

CALL FOR CONSULTANCY

Revision of an early childhood teacher education curriculum in Lao PDR

Terms of Reference

Type of Contract: Contract for Individual Consultant
Duration: 20 March through 7 September 2018
Closing date: 12 March 2018

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Office in Bangkok is seeking applications for an Individual Specialist to provide technical assistance to the revision process of the early childhood teacher education curriculum, Bachelor's Degree level, and to strengthen capacity of the teacher education curriculum revision task force in Lao PDR to enable them to effectively conduct the revision process.

Background:

In January 2017, UNESCO Bangkok Office launched a programme titled "Capacity Development for Education 2030 (CapED) in Lao PDR: Capacity Development Support for Teacher Education in Lao PDR", a follow-up to the Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA) in Lao PDR programme, Phase II (2012-2016). The project is aimed at strengthening individual and institutional capacities to enhance the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher training, with a view to improving the quality of the teaching force of basic education, from early childhood to secondary education in Lao PDR.

The Government of Laos is committed to providing quality early childhood education services, following the growing awareness of the importance of the holistic early childhood development. According to the Revised Education Law of 2015, early childhood care and education is offered in crèches (for children from 3 months to less than 3 years old) and kindergartens (for children from 3 to less than 6 years old), with the latter covering play-based learning groups and pre-primary classes. Teacher Training Colleges (TTC), under the supervision of the Department of Teacher Education (DTE), Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), are responsible for preparing early childhood teachers.

Before 2012, early childhood teacher education programmes in Lao PDR were offered at Diploma and Advanced Certificate levels. During Phase II of the CapEFA programme, UNESCO supported the development of the first-ever early childhood teacher education curriculum for Bachelor's Degree level or 12 + 4 system (12 years of basic education and four years of pre-service teacher education). The developed curriculum consists of general education, professional education and practicum courses, with a total of 56 subjects, 148 credits. The 4-year early childhood teacher education programme was first launched in Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College in Vientiane Capital in the academic year 2013/2014. The curriculum was expanded to Luangnamtha and Salavan TTCs in the academic year 2014/2015, and to Savahnakhet TTC in the academic year 2015/2016. From the academic year 2016/2017 onward, Luangprabang, Bankeun, and Pakse TTCs also offer this Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme on early childhood teacher education. Since the launch of the programme in 2013/2014, over 1,000 student teachers have enrolled in this B.Ed. programme in the seven aforementioned TTCs.

Recognizing the importance of curriculum revision, Dongkhamxang TTC conducted an internal formative assessment of curriculum implementation in 2015. The curriculum was subsequently

revised, in cooperation with teacher educators from other TTCs. The current curriculum covers 53 subjects, 146 credits, with an increase of teaching experience from 3 to 8 weeks, and teaching practicum from 8 to 12 weeks.

During November and December 2017, UNESCO Bangkok Office carried out an evaluation of the early childhood teacher education curriculum in Dongkhamxang TTC involving both graduates and current student teachers. The findings of the evaluation reflected the areas for improvements of the curriculum, with a view to accomplishing its goals and objectives to prepare effective and qualified early childhood teachers. In accordance with the findings, the Ministry of Education and Sports will appoint a task force responsible for conducting a revision of the early childhood teacher education, bachelor's degree level, in 2018.

Work Assignment:

Under the framework of the UNESCO programme “Capacity Development for Education 2030 (CapED) in Lao PDR: Capacity Development Support for Teacher Education in Lao PDR”, under the overall authority of the Director of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, and the direct supervision of the Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education (IQE), the Individual Specialist shall provide technical assistance to the revision process of the early childhood teacher education programme at Bachelor's Degree level (12 + 4 system), and to strengthen capacity of the teacher education curriculum revision task force to enable them to effectively and successfully conduct the revision process.

The Individual Specialist shall specifically perform the following tasks:

1. Review the current version of the early childhood teacher education curriculum in Lao PDR (available in the Lao language) and the evaluation report of the early childhood teacher education curriculum in Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College (available in English). Both documents will be provided by UNESCO Bangkok Office;
2. Communicate with relevant officials of the Pre-service Teacher Education Division of the Department of Teacher Education (DTE), Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), who will serve as focal point of communication between the Individual Specialist and the curriculum revision task force consisting of approximately 35 teacher educators in the early childhood teacher education programmes and relevant officials from MoES, to collect necessary documents and information for planning the revision process. Contact details of DTE's focal point will be provided by UNESCO Bangkok Office;
3. Prepare a proposal for the revision process of the early childhood teacher education curriculum in accordance with the findings from the evaluation of the early childhood teacher education curriculum in Dongkhamxang TTC. The proposal should specify the scope, approaches and work plan of the revision process, in consultation with DTE, the curriculum revision task force and UNESCO Bangkok Office. The proposal should be submitted to UNESCO Bangkok Office by 9 April 2018;
4. In line with the approved proposal, lead and provide technical assistance to the curriculum revision task force throughout the revision process. This includes conducting capacity development workshops for the curriculum revision task force to strengthen their capacity in curriculum revision through hands-on practice. It is foreseen that there will be at least three capacity development workshops in April, May and July 2018 respectively to complete the revision process. The revised curriculum should align with the 2012 national early childhood education curriculum, developed by the Research Institute for Educational Sciences;
5. Prepare a progress report on the revision process including the capacity development of the curriculum revision task force, and submit to UNESCO Bangkok Office by 15 June 2018;

6. Submit the first draft of the revised curriculum to UNESCO Bangkok Office by 31 July 2018. The draft revised curriculum will be shared with the Department of Teacher Education, the Department of Early Childhood Education, the Research Institute for Educational Sciences, and relevant development partners working in the areas of teacher education and early childhood education, for review;
7. Provide technical guidance to the curriculum revision task force on the finalization of the revised curriculum incorporating collected feedback and comments. The final revised curriculum should be submitted to UNESCO Bangkok Office by 31 August 2018;
8. Prepare a final report on the revision process highlighting main changes within the revised curriculum and the capacity development of the curriculum revision task force, and submit it, together with proof of travels such as electronic air tickets and boarding passes, to UNESCO Bangkok Office by 7 September 2018.

In line with UNESCO's overall gender mainstreaming strategy, the Individual Specialist is expected to integrate a gender perspective and apply gender analysis and mainstreaming concepts whenever feasible.

The work shall be completed by 7 September 2018 at the latest.

Deliverables and Timeline:

Within the consultancy period, the Individual Specialist is expected to prepare and submit the following key deliverables:

No.	Deliverables	Timeline
1.	Proposal of the curriculum revision process (in English)	9 April 2018
2.	Progress report on the curriculum revision process (in English)	15 June 2018
3.	Draft revised early childhood teacher education curriculum (in Lao)	31 July 2018
4.	Final revised early childhood teacher education curriculum (in Lao)	31 August 2018
5.	Final report on the curriculum revision process (in English)	7 September 2018
6.	Proof of travels, such as electronic air tickets and boarding passes	7 September 2018

Terms of Payment:

The total consultancy fee will be paid to the Individual Specialist in three instalments as shown below:

No.	Deliverables	Date of Submission	Payment
1.	Proposal of the curriculum revision process (in English)	9 April 2018	30%
2.	Progress report on the curriculum revision process (in English)	15 June 2018	50%
3.	Final report on the curriculum revision (in English), and proof of travels	7 September 2018	20%

Travel:

For Individual Specialist who resides outside of Lao PDR, UNESCO Bangkok Office will cover expenses related to his/her travels to Lao PDR to conduct capacity development workshops on curriculum revision periodically according to the agreed work plan in consultation with the Department of Teacher Education and UNESCO Bangkok Office. These expenses include (i) round-trip economy airfare for the most direct route between the Individual Specialist's country of residence and Vientiane, Lao PDR, and (ii) daily subsistence allowance based on UNESCO's reduced standard rates. In compliance

with UNESCO administrative rules, any other expenses, such as private insurance and vaccination, will be the responsibility of the Individual Specialist.

Supervision and Working Agreement:

Under the overall authority of the Director of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, and the direct supervision of the Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education, (IQE), the Individual Specialist will work closely with the Capacity Development for Education 2030 (CapED) Team in Bangkok. Technical guidance will be provided by UNESCO Bangkok staff, through regular communication by distance (via email, Skype, phone, etc.) and face-to-face if possible.

Qualifications, experience and competencies:

The Individual Specialist should demonstrate extensive knowledge on and experience in developing, reviewing and revising teacher education curricula, especially within context of the Asia and Pacific region. More specifically, the Individual Specialist should meet the following requirements:

Education:

- An advanced degree (Master's Degree or equivalent and above) in a field related to education, social development, human right, or other relevant field of studies;
- Specialization in teacher education, curriculum development, and/or curriculum evaluation.

Expertise:

- Knowledge on and experience in teacher education curriculum development and revision in the field of early childhood teacher education or other relevant areas;
- Knowledge and familiarity of the education system, particularly teacher education system, in Lao PDR would be an advantage;
- Experience of working with government ministries, particularly the Lao Ministry of Education and Sports, teacher training colleges, as well as UN agencies and NGOs on teachers and/or education-related projects, would be an advantage.

Skills:

- Excellent facilitation skills;
- Outstanding communication skills, with a good command of the Lao and English languages.

Application:

Interested individuals are invited to submit their updated CVs and a cover letter supporting their application and indicating an estimate number of working days and the consultancy rate per day, to the UNESCO Bangkok Office at the e-mail address below **by 12 March 2018**.

To the attention of:

Chief, Section for Inclusive Quality Education

UNESCO Bangkok Office

E-mail: iqe.bgk@unesco.org

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.