

Terms of reference:
**Consultancy for the analysis of out-of-school data and impact of COVID-19
in Bangladesh and Lao PDR**

UNESCO Institute for Statistics

May 2020

Closing date for applications: June 1st, 2020

1. Background

Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education calls for completion of “free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes” by all girls and boys by 2030.

One of the indicators used to monitor achievement of this target is SDG indicator 4.1.4, the out-of-school rate. The UIS estimates that globally 258 million children, adolescents and youth are out-of-school, but this estimate is based on administrative data submitted by national authorities. Many countries face challenges accurately identifying children who are out of school, measuring the scope and causes of exclusion, and integrating this evidence in policy and planning.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated problems of exclusion in many countries and caused further pressure on weak education systems. As of May 2020, globally an additional 1.3 billion students were out of school because of temporary school closures due to the pandemic. The current crisis also highlights the importance of accurate figures on enrolment and children out of school.

To provide national policy planners, donors and other stakeholders more reliable evidence for the design of interventions aimed at reducing the out-of-school population, and to make full use of existing data, the UIS is conducting a series of national studies in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Kenya, Lao PDR, and Madagascar.

The studies will be based on the conceptual and methodological frameworks described in the *Operational Manual* of the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (UNICEF and UIS 2015) and in *Monitoring Education Participation* (UNICEF and UIS 2016, 2017), adapted to the monitoring needs of SDG 4. In particular, the analysis will be expanded to youth of upper secondary age.

2. Objectives and key tasks

The main objective of this consultancy is to study and document available evidence on participation in and exclusion from education in Bangladesh and Lao PDR, based on administrative data, censuses, and national sample surveys.

Under the overall authority of the Director of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the direct supervision of the UIS Senior Regional Advisor for Asia, and in collaboration with the Section Education Standards and Methodology (UIS-HQs), the UNESCO regional office in Bangkok, and relevant government entities of the country, the Consultant will carry out the following tasks:

1. Carry out an inventory and assess the quality and reliability of national sources of data on enrolment, school attendance and out-of-school children (administrative data, censuses, sample surveys), with an emphasis on data collected since 2015.
2. Calculate out-of-school rates of children of pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school age, disaggregated by sex, location and other personal and household characteristics.
3. Systematically compare out-of-school rates calculated from different data sources- particularly between administrative and survey data. Determine the reasons for differences between out-of-school rates from different sources (e.g. target population, sampling / data collection method, definition of out-of-school children and differences in survey items), and identify the most accurate source of data on participation in and exclusion from education.
4. Develop profiles of the most important groups of out-of-school children and identify and describe the main (demand-side and supply-side) reasons for their exclusion from education.
5. Summarize the role of non-state actors and non-formal education in the provision of schooling to children from pre-primary to upper secondary age.
6. Identify data gaps and make recommendations for improved monitoring of out-of-school children.
7. Describe the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on school attendance and out-of-school numbers and document measures that the country has implemented to ensure that teaching and learning are not interrupted while schools are closed because of the pandemic.
8. Write a report in English and prepare datasets with the findings from tasks 1 to 7.
9. Prepare a presentation with the results of the study and present them to the UIS in a face-to-face or virtual meeting.

3. Deliverables and timeline

For each country, the Consultant will submit the following deliverables to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics:

1. Inception report with detailed plan of work and outline of study report (June 2020).
2. First draft report with the results of key tasks 1 to 4 (June-July 2020).
3. Second draft report with the results of key tasks 5 to 8 (July-September 2020).
4. Final report (with executive summary), incorporating feedback by the UIS, and datasets with the results of key tasks 1 to 8 (September-October 2020).
5. Presentation with a summary of the main findings, lessons learned, and recommendations from the exercise, including what worked well, what worked less, bottlenecks encountered at the national level (if any) and how they were overcome, and best practices (October-November 2020).

The report for each country shall consist of a text of approximately 12000 words (not more than 50 pages) (excluding appendices, annexes and bibliographies) written in the English language at a very good level.

The report will be divided into the following sections:

1. Abstract (200 words)
2. Introduction (300 words)
3. Description of trends in OOS numbers (500 words)
4. Comparison of out-of-school estimates between available sources (1000 words)

5. Discussion and analysis of differences between estimates, in particular between administrative data within EMIS and survey estimates (2500 words)
6. Profiles of OOS groups (1500 words)
7. Analysis of demand and supply side exclusionary factors for profiled groups (2000 words)
8. Discussion of major government policies to include OOS children (1500 words)
9. Discussion of the effects of COVID-19 on school attendance and the measures government has taken in response (1500 words)
10. Summary of key findings, lessons learned and recommendations to improve the monitoring OOS children (1000 words)

For each country, the consultancy is expected to require 50 working days over a period of no more than 6 months. The provisional start date for the consultancy is 15 June 2020 and the completion date would be no later than 30 November 2020.

4. Cost and technical arrangements

For each country, the total cost of the consultancy, including any essential travel, where necessary, will be agreed in advance. All payments under the consultancy will be made against deliverables, as shown below.

Deliverable	Time allocated	Payment
Inception report	5 working days	10%
First draft report	15 working days	20%
Second draft report	15 working days	30%
Final report and datasets	12.5 working days	30%
Presentation, main findings, lessons learned, and recommendations	2.5 working days	10%

In case of travel restrictions due to measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, the Consultant will be responsible for sub-contracting and managing the work of a country-based expert to help with tasks that require a physical presence in the country. The consultant is accountable for the quality of the work and full delivery of the assignment within the agreed timeframe and at no extra cost to the UIS, other than the amount specified in the Consultant's contract. Unforeseen costs related to access to national data may be covered by the UIS with an amendment to the contract, subject to UIS approval. Any datasets compiled by the Consultant will be submitted to the UIS. Two weeks following the final deliverable due date are added for the UIS to complete all required revisions and administrative procedures, if needed.

The work will be carried out remotely. The Consultant will be in regular communication with UIS staff via email, audio or video conferencing, and incorporate feedback from the UIS in the deliverables.

5. Qualifications

The consultancy requires the following skills and experience:

- Advanced degree in education, international development, social science, or a related field; or an advanced degree in statistics, mathematics, or a related area.

- At least 5 years professional experience in statistical analysis of administrative and household survey data, preferably on education.
- Proven expertise in reporting on equity issues in children’s education, preferably in [region].
- Ability to work with governments and facilitate among various stakeholders.
- Proficiency in R, SPSS, Stata or similar statistical software.
- Strong communication and writing skills in [English or French, depending on country].
- Ability to work effectively through email and other means of remote communications.
- Work experience with the UN is preferred.
- Knowledge of local languages is an asset.

6. Applications

Candidates for the consultancy should submit their application to uis.procurement@unesco.org by June 1st, 2020. Applications must include:

- Cover letter describing the candidate’s interest and qualifications, availability, and proposed consulting fee for the project
- Up-to-date CV
- Two writing samples demonstrating the candidate’s qualifications for the project

References

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). 2015. *Global Out-of-School Children Initiative: Operational Manual*. New York: UNICEF. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247531>.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). 2016. *Monitoring Education Participation: Framework for Monitoring Children and Adolescents Who Are out of School or at Risk of Dropping Out*. Geneva: UNICEF. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247861>.