
Terms of Reference
Consultant for Scaling –Up Access to Basic Education in Lao PDR (SABEL) Phase II

End-of-Project Evaluation

1. Organisational context

ChildFund in Laos is the representative office of ChildFund Australia – an independent international development organisation that works to reduce poverty for children in developing communities.

ChildFund Australia is a member of the ChildFund Alliance – a global network of 11 child-focused development and humanitarian organisations reaching nearly 32 million children and their family members in 70 countries. ChildFund Australia is a registered charity, a member of the Australian Council for International Development, and fully accredited by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which manages the Australian Government’s overseas aid program.

ChildFund began working in Laos in 2010 and works in partnership to create community and systems change which enables vulnerable children and young people, in all their diversity, to assert and realise their rights. Projects are implemented in Houaphanh, Xieng Khouang, Phongsaly, Sayabouly, Luang Prabang, Khammouane, Savannakhet, Sekong Provinces and Vientiane capital.

With a focus on upholding child rights and improving access to quality education, ChildFund in Laos also prioritises projects which focus on child nutrition, sexual reproductive health and rights, media literacy, and job readiness.

2. Background

ChildFund in Laos, in partnership with Ministry of Education and Sports have been working hard for a decade to improve the education accessibility and quality for Lao students and communities, especially in Houaphanh province, working closely to address vulnerable children (children from ethnic minority background, girls, children with disability) barriers to education. ChildFund in Laos currently receives the financial supports from ChildFund Korea to implement a 3-year funded project called **“Scaling-Up Access to Basic Education in Lao PDR (SABEL II)”**. **SABELL II is a second phase project following the completion of SABEL I in 2018-2021 with** experienced positive achievements, particularly improving children’s reading outcomes in Lao language, improved hygiene practices among students and parents, increased parents’ knowledge over the importance of education for children with disabilities, upskilled VEDC’s understanding to develop Village Education Development Plans. This second phase project emphasizes on the improvement of student’s learning outcomes, school accessibility for vulnerable children in ethnic communities including girls and children with disabilities, and school environment improvement through community participations.

SABEL II project will be implemented in 30 target schools of Houameuang districts, Houaphanh province at the primary education level (Grade 1-5). 27 out of these schools were targeted by SABEL phase I. The project will work closely with District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB) and Provincial Education and Sports Services (PESS) and the Ministry of Education and Sports at the central level. The project will collaborate with INGOs and local Non-Profit Association (Meaying Houmjai Phattana Association) in relation to technical expertise and resource exchange in relation to gender and disability inclusion.

SABEL II project duration is 36 months - from 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2025. The consultancy period is from March to July 2025.

The project includes 3 main outcomes, performance indicators and its baseline figures captured in June 2024 are as follow:

Logframe of the Project			
Result statement	Indicators	Result in the baseline	Means of verification
Outcome 1: Learning outcomes of students in grade 1-5 are improved through strengthened teacher capacity to effectively teach multi-grade classrooms.	% of teachers adopting multi-grade teaching practices.	0	Teacher performance observation checklist (Checklist developed based on the national curriculums of G1-G5 that focus on multigrade teaching)
	Positive changes in teachers in terms of using teaching and learning materials that promote gender equality, inclusion of children with disability and children from ethnic minority group(s).	A majority of teachers don't know how to use teaching and learning materials that promote gender equality, inclusion of children with disability and children from ethnic groups.	FGD guides for teachers
	% of children who perform satisfactory and above in reading at grade 2 level	13.2% of the children were able to read and understand the text	EGRA Test 5: Oral reading fluency with comprehension
	% of children who have confidence (self-assessed) in using Lao language in class	80.4%	Self-assessment (first part of the EGRA test)
Outcome 2: VEDC has strengthened knowledge, skills and practices of school governance and operations to ensure that schools are accessible for children with diverse abilities and ethnic minority children	% of Schools developing, implementing and reviewing school development plan that promotes inclusiveness in school	Not measured at the baseline	School development plan VEDC QTR report (by CFL)
	% of VEDCs demonstrating evidence of supporting school development plan	Not measured at the baseline	VEDC QTR meeting MOM with schools (by CFL) VEDCs monthly reports Case study (by CFL)

Outcome 3: Parents, caregivers and community members have improved knowledge, attitude and capacity on the importance of education and are contributing towards the improvement of school environment.	Evidence of parents/caregivers and community members in all target villages have increased level of investment (in-kind/monetary) in the school development plan implementation.	Not measured at the baseline	Document review of school development plan and implementation/FGD (by CFL)
	% of parents/caregivers, community members with improved understanding on the importance of education.	96.6% of parents/caregivers, community members understand the importance of education	Parent survey
	# of schools renovated to improve accessibility for students with disability and ethnic students.	0	School renovation checklist
	% of ethnic student satisfied with environment and enjoying the class	88.8%	Self-assessment (first part of the EGRA test)

3. Purpose

This project has undertaken a baseline study and towards the end of the project, this project requires an external, independent end-of-project evaluation. The evaluation questions should be driven by the OECD evaluation criterion of **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability**, as well as cross-cutting issues including gender, ethnicity and disability and inclusion. In the findings, the consultant will also help to highlight the potential lessons learnt, challenges, solutions, and recommendation.

Target audience and key stakeholders of this endline evaluations will be Grade 1-5 primary school students and teachers, caregivers, VEDCs, community members, government counterparts from district to provincial level and ChildFund staff.

The assignment involves consultation among Project Coordinator and Project Officers. Technical advisory will also involve Education Advisor and MEL Advisor from ChildFund Australia, as well as inputs from ChildFund Korea as the donor for the project.

The purpose of this evaluation is to undertake an outcome evaluation which to assess the:

1) OECD-DAC criteria

Relevance: The extent to which the project design and project outcomes responded to the needs of individual, group and organisational participants. Addressing the questions relating to hindering and facilitating factors; relevance of interventions to the target groups; utilising the most appropriate interventions.

- *To what extent do the selected intervention for teachers (Teacher Learning Circle (TLC)) correspond to the challenges of multi-grade classroom with diverse student demographic?*

- *To what extent do the selected strategies for education stakeholders including the Village Education Development Committee (VEDC) (Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) and Diversity and Inclusion Training (DIT)) correspond in addressing the needs of vulnerable children in schools?*

Coherence:

- *How did the TLC fit into the broader government programmatic aims, particularly around supporting teacher's continuous professional development (CPD)?*
- *How did the introduction of GALS and DIT fit into government aims in terms of school's diversity and inclusion?*

Efficiency: The extent to which all project activities and outputs outlined in the project design were achieved *on time, within budget and with quality*. This includes an analysis of the cost-efficiency and value for money of the project interventions versus the benefits from the project and the number of people reached.

- *Were different resources allocated to meet differentiated needs of children with disabilities and different gender? If so, how were they allocated and was it adequate, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context?*
- *How well did the project respond to changing context over the course of the project? Were resources redirected to changing needs? Were project risks managed efficiently?*
- *What were the factors that led the successful outcome achievement? What were the challenges and lessons we learnt from the project implementation?*

Effectiveness: The extent to which the project objectives and associated key performance indicators (outlined above) were achieved, citing quantitative and qualitative evidence (e.g., change stories), contributing and hindering factors in all project components at all levels of implementation and project management.

- *To what extent the project has achieved its intended outcomes, in relation to the key performance indicators of the project?*

Sustainability: The extent to which the capacity of the project stakeholders and partners was built to enable the benefits of the project to continue with/without support from CFL and other external actors. This will also examine what sustainability measures were put in place and what measures should be included should there be a next phase.

- *Will the achievements in TLC persist after the conclusion of the project? Have the IPS system been set up to support the teacher's professional development in the long term?*
- *Will the achievement with the VEDC members persist after the conclusion of the project? Has the knowledge of GALS and DIT contributed towards the improvement of diversity and inclusion in schools?*
- *To what extent has the project supported project stakeholders (teachers, VEDC members and DESB officers) to increase the participation of school development and how stakeholders perceive its impact on students beyond the duration of the project?*

Impact: By presenting concrete evidence for

What are the most significant changes the project has contributed towards

- *improved 1-5 graders' learning outcomes?*
- *Improved school environment?*
- *The promotion of diversity and inclusion in schools?*
- *improved VEDC members' knowledge, skills and practices of school governance and operations?*

- *What are the unexpected/unplanned results/changes? Are the unexpected results/changes positive or negative? How/Why?*

2) Cross-cutting issues

Gender inclusion - The extent to which barriers to participation were identified and addressed, such as promoting gender equity, empowering girls, female teachers, gender roles and power relations.

- *How specific activities impacts the welfare of the children? Whether any activities provided opportunity for gender equality practices and/or empowering female and other gender children and teachers?*
- *What are areas for further improvement with regards to gender inclusion?*

Disability inclusion - The extent to which barriers were identified and addressed, such as access to training, participation in activities and decision-making.

- *How are the interventions contributing towards tackling inequality faced by people and children with disability?*
- *What are areas for further improvement with regards to disability inclusion?*

Inclusion of vulnerable groups - The extent to which barriers were identified and addressed of identified vulnerable groups, such as access to training, participation in project design, project briefings, activities, decision-making and project feedback.

- *How inclusive the intervention has been for different vulnerable groups?*
- *What are areas for further improvement with regards to inclusion of vulnerable groups?*

3. Key Tasks and Responsibilities

It is expected that the consultant(s) to conduct the following tasks:

- To conduct a desk-review in order to gather and review relevant project documents and reports including the baseline, project reports and related manuals from ChildFund in Laos and related government and implementing partners.
- Prepare a detailed inception report for submission to ChildFund for review and approval. This shall clearly describe evaluation methods and tools in detail, data collection tools, work plan to undertake the assignment etc.
- Focusing on outcomes and their performance indicators (as mentioned above); review and update existing tools and develop new tools if necessary, including the Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interview approaches in order to measure the progress towards these outcomes and indicators, as well as output indicators.
- Train enumerators on both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.
- Conduct field level data collection based on agreed assessment tools, maintain quality and accepted norms and standards, lead the data entry and analysis.
- Develop a comprehensive draft report on findings/results of the study with input from ChildFund/project team.
- Prepare presentation slides in both English and Lao of the endline evaluations for ChildFund and relevant stakeholders.*
- Incorporate comments and suggestions forwarded and produce final report as per the agreed timetable.
- For the Terms of Reference (ToR), Inception Report, and Endline Evaluation Report, the consultant must discuss the development of each report with the project-implementing organizations and obtain their confirmation for the final version.
- Submission of all raw data that used as the basis of the report is required

5. Methodology

The consultant, in consultation with ChildFund in Laos and ChildFund Australia Education and MEL advisors, is expected to develop the appropriate methodology to collect data.

The methodology and tools have to:

- Be both quantitative and qualitative and strongly support the active participatory approach and engagement from the project stakeholders including youth volunteers, youth trainers and child protection committee, teachers, government counterparts and ChildFund in Laos staff.
- The methods, data collection and analysis should also consider and include the perspectives of different genders and people living with disabilities (PLWD). The tools used during baseline study should be utilised or modified to suit the capacity of participants (such as the ones with disability and/or from ethnic minority groups) and need for end of project evaluation, wherever relevant.
- The right to participation must be balanced with the right to protection, recognising that placing excessive or inappropriate expectations on children denies them the right to take part in decisions they are capable of making.
- Data collection methods should be guided by the project SMART indicators and other useful information to give a clear picture of the project. The consultant is expected to develop a clear guideline to assist the process.
- Should there be a baseline tool established, the endline consultant is expected to use the same methodology to collect the data to measure some performance indicator to ensure comparability.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data should be collected and reported, and data sources clearly cited.
- Tools and methods must coherently respond to the project objectives and performance indicators.

Report:

- The report must be written in English, provide in an electronic format (Microsoft Word and PDF). Raw and analysed data to be submitted by Excel or Word file.
- The actual evaluation report is limited to 35 pages excluding annexes. A maximum 3-page executive summary should be included as part of the report.
- Report format:
 - Table of contents
 - List of Abbreviations
 - List of tables
 - List of figures
 - Executive summary (main findings including the results of the outcome indicators of the project – max 3 pages)
 - ✓ Background
 - ✓ Results and key achievements
 - ✓ Recommendations
 - Introduction providing background information about the project and objectives of the project
 - Purpose of the evaluation
 - ✓ Key questions
 - ✓ Approach/Methodology
 - ✓ Limitations and mitigation measures taken
 - Evaluation Findings (include findings for each Outcome and its performance indicators, including 2 case study - One for youth volunteer and one for youth trainer)
 - ✓ Relevance
 - ✓ Coherence

- ✓ Efficiency
- ✓ Effectiveness
- ✓ Sustainability
- ✓ Impact
- Discussions and Recommendations
- Annexes (include all tools used)

6. Deliverable and Indicative Timetable

Note: this is subject for negotiation with the Consultant

Indicative dates	Outputs and Activities	Number of Days
30/10/2024	Finalise ToR	-
29/11/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultant Recruitment ▪ Interview ▪ Negotiation and signing the contract 	-
15/03/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in a 90-minute project orientation provided by SABEL project team ▪ Consultant prepares and presents the Inception Report to CFL and CFA Technical Advisors ▪ Work in collaboration with CFA Education and MEL Technical Advisors to develop methodology and review/update tools 	3
30/03/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit the final inception report ▪ Revise the inception report and resubmit it for the final review and approval 	
30/04/2025	<u>Data Collection</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enumerator training (1 day) ▪ Piloting tools (1 day) ▪ Data collection (8) <p>Complete data collection</p>	10
30/05/2025	Data tabulation and data analysis (7 days)	7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Debriefing/presenting results (1 day) ▪ Report writing (first draft) (7 days) ▪ Submit the 1st Draft Report (English) 	7
30/06/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporate feedback and finalise the second draft report (2 days) ▪ Submit the second draft report (English) ▪ If any further comments, respond to and incorporate CF's further comments and feedback and submit third draft/<i>Final Report</i> (1 day) 	3
Total		30

7. Management and Reporting Arrangements

The Consultant will report directly to the Education Advisor of CFA and coordinate data collection plans with the Project Coordinator, keeping the MEL Technical Advisors copied to the communication chain. *All reports must be written in English providing in an electronic format (Microsoft Word).*

8. Confidentiality

All discussions and documents relating to this ToR will be treated as confidential by the parties.

9. Child Safeguarding

The successful applicant will be required to comply with ChildFund Australia's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and to sign a Code of Conduct. The consultant will also have in place an Australian Federal Police Criminal Background Check and Working with Children Check.

10. Counter-Terrorism

ChildFund Australia acknowledges its obligation under the Australian laws relating to counter-terrorism. In order to meet its obligation, the consultant's name will be reviewed against Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and National Security Australia lists at the onset of any financial relationship.

11. Conflict of Interest

The Consultant must declare any financial, personal, family (or close intimate relationship) interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of ChildFund.

12. Fraud and Corruption prevention and awareness

ChildFund Australia has a zero approach to fraud and corruption act. The successful consultant will be required to comply with ChildFund Australia's fraud and corruption prevention and awareness Policy and act against any form of fraud or corruption and not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes.

13. Insurance

The successful applicant will be required to have in place insurance arrangements appropriate to provision of the requirement in this TOR including (without limitation) travel insurance.

14. Acknowledgment and Disclaimer

ChildFund, its Board and staff make no express or implied representation or warranty as to the currency, reliability or completeness of the information contained in this ToR. Nothing in this ToR should be construed to give rise to any contractual obligations or rights, expressed or implied, by the issue of this ToR or the submission of Expression of Interest in response to it. No contract would be created until a formal written contract is executed between ChildFund and a selected consultant.

Selection Criteria for Consultant

Core Competencies

- Commitment to ChildFund Australia's values, vision and mission;
- Teamwork;

- Communication;
- Accountability and integrity; and
- Adaptability and flexibility.

Essential Qualification and Experience:

- At least Master Degree in Education, International Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, or related disciplines with minimum five (5) years' experience in conducting similar evaluation and/or research works in developing countries particularly in South East Asia.
- Relevant experience in development sector around INGOs' work or relevant agency
- Experience in monitoring and evaluation, and conducting end-of-project evaluation, impact studies, utilizing quantitative and qualitative research methods including data collection techniques and analysis
- Strong experience in primary education and teacher training.
- Familiarity with child-focused programming;
- Flexible and able to adapt to a multi-cultural environment and complex situations, with demonstrable high-level interpersonal and cross-cultural skills especially with ethnic minorities
- Familiarity with the development context of Lao PDR including relevant language skills;
- Good experience in collaboration and interaction with communities and government bodies from local to national level, especially the MoES, PESS and DESB.
- Strong facilitation skills, particularly with children, youth and ethnic women;
- Self-driven, strong organizational and planning skills, with the ability to work independently or in a group, as well as under pressure
- Fluent in both Lao and English, and showing ability to communicate ethnic languages; Hmong and Khmu would be an asset.

Submission Procedure:

Applications can be made by email to Bamboo HR (linked will be identified when the announcement is launched); all other applications will be rejected. Interested applicants should submit

- a) CV of the lead consultant and their team (if any) and a cover letter
- b) Technical proposal
- c) Financial proposal (Please include fee, transportation and accommodation for the evaluation team)

NOTE: The financial proposal should specify a total lump sum amount and a breakdown of a daily professional fee and communication costs etc. Applications without a financial proposal will be regarded as incomplete and will not be considered for further assessment.

ChildFund in Laos does not require interested candidates to submit copies of certificates, ID cards or any other information.

ChildFund in Laos is an equal opportunity employer and has a strict child protection policy and background checks will be undertaken prior to any offer of employment. All candidates should submit two professional referees including their current or most recent employer.

Please **submit your application via <https://teamchildfund.bamboohr.com/careers/552> or before 5:00 pm of 8th December 2024.**

ChildFund is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and strongly encourage people from all backgrounds, abilities, and identities to apply for any vacancies.