

CONSULTANCY NOTICE *EDU 2011-03*

UNICEF Viet Nam is looking for a qualified individual consultant or a team of consultants to assist the MOET to strengthen the implementation of Early Learning and Development Standards in Viet Nam.

1. Background

The Government of Vietnam's commitment to education has been demonstrated in the significant progress made in achieving high enrolment rates at all levels of education. The current enrolment of five year old children in preschools is over 90 per cent and the enrolment rate of children aged 3-5 years in preschool is 79 per cent. However, the quality of early childhood education remains a significant concern, particularly in remote and rural areas. According to the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), only 20 per cent of preschool classrooms have acceptable play and learning materials; 14 per cent of preschools reach national standards (only in terms infrastructure); and 13 per cent of classroom buildings are temporary.

In 2005 the MOET, with UNICEF support, initiated the process to develop Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) for 5 year old children. ELDS are statements that describe expectations for the learning and development of young children across four domains of development: (i) Physical Development, (ii) Emotional and Social Development, (iii) Language Development and Communication, and (iv) Cognitive Development. ELDS, applied properly, can assist parents and caregivers to assess and ensure they are on track in meeting their obligations to young children and can also be used to assess the quality of institutional care for young children.

The Standards have been developed by a National Team consisting of experts from the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Department of the MOET, along with other relevant national bodies and with the support of regional and international resource persons. Content validation of the draft ELDS was carried out in 2007 to identify the degree of relevance of the draft standards to Vietnamese national values and expectations, as well as its use of appropriate scientific understandings of child development. An age validation study on the ELDS was conducted in 2008 involving 700 children in 7 provinces with positive results. In 2009, the draft ELDS were circulated nationally through the MOET website. The ELDS were endorsed by the MOET on 22 July 2010 and the first draft of user guidelines has been developed.

The remaining challenges are to ensure that the standards are used correctly in terms of child development assessment and curriculum implementation, as well as how standards can be utilised for parental education effectively. In close collaboration with the MOET, UNICEF Viet Nam is looking for an individual consultant to assist the MOET to strengthen its institutional capacity and prepare for the nation-wide application and implementation of the ELDS by 2015.

2. Purposes and Objectives

The overall objective of the consultancy is to assist the MOET to strengthen its institutional capacity and prepare for the nation-wide application and implementation of the Early Learning and Development Standards by 2015.

The consultant will work with/assist the MOET specifically to:

- i. Develop standardised assessment tools to assess the development of 5 year old children based on the approved ELDS
- ii. Develop a strategy and Action Plan for the application and implementation of the ELDS
- iii. Conduct a training/workshop for the MOET leaders and officials to improve knowledge regarding ELDS and introduce the standardised assessment, strategy and action plan for implementation and application of ELDS.

3. Methodology and Technical Approach

The consultant will work closely with the MOET's Early Childhood Education Department as well as the national ELDS development team and other related institutions to carry out the tasks. The consultant will apply up-to-date knowledge on ELDS based on her/his experience worldwide, and use her/his network on Early Childhood Development (ECD) to collect experiences and lessons learnt from other countries. The consultant will also interact with other international organisations such as the World Bank and INGOs who are working in the area of ECD in Viet Nam. A field visit to one province will be undertaken by the consultant in order to gather information for the development of the strategy and action plan.

The ECE department will provide an update of the current ECE situation in Viet Nam, related documentation on the ELDS development process and assign a focal person to work closely with consultant during the consultancy.

4. Activities, Task, deliverables and timeframe

Activities and Tasks:

Activity 1: to develop a work plan for whole consultancy based on discussions with the MOET and UNICEF.

Output 1: Work plan with clearly defined time frame for each objective developed.

Activity 2: to assist MOET to develop standardised assessment tool to assess the development of 5 year old children based on approved ELDS

Tasks:

- Desk study on related ELDS documentation
- Discussions with the MOET to review and gain an insight into the current pre-school education system, including national standards
- gather and consolidate international experiences and lessons learnt from other countries and in Viet Nam through a visit to one province
- develop a guideline for MOET to development of assessment tools
- provide overall guidance and technical support to the MOET to draft assessment tools

Output 2:

- Guidance and technical support provided to the MOET in the development of assessment tool.
- Draft assessment tools

Activity 3: to provide assistance to the MOET to develop a strategy on ELDS application and implementation. To provide guidance for MOET on how to develop action plan based on developed strategy. The strategy will explain how to use and apply the ELDS while the action plan will focus on the implementation of ELDS at all levels in the Vietnamese context.

Tasks:

- Discussions with the national ELDS development team to understand the ELDS development process in Viet Nam and views on national implementation
- Consultation with other organisations supporting ECD, such as the World Bank and Save the Children
- Gather and consolidate international experiences and lessons learnt from other countries
- Discuss with the MOET on the need and priority areas for ELDS application based on the situation in Viet Nam.
- Provide assistance to the MOET to develop a strategy.
- Provide guidance and technical support to MOET on how to develop action plan

Strategy on ELDS, addressing the following issues, though not limited to:

- Explaining the purpose and rationale for ELDS, its design and how it can contribute to improving existing national standards.
- Clarifying responsibilities of various stakeholders, such as the MOET Provincial Department of Education and Training, District Department of Education and Training, schools and other stakeholders.
- Priority areas for applying ELDS and methodology of application.

Action Plan for the nation-wide implementation of ELDS by 2015 with timeframe and tentative budget, addressing the following issues, though not limited to:

- Defining a modality to implement ELDS
- Preparing for implementation, including: development of capacities, materials, financing framework, monitoring mechanism, and advocacy
- Required actions and activities prior to nation-wide implementation

The action plan should have the following components, though not limited to: objectives, activities; budget; timeframe; responsible parties, monitoring and evaluation; and financing framework.

Output 3:

- Orientation and technical support to the MOET on the process to develop an MOET Strategy and Action Plan provided
- Practical recommendations to the MOET's draft Strategy and Action Plan developed by the MOET for the finalisation

Activity 4: Facilitate a training/workshop for the MOET leadership and ECE Department officials to provide an update and refreshment on ELDS and debrief on guideline to develop assessment tools, strategies on ELDS application and implementation in Viet Nam and guideline to develop action plans based on the strategy.

Output 4: Debriefing training/workshop facilitated, MOET leaders and officials understand ELDS and agreement reached on strategies and action plans and assessment tools.

Activity 5: preparation of final consultancy report

Output 5: final report

Deliverables and Time frame

The assignment is scheduled to take place during the period from 1 July to 30 September 2011 tentatively, with the total number of 26 working days (6 weeks).

Outputs/deliverables	Approximate Time required	Time for submission
1. Work plan	2 days	
2. Guidelines and orientation on how to develop assessment tools	10 days	
3. Strategy for ELDS application and implementation. Guideline to develop Action Plan based on strategy.	10 days	
4. Debriefing ELDS Training/workshop	2 days	
5. Final Report	2 days	
Total number of days	26 days	

Working Mechanism

Consultancy will be divided into two phases:

- Phase 1 - Expected outputs and time frame: 12 days in Viet Nam including field trip; develop guideline on how to develop assessment tool (activity 2); develop strategy and guideline to develop action plan (activity 3); and debriefing training/workshop for MOET (activity 4).
- Phase 2 - Expected outputs and time frame: 10 days in consultant's country to provide distance technical assistant to MOET and national team to complete quality assessment tools (activity 2); action plan for ELDS application and implementation (activity 3); and to complete final report (activity 5), and 4 days in Viet Nam to provide direct assistant to MOET to finalize all mentioned documentation.

5. Management

The consultant will report to the ECD officer of UNICEF Viet Nam who will provide overall guidance, together with the Education Section Chief of UNICEF. The consultant will also report to a MOET official assigned to work with the consultant.

6. Qualifications and experience required:

- Advanced university degree in Education or related field, or equivalent qualification
- Technical expertise and international experience in Early Learning and Development Standards and/or assessment of early childhood development
- Excellent advocacy skills particularly in relation to advocating for education quality
- Excellent written, verbal communication and interpersonal skills

- Experience in working with Government counterparts at national and sub-national levels
- Experience in Viet Nam or the region will be considered an asset

7. Condition of Work

Condition of work	To be provided by UNICEF		Remarks
	Yes	No	
Field Trip Transport	X		
International Travel	X		
Visa for internationally recruited	X		
DSA	X		
Security Clearance		N/A	Not required at this stage
Accidental Death and Dismemberment and Accident Medical coverage	X		For Consultants travelling outside their country of nationality or residence
Health Insurance		X	Responsibility of consultants and individual contractors
Office Space		X	
Computer		X	
Secretarial Services		X	
Photocopier services		X	
Other supplies	X		Translator will be hired by UNICEF to assist consultant

8. Interested candidates are kindly requested to submit the following information:

- Letter of interest
- Technical proposal
- Proposed budget and fees
- CV/P-11 forms ([UN Personal History Form](#))
- In case of individuals (either pair or group) wishing to apply for this consultancy, they need to submit the application to clearly indicate the task division with financial information for each of the individual.

Please indicate the title of the assignment on the top left corner of envelop and address to UNICEF at:

Human Resources Unit

UNICEF Viet Nam

81A Tran Quoc Toan street, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Or via email: ntha@unicef.org

Closing date for receipt of proposals: 04 July 2011 at 17:00 PM Ha Noi Time.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

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