



## FO ToR external evaluation

<b>Country:</b>	Lao PDR/Southeast Asia
<b>Project:</b>	532003 Improving Quality and Relevant Education in Primary School (IQREPS)
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	Pestalozzi Children's Foundation

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### List of Abbreviations

CCA	Child-Centered Approach
DESB	District Education and Sports Bureau
ICE-PLA	Intercultural Education – Participatory Learning and Action
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
LSDA	Life Skills Development Association
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OP	Operational Partner
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PCF	Pestalozzi Children's Foundation
PESS	Provincial Education and Sports Service
ToR	Terms of Reference
VRT	Village Representative Team

## 1 Background information and context

To address poor quality teaching and relevance of primary education, Life Skills Development Association (LSDA) in partnership with District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB) of Viengxay, works with 15 rural ethnic communities (Lu Mien-Hmong village, Tai Deng-lu Mien village, Hmong-Khmu village, Tai Deng-Lao Phud village and two Khmu villages), in Viengxay District, Houaphan Province, Laos. The project provides a series of trainings to in-service teachers in the target primary schools, as well as to pedagogical support advisors of DESB, in order to improve child-centred teaching skills and use appropriate, locally available teaching aids. Internal pedagogical peer support mechanism was established at school cluster level. Furthermore, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) teaching has been integrated into the teaching for schoolchildren. At the same time, at the community level, community members, particularly IK experts are empowered to teach community-prioritized IK topics to schoolchildren. The process has been documented and officially approved by the Provincial Education and Sports Service (PESS).

For sustainability, LSDA has been applying ICE-PLA or the “empowering people” approach to the project cycle. Community members—women, men, elderly people and children—have been empowered to actively participate in planning, implementing and managing their village development action plans. Each of the target communities has their own village mechanism, called the Village Representative Team (VRT), to mobilize and to manage their community development activities regarding children’s education development and child protection.

The project aims to address “low quality education” by tackling: 1.) community participation and ownership in pre- and primary education development, child rights promotion, and environmental protection; 2.) inefficient pedagogical support; and 3.) Relevance of the learning and teaching process.

**Project Impact:** Increased social equity and opportunities for ethnic people to be able to contribute to sustainable development.

**Project Outcome(s):** Pre-and Primary school children (boys and girls) in rural ethnic communities receive an improved quality education.

### Outputs:

1. The quality of teaching is improved.
2. DESB has a mechanism to replicate and sustain the good practice (community participation and ownership) to foster good quality education development in Viengxay District.
3. Communities commit a participatory approach to effectively empowering children to actively participate in learning for sustainable development.

### Project Participants:

1. 945 pre-and primary schoolchildren (455 girls), aged 3 – 13, in poor and remote communities (15 villages), from 5 different ethnic groups: Tai Deng, Hmong, Lu Mien, Khmu and Lao Loum.
2. 4,672 parents and community members (2,275 women)<sup>1</sup> of Tai Deng, Hmong, Lu Mien, Khmu and Lao Loum ethnic groups. They are all subsistence farmers. More men than women from all ethnic groups can speak Lao. But most of Hmong women cannot understand Lao.
3. 51 pre-and primary school teachers (19 women) the majority of the teachers are Tai Deng who speak their own dialect and Lao. They passed a short-term teacher training. Most of them are not originally from the same ethnic group as the children. Teachers who are in the new target villages hardly receive refresher training since they had graduated.
4. 70 Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Experts (29 women): they are selected by villagers based on their expertise, in particular, IK topics and voluntariness to work.

### Project Partners:

- Village Representative Team (VRT)<sup>2</sup> established in each of the 15 villages (6 old villages from previous phase and 9 new villages). Their roles and responsibilities are in general for mobilizing community resources to contribute to community education development for the benefit of the community children. Specifically, they are empowered through the ICE-PLA to plan to implement and monitor the community education development plan of action.

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<sup>1</sup> The number of parents and community members is much higher than the number of children because it covers the whole community members who may not have children of the pre-and primary school age, but contribute to the education development of their own communities.

<sup>2</sup> 7 VEDC members (government structure) plus 5 to 10 selected villagers

- District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB) is responsible for appointing staff to work closely with LSDA in improving quality teaching, which is to address poor literacy and numeracy of the ethnic children. DESB is also responsible for replicating the “community participation and ownership” model<sup>3</sup> for 3 other villages to be piloted with minimal support from the project.
- Provincial Education and Sports Service (PESS) has a supervisory and advisory role in supporting DESB and LSDA for the implementation of the project. They will participate in the quarterly meeting, bi-annual meeting as well as field visit.
- Teacher Training College (TTC) will be invited to provide specific trainings, such as how to handle multi-grade teaching, teaching Lao to ethnic children and textbook contextualization.
- Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) will be invited to visit the project site and participate in the bi-annual meeting as well as provide feedback to DESB, PESS and LSDA regarding the project in alignment with the MoES’s education development strategy and plan.

**Project Duration:** 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2022

## 2 Purpose of the evaluation

The formative and summative evaluation purpose is to:

- Assess the achievements and sustainability of project outcome and outputs<sup>4</sup>;
- Assess the cooperation among partners (VRT, Teachers, DESB, PESS, LSDA and PCF) concerned with the project,
- Assess effectiveness of methodologies applied by project,
- Draw key lessons learned and obtain clear, specific and practical recommendations for planning a new project.

## 3 Scope and focus of the evaluation

The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and management of the third phase of the project and shall look at:

1. Progressive achievement of the project as per the designed impact, outcome and outputs.
2. Lessons learnt in methodologies applied by the project in participatory delivery of quality education encompassing the training of teachers and pedagogical support advisors, community engagement, child participation, pedagogical support mechanism and expansion/replication approach.
3. The capacity of PESS and DESB in ensuring compliance of teachers’ ethics.
4. Sustainability of community participation or contribution to education development (teaching of Indigenous Knowledge (IK), school maintenance, improve school environment, support enrolment of children, child protection, etc.)

### 3.1 Evaluation questions

- To what extent has the project outcome been achieved?
- What lessons learnt can be taken from the project implementation methodology and approach to effectively improve the quality of education in a sustainable manner?
- What recommendations could be drawn for expanding the project to reach more children?
- What arrangement have been in place in ensuring the existence of project's assumption regarding the compliance of teachers’ ethics?
- What arrangement of the IK teaching have been established and how can IK teaching be developed to ensure its long-term sustainability?

### 3.2 Evaluation methods

The evaluation shall be conducted by an external consultant jointly with PCF, LSDA staff and project team. A more specific and detailed assessment design shall be developed by the consultant and discussed between consultant, PCF and LSDA based on the following mixed methods of information gathering (the list below can be adjusted):

- a. Multi-stakeholder workshop- quarterly meeting

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<sup>3</sup> 3 villages that DESB will replicate the model from previous project phase by themselves.

<sup>4</sup> The periodic test results of children’s learning are available in semi- annual and annual project reports and monitoring system.

- b. Focus group discussions with project's participants, with teachers regarding skills improvement and application of their new knowledge, parents/VRT regarding their contribution to community education development, children of different ages and gender regarding their participation in project supported activities and leaning of IK and child right, with PESS and DESB regarding the overall project intervention and sustainability.
- c. Interviews with key informants (parents)
- d. Desk review of project/programme documentation (project planning documents (e.g. log frame), monitoring system, monitoring report, project/programme report)
- e. Participant observation

The evaluation shall be conducted through a multi-stakeholder workshop, focus group discussions, village visit and interview during the second half of May 2022 in Viengxay district, Huaphan province. If required, selective interviews may be arranged.

The multi-stakeholder workshop participants include PESS, DESB, Lao Women Union and district cabinet, community representatives, teachers from target villages in Viengxay district, Huaphan province and project staff. The representatives of the Ministry of Education's Department of Teacher Education, Department of General Education and the Department of Arts will be invited to participate in the field assessment.

## 4 Schedule and Deliverables

Septs	What	Date
1.	Submission of proposal	06 May
2.	Selection of the candidates	11 May
3.	Signing the contract and finalising the ToR	16 May
4.	Travel to Viengxay	22 May
5.	Preparatory workshop with PESS and DESB	23 May
6.	Quarterly meeting cum evaluation (Multi-stakeholder workshop with plenary and small group discussions - separate groups of staff, PESS, DESB, teachers and village representatives)	24-25 May
7.	Village visit (separate teams to 4 villages) to talk to some parents and see school landscapes)	26 May
8.	PESS, LSDA, DESB and PCF reflects on cooperation	27 May
9.	Travel back	28 May
10.	Draft report submitted	10 June
11.	Final evaluation report	24 June

### 4.1 Structure and length of the final report

The final evaluation report shall be submitted in English and Lao, if possible. It shall not be longer than 20 pages (excluding annexes and executive summary). The final evaluation should contain an executive summary of no more than 5 pages that includes a brief description of the project/programme, its context and current situation, the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology and its main findings, conclusions and recommendations. The structure of the report should follow the structure of the executive summary. Three signed copies of the final version of the report along with a digital version have to be submitted to PCF.

## 5 Role and responsibilities

A specific and detailed assessment design and process is led by a consultant with support of PCF and LSDA.

LSDA staff will facilitate the coordination with stakeholders at central and local level.

The lead during the actual evaluation is by the consultant and the actual evaluation is done jointly by the consultant and LSDA, including PCF CRep.

The report will be written by the consultant in consultation with PCF and LSDA. After receiving the first draft of report, PCF (Programme Director and Country Representative) will coordinate for the review and feedback to be given within 7 days after the receiving the draft. PCF's Country Representative Laos will be the contact person for this exercise.

## **6 Competency profile of the evaluator(s)**

The lead evaluator or the evaluation team is required to have the following of competency:

- Experience conducting project evaluations in education and related social development fields including community level.
- Knowledge of the OECD-DAC definitions: how to assess Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Management
- Experiences of Result-Based Management, results chain and project cycle
- Strong experiences with participatory working approaches
- Skills in facilitating multi-stakeholder workshop
- Skills to evoke and solicit data from different stakeholders (children, gender, etc.) concerned with the project, synthesise all accounts, justify achievement of the project.
- Knowledge of the rural community context and ability to travel to "hard to access" area and overnight in the rural community.
- Ability to write evaluation report in English.

## **7 Budget**

A detailed budget should be included in the proposal and specify how many days are given for studying the documentation, execution (field visits), reporting etc. Other expenses to be calculated include (if relevant): translation, session with partners, transportation etc.

## **8 Guiding principles and values**

The evaluation team should adhere to the United Nations evaluation norms and standards and ethical guidelines for evaluation<sup>5</sup>.

The individual consultants/team or institution that will work on this project must demonstrate personal and professional integrity during the whole process of the evaluation. He/she/the team must respect the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and ensure that sensitive data cannot be traced to its source. Further, the team must respect ethics of research while working with children including using age appropriate consent forms, age appropriate data collection, and principle of do no harm. Furthermore, the team and its members must take care that those involved in the evaluation have an opportunity to examine the statements attributed to them. The evaluation process and consultants must be sensitive to beliefs, manners, and customs of the social and cultural environment in which they will work. Especially, the consultants must be sensitive to and address issues of protection, discrimination and gender inequality. Furthermore, the consultants are not expected to assess the personal performance of individuals, and must balance an assessment of management functions with due consideration of this principle. Finally, if the consultants or team uncover evidence of wrong doing, such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body.

## **9 Annexe**

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>, consulted on 23.10.2016