

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Vientiane, Lao PDR

**Individual National Consultancy: Support the Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR
in developing an online & off-line Teaching and Learning Platform**

Terms of Reference

1. Background:

Lao PDR has not been immune to the effects of the novel corona virus, COVID-19. Following the first identified case in the country during March 2020, the Government of Lao PDR (GoL), under the leadership of the National Taskforce Committee for COVID-19 Prevention and Control has been closely monitoring the situation and has been taking a wide range of measures to prevent the spread and the impact of the virus. These measures included the temporary closure of all schools.

To mitigate the impacts of school closures, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), with the support of development partners, has taken a range of measures to offer children alternative learning opportunities, promote COVID-19 safety messages for teachers, children and their parents and enhance its capacity for planning and monitoring the emergency response. As part of these efforts, UNICEF has supported MoES with the development of online and offline teaching and learning resources for use by children and families unable to attend formal schooling. Indeed, the MoES has developed an initial suite of teaching and learning resources currently being disseminated via various means.

Exploration of online learning, in light of COVID-19, has exposed the significant potential of new technologies to provide education to children unable to physically access schooling. Given that Laos is particularly disaster-prone, with severe flooding a near annual occurrence causing major disruption of learning – the development of an online learning platform is viewed favourably by the MoES not just in the short term, but as an ongoing alternative form of education.

In response, UNICEF has agreed to support MoES with the development of a digital Teaching and Learning Platform in close coordination with other development partners. This platform would enable the continuation of learning for children unable to physically access schooling, connecting them to the national curriculum both on and offline. It could also form part of a larger multipurpose MoES webpage that could connect to other key ministry platforms and provide a space for school principals to upload school data and other key documents.

The support provided by UNICEF's 'Learning Passport' initiative - which consists of a partnership between UNICEF, Microsoft and Cambridge University - will allow for the speedy development of the initial platform, enhancing MoES' COVID-19 response in education by making the pre-school and primary curriculum, as well as other teaching and learning resources available online for students, parents, teachers, principals and pedagogical advisors.

2. Purpose:

Under the supervision of the UNICEF Education Manager in Lao PDR and the UNICEF Learning Passport Global Program Manager, and in close coordination with the MoES Director of the ICT Centre, an individual consultant is required to help support the rapid deployment of the Teaching and Learning Passport platform, including the provision of technical assistance in localising the

technology, curating content, coordination of various actors and providing regular reports to the Country Office and global teams.

3. Work Assignments:

The consultant is expected to provide the following services as part of their work assignment:

1. Support MoES ICT Centre and UNICEF in the rapid deployment of the Learning Passport Platform, providing technical assistance in localising the technology, curating content, coordinating various actors, and providing regular reports to Country Office and global teams.
2. Serve as lead for local troubleshooting and user support.
3. Serve as a key focal point to the MoES, content creators and regional and global UNICEF stakeholders.
4. Provide on-the-ground support to users (learners, teachers) and stakeholders at key moments of engagement. Support may include sourcing and uploading content in collaboration with Education Staff and government departments, creating categories, courses, and lessons, and providing analytical reports from data aggregated by the platform.
5. Provide technical support to UNICEF Lao PDR in procuring digital content services (e.g. curation, digitization, localization, production) and quality assuring their deliverables from a digital perspective;
6. Create and manage a Teaching and Learning Platform community among UNICEF staff and national partners engaged in deployments, producing knowledge management resources and organizing activities to ensure collaboration among members of the community and documenting lessons learned, challenges, and good practices;
7. Provide inputs and support the drafting of reports to internal and external stakeholders and funders of the Teaching and Learning Platform (donor reports, annual results reporting and other needed updates)
8. Scope complimentary ICT for learning and Edtech tools that could be integrated to support the Teaching and Learning Platform related technology efforts
9. Other activities needed to support the purpose of this contract.

4. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

- Advanced degree in education, information technology, statistics, communication, engineering, or other relevant field. In lieu of a specific academic degree, relevant experience may be considered to meet this requirement.
- At least 5 years of professional work experience in Technology for Development (T4D) and/or information system development, including mobile and web-based applications, with manifested capacity to manage programmes involving many stakeholders. Specific experience on ICT for learning or digital learning is an advantage.
- Experience managing user-driven design processes.
- Experience in digital learning design.
- Proven training and capacity building skills for a range of stakeholders.
- Good technical understanding and familiarity with information management systems.
- Knowledge of at least Teams, SharePoint, GitHub, Trello, Jira,, other software development and project management tooling a plus.
- Excellent communication abilities, in both written and oral forms. Consultant should be at ease in presentations and meetings with D-level (UN) or C-level (private sector) executives.
- Demonstrated ability and experience in coordination, and able to work under pressure is required.
- Fluency in English and Lao language is a requirement.

5. Location:

The consultant will be stationed at the UNICEF Lao PDR office in Vientiane. However, pending any further COVID-related restrictions, the consultant may also be required to work from home in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

6. Duration:

The duration of this assignment is 240 days over 12 months.

7. Deliverables:

Activity	Deliverables	Timeline
1. Lead overall deployment of the Teaching and Learning Platform in Lao PDR, in close collaborations with the UNICEF Global Learning Passport Team	Monthly status report documenting progress, bottlenecks, challenges and actions taken in relation to Country Office support.	Monthly.
2. Lead provision of teaching and Learning Platform with local and global content	Regular status reports on deployment progress	Ongoing.
3. Serve as focal point and troubleshoot manager for all users in the country	Monthly status report documenting this activity.	Monthly.
4. Provide technical support to UNICEF Country Office and MoES ICT Centre procuring digital content services (e.g. curation, digitization, localization, production), quality assuring their deliverables from a digital perspective.	Documented review and feedback submitted to Country Offices.	Ongoing.
5. Create and manage a Teaching and Learning Platform community among UNICEF staff and national partners engaged in deployments, producing knowledge management resources and organizing activities to ensure collaboration among members of the community and documenting lessons learned, challenges, and good practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active forum and chatbox in Teams, Collaboration Site, Trello and/or other services. • Creation of FAQs. • Ongoing documentation of lessons learned, challenges, and good practices. 	Ongoing.
6. Produce a Sangam Platform Lessons Learned to guide other country offices and enable uptake.	Playbook is produced and updated regularly.	First version 3 months after start of contract. Ongoing updates.
7. Feedback user needs and functionalities that would enhance the experience, adoption, and usability of the Sangam Platform by UNICEF users, and understand how this information is included in the	Needs and functionality requirements documents are updated regularly. Information about product roadmap is available.	Ongoing.

Microsoft Sangam's product roadmap.		
8. Provide inputs and support the drafting of reports to internal and external stakeholders and funders of the Teaching and Learning Platform (donor reports, annual results report, needed updates, etc.).	Inputs and updates are provided when requested.	Ongoing
9. Scope additional ICT for learning and Edtech tools that could be integrated to support education programmes, in general, and Teaching and Learning Platform related technology efforts, in particular.	Scoping conducted in consultation with Supervisor and T4D staff in regions where deployments are ongoing.	Ongoing.
10. Other activities needed to support the purpose of this contract.	Monthly progress report documenting this activity.	Monthly.

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:

** 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 upon work plan for the submission of deliverables. No additional fees shall be paid to complete the assignment. Payment will be made upon submission of approved deliverables and satisfactory completion of assignments. Payments 1-12 below will be divided equally from the total contract lump sum amount.*

Deliverables	Duration (estimated # days)	Payment must be directly linked with satisfactory deliverables	Reporting Requirements for each deliverable
1	21	Payment 1	Monthly status report
2	21	Payment 2	Monthly status report
3	21	Payment 3	Monthly status report
4	21	Payment 4	Monthly status report
5	21	Payment 5	Monthly status report
6	21	Payment 6	Monthly status report
7	21	Payment 7	Monthly status report

8	21	Payment 8	Monthly status report
9	21	Payment 9	Monthly status report
10	21	Payment 10	Monthly status report
11	21	Payment 11	Monthly status report
12	21	Payment 12	Monthly status report

10. Administrative Issues:

The consultants will be provided with a UNICEF laptop and access to printers etc., as well as their own desk space at UNICEF Lao PDR. No travel outside of Vientiane is anticipated as part of this consultancy. Copyright of all the deliverables to be produced through this assignment will rest with the MoES and UNICEF.

11. Contract supervisor:

Under the supervision of the UNICEF Education Manager, the consultant will work closely with one or more Education Specialists and an Education Officer within the UNICEF Lao PDR office.

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 as per the work assignment.

The deadline for applications is 19.06.2020

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 assessment of

a) Technical Qualification (max. 100 points) weight 70 %

- Relevant education/degree (30 points)
- Experience working in the education sector in Lao PDR (40 points)
- Fluency in both English and Lao languages (30 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.

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

Section Request: Education

Programme Area: Output 3

Milestone 5: Strengthened Sector Disaster and Climate Change Resilience, Emergency

Included in approved AWP: Yes No