

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Ministry of Education and Sports

SECOND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION PROJECT
GRANT NO. TF018969

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LOCAL LAO-ENGLISH TRANSLATOR

I. BACKGROUND

The Lao PDR Second Global Partnership for Education Project (GPE II) is a program managed and implemented by the Lao PDR's Ministry of Education and Sports. The program is financed through a US\$ 16.8 million grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), approved on April 14, 2015 and effective since June 4, 2015. The GPE II. The grant's supervision has been entrusted to the World Bank, acting as GPE Grant Agent (GA) under the oversight of the Lao PDR Education Sector Working Group (ESWG)¹ and the GPE coordinating agencies (CA) in Lao PDR – UNICEF, the European Union (EU) and the Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The GPE II supports the efforts of the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) to strengthen the governance and improve the quality of primary and preprimary education through the following key interventions:

- Enhancing the school-based management (SBM) capacity at school, district and central levels through a nationwide SBM training based on harmonized training materials focusing on school self-assessment, school development planning and management of school block grants (SBGs) (GPE II Component 1)
- Improving the transparency of the school funding model by establishing a national system of school bank accounts (GPE II Component 1)
- Providing additional funding for non-wage expenditures of primary schools and kindergartens through complementary SBGs to help schools achieve minimum education quality standards (GPE II Component 1)
- Strengthening the capacity of central, provincial and district authorities to support schools and monitor their SBM and SBG implementation, and support sector wide monitoring (GPE II Components 1 and 3), and
- Piloting a new reading readiness program for children aged 5 in preprimary classes and kindergartens (Component 2).

This term of reference relates to the piloting of the reading readiness program (RRP) under Component 2 of the GPE II project. The total budget of Component 2 is USD 4 million. The responsibility for the RRP implementation is with the following departments of the MOES:

- Research Institute for Education Sciences (RIES)
- Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE)

¹ The Lao PDR's ESWG is the GPE's local education group (LEG) in charge of GPE grants. The Lao PDR ESWG comprises of Government of Lao PDR (Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning and Investment) and key development partners (DPs), including the World Bank as a GPE II grant agent, The ESWG is chaired by the Minister of Education and Sports and co-chaired by the Development Partners with largest education portfolio in the Lao PDR – the EU and DFAT.

- Department of Teacher Education (DTE)
- Teacher Training Colleges Faculty (TTC)
- Education Sector Plan Coordinating Unit (ECU) within the Department of Planning (DOP)

II. OVERVIEW OF THE READING READINESS PROGRAM (RRP)

Instructional objectives

The GPE II RRP will comprise 30 supplemental instructional sessions, it will not be designed to replace the curriculum, the daily lesson plan or the lesson content. The program will nevertheless closely follow curricular objectives and skills for KG+PP early literacy instruction. The program will aim at building children's competencies in four key areas of early literacy: language, narrative, phonological awareness and print knowledge. Teachers will be provided with well-structured activities and material, to support the explicit teaching of each domain area. The role of each of these areas in predicting success in learning to read in G1 and above is well documented.

Teachers will be provided with a guide that will include (i) session by session scope and sequence, detailing the progression of skills and material for all the instructional activities included in the program's package and (ii) description of how teachers should conduct the activity with the children and the list of items (visuo-haptic props, stories, books etc.) that should be used for each session. In addition, the program will develop the following teaching aids:

- Culturally Sensitive Literature: Pedagogical resource is scarce in Laos, therefore Lao-Tai language literature appropriate for a 5-year-old audience of pre-readers will be developed and tailored to support the pedagogical activities included in the program. Topics will be varied, dealing with settings and situations that are familiar and common to all ethnic minority groups and are characteristic of the Lao rural environment.
- Visuo-haptic Props: Allow teachers to introduce and complement print and alphabetical knowledge instruction with a visuo-haptic exploration of those concepts in the Lao language (such as 3D letters, crepe letters on a sheet, tracing letters along lines/dotted lines, etc.)

Target group:

The RRP covers 127 preprimary teachers and children aged 5 years of very diverse ethnic backgrounds (30% Lao-Tai, 25% Khmu, 27% Hmong, 5% Prai, 4% Phong, 4% Akha, and 5% other ethnic groups), enrolled in kindergartens and preprimary classes in 127 communities in 14 districts in 5 provinces of Northern Laos (Houaphanh, Phongsaly, Oudomxay, Xayaboury, and Borikhamxay). These communities belong to the GPE II pool of priority districts, among the most disadvantaged in the country with respect to all key education disadvantage indicators, malnutrition, stunting, and poverty. The list of the 127 communities is provided in Annex 1, along with the list of 127 control communities.

Language of the RRP

In line with the legal provisions concerning the official language of instruction, the reading readiness program will be developed in the official Lao-Tai language with the objective to improve Lao-Tai reading readiness of all target children, 70 percent of which belong to non-

Lao Tai language groups. While mother tongue instruction may be appropriate in certain contexts, the existence of 47 ethnicities in Lao PDR, further branching into 160 ethnic groups that speak 82 distinct living languages without written forms (except for the Hmong ethnic group) precludes the identification of effective approaches for developing mother tongue reading readiness programs. The revised primary education curriculum, supported by BEQUAL, and the revised preprimary curriculum, supported by UNICEF, are both based on Lao-Tai language. The reading readiness program under the GPE II project will be designed and delivered in alignment with the revised curricula and the legal provisions for the official language of instruction.

Key RRP Activities:

1. Setting up teams:

(a) Reading Readiness Program Team (RRPT) of the Ministry of Education and Sports:

- Research Institute for Education Sciences (RIES, master coaches)
- Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE, master coaches)
- Department of Teacher Education (DTE, master coaches)
- Teacher Training Colleges Faculty (TTC master coaches and coaches)

(b) International and Local Reading Readiness Technical Advisors (RRTA) recruited by the GPE II

2. Preparation of the RRP content framework: RRPT and RRTA conceptualize the initial framework of activities and materials.

3. Pre-testing and Quality Control: RRPT and RRTA ensure that cultural specificity of each ethnic group is taken in consideration and confirm the activities planned are feasible in the target areas. The pre-testing phase should allow sufficient time for the material developers to progressively learn and master how the lessons should be applied in the classroom.

4. Material Development Workshops: involves the RRP core team and Technical Advisors (TAs); takes stock of the pre-testing and quality control feedback and develops the RRP material

5. Printing and distribution of RRP material

6. Trainings:

(a) The RRPT will double as master trainers for the coaches, master trainers for the teachers, overall supervisors and coaches of coaches (or coaches themselves) throughout implementation.

(b) Initial trainings of the RRPT by the RRTA. RRPT will be provided with opportunities to practice the lessons they developed to improve them, and to master the use of the lessons.

(c) RRPT will then train TTC coaches in using the lessons, mentoring the teachers on how to use the material effectively in the classrooms. Regional or national meetings with coaches should be regularly organized to take stock of difficulties and address issues early on.

(d) The RRPT along with the coaches will then train the teachers in the target communities.

- (e) Refresher teacher trainings will be organized locally (lead by coaches of the RRPT), scattered throughout the implementation year to ensure issues are tackled and concerns are addressed in a timely manner,

GPE II RRP Implementation schedule:

- 09/2018-06/2019: RRP Preparation Activities 1 to 6 (a)-(d)
07/2019-06/2020: RRP implementation + Activity 6 (e)
07/2019-11/2020: Endline Impact Evaluation data analysis

Impact Evaluation (IE) Design:

The RRP impact evaluation is anchored to the existing Early Childhood Education project impact evaluation which covers 376 villages, of which 135 villages with existing preprimary classes, 119 villages with existing kindergartens and 122 villages with no early childhood education programs (see Annex 2 for detailed description). The transition from the ECE impact evaluation (ECE IE) to GPE II RRP impact evaluation (GPE II RR IE) will occur in August-September 2019, when the ECE IE endline measurement will be conducted and will serve as a baseline measurement for the GPE II RRP. Since the GPE II RRP will be implemented only in villages with existing preprimary classrooms or kindergartens, the third cluster of 122 will be dropped from the GPE II IE. The remaining 254 villages will be re-randomized at the endline measurement of the ECE IE and regrouped into 127 GPEII RRP treatment villages and 127 control villages. Thus, the children receiving the GPE II RRP will be coming from households that have and have not been benefitting from the ECE project interventions. It is estimated that the population of 5-year olds in the 254 GPE II RRP will be at least 1000, thus ensuring sufficient statistical power. The re-randomization of the study sample will enable the GPE II RRP impact evaluation to determine not only the impact of GPE II RRP alone, but also the combined impact of the various ECE IE modalities and the GPE2 RRP.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

This assignment is for provision of translation services throughout the program cycle. Translation will involve face to face translation for workshop and meetings as well as documents translation from Laos to English and from English to Laos. Face to face interactions will be scheduled ahead of time, however, the bulk of the work involving documents translation will not follow a strict timeline. Availability for continuous support for several days per week and responding and delivering on short notice should be considered a key feature of the assignment.

The translator shall:

- Provide translation services during workshops and meetings, supporting mainly international consultants during capacity building activities. These activities will require the translator be available for several consecutive days, with 2 to 3 weeks' notice (more when possible).
- Prior to trainings and capacity building events, international consultants may provide the translator with handouts and power point presentations to translate in writing for the audience.

- Translate stories and instructional material, sampled across the local teams work in order to facilitate international consultants' quality control.
- Provide translation service or existing curricula, INGO tools and material, story books and instructional resource relating to early childhood education and reading readiness in Laos.

IV. LEVEL OF EFFORT:

300 days in the period September 2018- December 2020 with specific allocation of days across months and calendar years to be determined. The indicative implementation schedule of the reading readiness program is described in Annex 1.

V. PROFILE AND KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

Bachelor degree in a relevant field

Excellent command of Laotian and English language.

5 years of experience in providing translation services for face to face interaction and for written documents.

Experience in translating education materials is an advantage (teacher training, publishing, textbook production)

Ability to travel across Laos to support the supervision team.

Good command of Microsoft office

ANNEX 1: TIMELINE OF THE READING READINESS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Y1 Timeline:

September-October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review all available material on literacy instruction, programs, textbooks and curricula for Laos' early primary grades (EPG) and Kindergartens (KG). - Review all available Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs implemented in Laos and identify synergies in the material, the methods, etc. - Consult available videos, photos of KG classrooms in the selected regions. - Produce statistical analysis and quantitative data necessary to the basis of phonics component of the program and all the modules relating to the phonology of the Lao-Tai language and print. - Finalize the conceptual framework for the Reading Readiness Program (RRP), produce a draft scope and sequence for the year, produce a draft example lesson and draft routines for each pedagogical activity of the program, produce a draft training plan (all drafts to be refined during material development and school visits)
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAs trip #1: workshop with RR team #1. - Objectives: presentation of plans, roles and responsibilities, basics of Reading Readiness, visits of KG (both rural vs. urban, ethnic vs. non-ethnic)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver RR team with a schedule of homework and feedback until next TA trip, guidelines / how to's to produce their work, templates to produce the work in a structure editable form as well as instructional routines for the corresponding activities. - Material Development begins.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material Development -- cont'd.
January 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material Development -- cont'd.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material Development -- cont'd. - Draft lesson: ready to trial (edited and printed)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAs trip #2: Trial draft lesson - Objectives: touch base with RR team on potential difficulties and trial lessons in a group-settings and in schools / classroom settings and introduce concepts of coaching, including role play. - Deliver a trial tested routine and example lesson which will be the basis to finalizing all lessons and based on classroom performance of RR team update coaching framework and training - Material with MoES for pre-validation.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material Development reviewed and finalized. - Evaluation tools developed and piloted (classroom, coaching, impact evaluation)
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material and evaluation tools with editor. - Material proof read by the team. - Material final validation by MoES before printing.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAs trip #3: Preparation for implementation and trouble shooting - Material and evaluation tools: drama buffer. - Trainings: - Documents translated and printed. - Logistics finalized - Impact Evaluation: logistics finalized

Y2 Timeline:

July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 printing. - TAs trip #1 (or August): - Training of Trainers STRATA 1 and 2 - Input into training of IE firm
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Material LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 distributed and in schools. - Training of teachers - Training of enumerators for the Impact Evaluation
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation baseline - Implementation kick off - Coaching kick off
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation: supervision (RR team), coaching (coaches), teaching (teachers)
November	
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAs trip #2: monitoring / field visit.

January 2020	- Implementation: supervision (RR team), coaching (coaches), teaching (teachers)
February	
March	
April	- TAs trip #3 (June or before depending on end of the school year): - Stock taking of implementation and necessary modifications of the program (must be feasible in the time available).
May	
June	- Training of IE firm - Evaluation endline

Y3 Timeline:

July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Material & training: final modifications. • Planning for next round of funding.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Material & training: final modifications.
September	• Report / Paper Writing
October	• Report / Paper Writing
November	• TAs trip #1: dissemination of results led by TAs and RR team.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All publications finalized • Material hand-over to MoES.