

United Nations Children's Fund

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

Title	Funding Code	Type of engagement	Duty Station:
Consultant: Analysis of policy options to improve diets in Lao PDR	WBS: SC220431 2460/A0/06/200/001/002	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Part-Time* <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Full-Time *	UNICEF Lao PDR Office, Vientiane, Lao PDR
<p>Purpose of Activity/Assignment:</p> <p>Lao PDR is seeing the negative effects of the global economic crises on its population's diets. Food insecurity is reported by 32% of the population, and the majority of Laotians (80%) cannot afford healthy diets. This proves that although Laos has demonstrated political commitment to tackle malnutrition through a number of existing policies, strategies, action plans and initiatives, access to healthy diets remains a critical challenge in the country.</p> <p>Recent evidence in South East Asian Countries shows an increasing trend in overweight and obesity. In Lao PDR, there is high disparity among socio-economic groups based on location, ethnicity and wealth quintiles. Adolescent overweight is substantial – estimates indicate 6.8 and 13 percent overweight in adolescent boys and girls, respectively. Similarly, the proportion of obese women is estimated to more than double and reach 12% by 2025. Data suggest that the WHA and SDG targets of “no increase/reduced prevalence of child overweight” to below 5 per cent by 2025 and 3 percent by 2030 may not be within reach unless prevention actions are put in place.</p> <p>The Diet quality assessment carried out in Laos in 2022 show that a high proportion of people regularly consume vegetables, fruit, and animal-source foods. Three-fourths (73%) of women of reproductive age consume diets that meet minimum dietary diversity and about 27% of adults consume all five food groups typically recommended in food-based dietary guidelines. The food groups most consumed in addition to staple foods are animal-source foods (91%) and vegetables. Data also shows that 42% of the population are consuming processed meats, 42% are consuming sweets, and 27% are consuming instant noodles. Soft drinks are another area of concern, which are more prevalent in urban areas (42% urban vs. 28% rural).</p> <p>According to data from LSIS-II 2017, throughout the early childhood, less than half of infants (44.9%) are exclusively breastfed in the first 6 months of life. Consumption of breastmilk substitutes is widespread from the first days of children' lives, especially, in urban settings where mothers are exposed to aggressive marketing of artificial formulas. Limited data exist on the quality of diets during adolescence. A study undertaken in a district of Vientiane province found that 24% only consume vegetables more than once a day, yet 42 per cent consume soft drinks daily and 46 per cent consume processed snacks at least weekly¹.</p> <p>UNICEF currently supports the implementation of nutrition programmes in the country using the systems approach. This involves capacitating sectors to design and implement evidence-based nutrition services across the country.</p> <p>UNICEF seeks to hire a consultant to support policy efforts to promote healthy diets by conducting an analysis of policy options. This consultancy is expected to run over a period of about 3 months, on a part time basis, and the consultant should be in country, at least partially, during that period (could be split in 2 trips).</p>			
<p>The overall objective of this consultancy is to provide a good understanding of the current landscape in terms of policies promoting healthy diets and regulating the promotion of unhealthy foods, and to present clear actionable recommendations on specific policy options that could potentially benefit Lao PDR.</p> <p>Specifically, the consultant will:</p>			

¹ Sengchanh Kounnavong, Manithong Vonglokham, Thidatheb Kounnavong, Djan Daniel Kwadwo & Dirk R. Essink (2020) Anaemia among adolescents: assessing a public health concern in Lao PDR, Global Health Action, 13:sup2, DOI: [10.1080/16549716.2020.1786997](https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2020.1786997)

- (i) Conduct a comprehensive landscape analysis of existing policies that promote healthy diets or protect children from the promotion and marketing of unhealthy foods in Lao PDR.
- (ii) Analyze findings and propose a range of policy options that can support the promotion of a healthier food environment in the country. Policy options should also include fiscal policies to contribute to increase revenues that can be invested in nutrition.
- (iii) Organize and convene stakeholders' consultations to develop consensus on the set of priority policies and actions to improve diets in Lao PDR.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES NO If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

Child data role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

Budget Year:	Requesting Section/Issuing Office:	Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:
2024	Nutrition Section, Lao PDR	The Section currently lacks the capacity to undertake the identified streams of work in a coherent and timely manner. Some of the activities are tied to donor funds which are time bound.

Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: Yes No, please justify:

All the activities are contained in the 2022/23 rolling workplan of the section.

Consultant sourcing:

National International Both

Competitive Selection:

Advertisement Roster

Single Source Selection (Emergency - Director's approval)

Request for:

New SSA – Individual Contract

Extension/ Amendment

If Extension, Justification for extension:

Supervisor: Karina Lopez Enye, Nutrition Specialist	Start Date: 15/1/2024	End Date: 30/04/2024 Period: 3.5 months
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m	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline
Comprehensive landscape analysis of existing policies that promote healthy diets or protect children from the promotion and marketing of unhealthy foods in Lao PDR.	Report presenting the policy review, the highlighting opportunities in policies that contribute favourably to healthy diets as well as policy gaps that should be addressed.	29/02/24
Propose a range of policy options that can support the promotion of a healthier food environment in the country.	Section in the report with recommendations in terms of policy options that Laos can consider adopting to provide an enabling environment for the promotion of healthy diets. Policy options should also include fiscal policies.	15/03/24
Stakeholders' consultations to develop consensus on the set of priority policies and actions to improve diets in Lao PDR.	Report on consensus agreed by key stakeholders on policy options to be prioritised in the country, with a draft roadmap and roles & responsibilities.	15/04/24
TOTAL		

Minimum Qualifications required*:	Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required *:
<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post- graduate degree in public health, nutrition, information management, international development or other clearly related disciplines ▪ At least 5 years professional work experience in related areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant work experience in nutrition programming/research and or policy development. ▪ Knowledge of policy development, public financing for nutrition and dietary guidelines. ▪ Good analytical and report writing skills. ▪ Excellent communication skills. ▪ Fluency in English is required- both in oral and written communication.
Submission of applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 medical insurance with medivac, travel and accommodation cost for this assignment as per work assignment 	
Evaluation Criteria (This will be used for the Selection Report (for clarification see Guidance)) A) Technical Evaluation (maximum 100 points), 75Points	

Degree Education in (20 points)

- ✓ Post-graduate degree in Public health, nutrition, international development or other clearly related disciplines

Knowledge of (25 points)

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Nutrition policies
- ✓ Public financing for nutrition
- ✓ Dietary guidelines and marketing of unhealthy foods
- ✓ Excellent communication skills
- ✓ Fluency in English is required- both in oral and written communication.

Experience in (30 points)

- ✓ At least 8 years professional work experience in related areas
- ✓ Experience in supporting countries develop and/or review policies
- ✓ Experience analysing data and writing reports

Quality of past work (e.g. understanding, methodology) (25 points)

- ✓ Assessment of previous work including written and analytical skills
- ✓ Reference checks

B) Financial Proposal (100 points), 25points

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 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.

¹ Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

Text to be added to all TORs:

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.

UNICEF offers [reasonable accommodation](#) for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.