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# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## National Consultant for Child Protection in Emergency

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| **CONTRACT MODALITY** | Individual Consultancy |
| **DUTY STATION** | **UNICEF Lao PDR office, Vientiane** |
| **DURATION OF CONTRACT** | 9 months |

### Purpose of Assignment

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical support to strengthen child protection preparedness, response and recovery for children and families living in disaster- and climate-vulnerable communities in Oudomxay, Savannakhet and Saravan province. The consultancy will contribute to the Child Protection component of the UNICEF-supported "Disaster Risk Reduction for the Most Vulnerable Children" initiative, which seeks to strengthen child-sensitive disaster risk reduction and the capacity of social service workforce and communities to prepare for and respond to emergencies. This consultancy will contribute to the UNICEF Lao PDR Country Programme Document (CPD) 2027–2031, outcome 4: "By 2031, more children and families in climate- and disaster-vulnerable areas are protected by child-sensitive risk information and early warning systems and use climate-resilient WASH, health and education services," and outcome 3, which aims to ensure that adolescents, particularly those who are vulnerable and marginalized, use inclusive child protection and social protection services.

Children and families affected by disasters may face increased risks of family separation, violence, exploitation, gender based violence (GBV), child marriage and psychosocial distress. Disasters can also disrupt existing social support systems and access to child protection and social services. The wider programme recognizes the importance of strengthening protection referral pathways, safe reporting channels, psychosocial recovery and community-based support to ensure that children and families can access appropriate protection services during and following emergencies.

The consultancy will support UNICEF, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and the Lao Women's Union to strengthen the capacity and functionality of child protection systems at community and sub-national levels, with a particular focus on disaster preparedness, emergency response, and recovery. Building on existing government structures, social service systems, community-based child protection mechanisms, and referral pathways, the consultancy will contribute to more effective and coordinated protection services for vulnerable children and families in emergency contexts.

The overall objective of the consultancy is to contribute to a more accessible, coordinated and child-sensitive child protection response in disaster- and climate-vulnerable communities. This will be achieved through four complementary areas of support:

1. Strengthening the capacity of the social service workforce, particularly child protection networks on roles and responsibilities, psychological first aid (PFA), GBV and child protection to enable them to better identify protection concerns, provide appropriate first-line support and facilitate safe referrals during emergencies.

2. Strengthening community-based child protection services, including linkages between community-level structures, social service providers and relevant government referral systems, so that children and families can access appropriate protection and psychosocial support.

3. Strengthening community outreach and communication on psychosocial recovery, child protection risks,

prevention messages, available services and reporting/referral pathways, ensuring that children, caregivers and communities have the information needed to seek support and protect children during and after disasters.

4. Strengthening Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM) to promote accountability to affected populations and ensure that children, caregivers and community members have safe and accessible opportunities to provide feedback, raise concerns and report protection issues.

The consultancy will promote an approach that is child-centred, inclusive, gender-responsive, disability-sensitive and consistent with safeguarding and humanitarian principles. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that children and families who face heightened protection risks or barriers to accessing services are not left behind.

### Scope of Work

Under the supervision of the Child Protection Specialist and in close collaboration with the Child Protection Officer, the consultant will have key accountabilities, duties, and tasks as follows:

1. Implementation planning

• Develop a detailed workplan, in consultation with Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Lao Women's Union, outlining priority activities, expected results, target groups and timelines.

2. Strengthening capacity of the social service workforce, particularly child protection networks

• Review and update existing training materials and approaches (referring to UNICEF and government policies, guidelines, tools and existing child protection network training materials, SOP on child case management, child friendly space facilitation, PFA, GBV, emergency preparedness and community-based protection), to ensure they are relevant to the disaster and community context.

• Based on the updated training material, delivery training for social service workforces and child protection network on PFA, GBV, child protection risks and safe referral.

• Document key capacity-building results, challenges and areas requiring further support.

3. Strengthening community-based child protection services

• Provide follow-up technical support, coaching or mentoring to social service workforce and child protection networks in identifying, responding and referring child protection cases.

• Support and coordinate with Lao Women' Union on MHPSS services including a mobile counselling service.

4. Community outreach on psychosocial recovery, child protection and reporting pathways

• Work with Lao Women's Union and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare develop context-appropriate child protection and psychosocial recovery messages, using existing UNICEF and government materials where available.

• Support community outreach activities (through Child Friendly Space as appropriate) to promote key child protection risks associated with disasters, including violence, exploitation, GBV, and safe and appropriate reporting and referral pathways, targeting children, caregivers, and community members.

• Ensure that communication and outreach approaches are age-appropriate, gender-responsive, disability-inclusive and accessible to community members with different communication needs.

5. Strengthening Community Feedback Mechanisms

• Work with Lao Women's Union and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to review existing feedback and reporting mechanisms in target communities.

• Promote community awareness of available feedback, and reporting channels.

6. Coordination, monitoring and documentation

• Conduct protection cluster meeting, which co-chaired by UNICEF, UNFPA, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Lao Women's Union.

• Coordinate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and relevant provincial, district and community-level authorities and Lao Women's Union and relevant implementing partners and protection actors, as appropriate.

• Work closely with UNICEF Child Protection and relevant Emergency/DRR teams in UN agencies.

• Prepared and submitted reports against proposal indicators in accordance with donor requirements.

• Provide regular updates to UNICEF on progress, challenges, emerging protection concerns and required follow-up.

| **Work Assignments Overview** | **Deliverables/Outputs** | **Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable** |
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| Implementation planning | Deliverable 1: One detailed workplan Agreed activities, target groups and implementation timeline. | 10.01.2027 |
| Strengthening capacity of the social service workforce, particularly child protection networks | Deliverable 2: Capacity strengthening package and Training delivery<br>• Adapted training materials and/or session plans on PFA, GBV and child protection in emergencies and conducted consultation meeting to finalize the training package.<br>• Delivered 3 training sessions for 3 districts.<br>• Reported key results and identified follow-up needs. | 20 February2027<br><br>31 March 2027<br><br>20 April 2027 |
| Strengthening community-based child protection services | Deliverable 3: Strengthened community-based child protection services<br>• Coaching and mentoring support to child protection networks through 3 trips of field visit in three districts. • Follow up and monitor the CPN and counselling service by LWU and conduct 3 field monitoring in 3 districts to observe activity (Once per district). | 20 August 2027 |

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| Community outreach on psychosocial recovery, child protection and reporting pathways | Deliverable 4: Community outreach package and implementation • Developed context appropriate child protection and psychosocial recovery messages • Conduct consultation meeting to finalize key messages with government partners. • Support community outreach activities conducted in selected locations (Field visit combined with counselling monitoring activity). | 31 March 2027 |
| Strengthening Community Feedback Mechanisms | Deliverable 5: Strengthened Community Feedback Mechanisms Reviewed and updated existing CFM and finalize with LWU and MOLSW. | 10 April 2027 |
| Coordination, monitoring and documentation | Deliverable 6: Report • Conducted protection cluster meeting • Summary of key lessons learned activities and achievements against the agreed workplan, and indicators as required by donors. | 15 August 2027 |

**Payment Schedule:**
Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of 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.

**Important Notes**

- 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 for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) 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.

**QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT**

- Minimum requirements:
- **Education**: Master`s university degree in Social Work, Psychology, Social Sciences, Community Development, Humanitarian Studies, or a related field
- **Work Experience**:
- At least 3 years of professional experience in child protection, social welfare, community-based protection, or humanitarian programming.
- Demonstrated experience in child protection in emergencies (CPiE), disaster risk reduction (DRR), psychological first aid (PFA), and safeguarding.
- Experience in capacity building, training delivery, coaching, and mentoring of social service workforce and community.
- **Skills** (optional):
- Degree in Social Work, Psychology, Social Sciences, Community Development, Humanitarian Studies, or a related field.
- Strong coordination, communication, and report-writing skills.

- **Language Requirements**: Fluency in Laos and English languages
- **Desirables**: Experience working with UNICEF, UN agencies, government counterparts, or development partners is an asset.