment invoice

6. Location and duration

This assignment will require a mix of home-based/remote and in-country work. The duration of the assignment will be for a maximum of 40 working days between January 2020 and April 2020. The consultant should be working in Cambodia for 25 working days during the period of the consultancy. Of the 25 working days allocated for in-country work, the consultant can conduct field work outside Phnom Penh for a maximum of 10 days.

During the in-country portion of the assignment, the Consultant will be based at General Secondary Education Department (GSED). GSED will provide a desk, resources and other necessary facilities, such as access to printer and internet. The Consultant is expected to organize his/her own travel to Cambodia, and to the provinces, in close collaboration with relevant MoEYS staff.

The Consultant will be contracted under the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) and will be required to work in such a way so as to maximize the impact and sustainability of the input by taking an approach that actively supports capacity development and ownership on the part of the lead department. In particular, the technical adviser is required to:

- Work in close communication with the designated MoEYS department (GSED), following the reporting lines;
- Take a mentoring approach that supports identified counterparts to progressively take the lead on key tasks;
- Work in close communication with other Advisers as well as others appointed under the CDPF and by other complementary programmes, in order to ensure coherence; and
- Collaborate effectively with other technical departments and relevant development partners.

7. Qualifications of successful candidate

Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced degree in Economics, Public Administration, Statistics or related field
- At least 10 years of professional work experience in education, social protection or other related disciplines
- Experience working with Cambodian Government and counterparts providing technical support on social protection and/or education issues
- Familiarity with the education sector in Cambodia and MoEYS policies and programmes, including scholarships strongly preferred;
- Knowledge and experience with scholarships programming, including costing elements
- Experience working with UN or other international or national development organisations
- Demonstrated experience providing good quality written inputs in English, working to deadlines;
- Demonstrated experience in equity, gender equality and human rights analysis is a distinct advantage; and
- Experience working with UN or other international or national development organisations

Competencies, Knowledge and Skills

- Strong analytical and financial modeling skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to interact and communicate effectively and diplomatically with government staff; and

- Ability to engage in substantive technical discussion with all stakeholders
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment and establish harmonious and effective working relationships, both within and outside the work place

8. Contract supervisor

The consultant will report directly to UNICEF CDPF Education Specialist, who will be responsible for final review of the deliverables and certification of payments to the Consultant, in close collaboration with MoEYS. The consultant will also be expected to closely liaise and update the Deputy Director of GSED on the deliverables related to the assignment. UNICEF's Chief of Education will provide strategic direction and orientation to the consultant, as required, in addition to technical guidance from the Director General of Basic Education (DGE).

9. Penalties for underperformance

Payment of fees to the Contractor under this contract, including each instalment or periodic payment (if any), is subject to the Contractor's full and complete performance of his or her obligations under this contract with regard to such payment to UNICEF's satisfaction, and UNICEF's certification to that effect. Performance indicators: Consultants' performance will be evaluated against the following criteria: timeliness, quality, and relevance/feasibility of recommendations for UNICEF Cambodia.

10. Termination of contract

This contract may be terminated by either party before its specified termination date by giving notice in writing to the other party. The period of notice shall be five (5) business days (in the UNICEF office engaging the Contractor) in the case of contracts for a total period of less than two (2) months and fourteen (14) business days (in the UNICEF office engaging the Contractor) in the case of contracts for a longer period; provided however that in the event of termination on the grounds of impropriety or other misconduct by the Contractor (including but not limited to breach by the Contractor of relevant UNICEF policies, procedures, and administrative instructions), UNICEF shall be entitled to terminate the contract without notice.

11. Submission of applications

Interested candidates are kindly requested to apply and upload the following documents to: <http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/>

1. Letter of Interest (cover letter) with indication of applicant's ability and availability
2. CV or Resume with explaining how your background and experience are relevant to the consultancy work assignment and the qualifications, competencies, knowledge and skills
3. Example/s of applicant's Performance evaluation reports or references of similar consultancy assignments or other references of similar consultancy assignments (if available)
4. Your fee proposal or price proposal by indicating daily/monthly rate (in US\$) to undertake the terms of reference above, including travel costs and accommodation related to the 7 days-travel to the provinces in Cambodia. Applications submitted without a daily/monthly rate will not be considered.

12. Assessment Criteria

A two-stage procedure shall be utilized in evaluating technical assessment being completed prior to any price proposal being compared.

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

NOTE:

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 %)
 - Education (**20 points**)
 - Relevant working experience (**30 points**)
 - Knowledge and Skills (**30 points**)
 - Quality of past work (e.g. applicant's written Standard Operational Procedures or other relevance written work) (**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 evaluated and compared among those technical qualified candidates who have attained a minimum 60 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.

The maximum number of points shall be allotted to the lowest Financial Proposal that is compared among those technical qualified candidates who have attained a minimum 60 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.