

Who can I contact if I have a question or comment about this document?

Please contact the Evidence Quality and Innovation TWG at EQITWG@savethechildren.org.
as well as SCI Centre Evidence and Learning Team
at CentreEvidenceandLearning@savethechildren.org

Terms of Reference for Research

**Assessment of Covid-19 short-term and long-term
impacts and correlation with
facilitators/vulnerabilities to child labour**

**Work - No Child's Business
[October 2022]**

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I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Type of evaluation	Research
Name of the project	Work - No Child's Business Project
Project Start and End dates	July 2019 – June 2024
Project duration	Five years
Project locations:	Ho Chi Minh City and Advocacy at Central with MOLISA
Thematic areas	Child protection
Sub themes	Protect children from Child Labour
Donor	Dutch Foreign Affair
Overall objective of the project	To ensure that children and youth are free from child labour and enjoy their rights to quality education as well as (future) decent work.
Beneficiary groups	Children and children at risk of child labor Parents Teachers and education managers Members of Child Protection Boards at districts and communal levels

2. INTRODUCTION

This document provides Terms of Reference for a research on Covid-19 impact on child labor.

Save the Children's vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. Our mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives. The organization started our work in Vietnam in 1990 and implements programs in the key thematic areas: Education, Health and Nutrition, Child Protection, Child Rights and Governance, Child Poverty, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Emergency Response. At present, Vietnam Country Office has programs in 20 out of 63 provinces in Vietnam.

As of present, Save the Children in Vietnam continues to develop innovative programming that reflects the overall strategic goal of measurably improving the survival, health, protection and development of Vietnam's poorest children by strengthening the capacity of women and children, caring adults, communities and partner organizations. We are committed to ensuring that all our personnel and programs are absolutely safe for children.

The project background, study scope, key questions, intended methodology (if applicable), reporting and governance, key deliverables and timeframes for its implementation are provided in the sections that follow.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since the first case of the COVID-19 was reported in Viet Nam on 23 January 2020, the Government of Viet Nam (GoV) accelerated efforts to contain the spread of the virus and provide treatment for those infected. While COVID-19 vaccine was not yet available, the government had relied on non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs), with a focus on social distancing. These NPIs included closures of schools and other non-essential service facilities as well as isolation, quarantine, and travel restrictions. Based on the impact of the 4th wave pandemic from May 2021, with approval of Viet Nam's Prime Minister, the country's first significant step saw the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) announce that provinces impacted by COVID-19 could decide on localized closures of schools and localities. As a result, all schools at all levels nationwide were closed until the end of 2021. These shockwaves of COVID-19 have exacerbated education sector challenges, with school closures impacting an estimated 21.2 million children nationwide.

- The Covid 19 pandemic caused serious impacts on children in the short term and long term. The latest Covid 19 outbreak in Ho Chi Minh City has taken away the parents of 1,517 students and left thousands infected, according to the municipal Department of Education and Training's statistics. The orphans have lost either their fathers or mothers, or both due to COVID-19. More than 10,000 high school students and over 3,000 teachers have caught the viral disease. Some 62,100 students enrolled at elementary, middle, and high schools have been stricken by poverty. As of 11 September 2021, 12,341 cadres, teachers, employees, and workers in the city's education and training sector have lost their jobs. The number of students having difficulty accessing online lessons has decreased from 75,000 at the end of August to 40,000 in middle Sep.

- Many workers went from “having a job” status to being temporarily laid-off, underemployed, or even unemployed during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Lack of a coordination mechanism in response and support for children who are negatively affected during and after pandemic.

In August 2020, a rapid assessment¹ at household and individual levels was conducted by UNICEF in partnership with Ha Noi University of Public Health to assess the pandemic’s social and economic impacts on children and their families in Viet Nam to support the government in making timely and effective responses towards short and long-term recoveries. Key literature and secondary data on COVID-19 impacts on children and their families in Viet Nam were reviewed, extracted and categorized. The cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted in Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh City and Vinh Phuc province. In this assessment, a total of 148 mothers, fathers and caregivers of children aged 2-18 years were interviewed via telephone. The assessment found that COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the lives of children and their families negatively and positively through multiple socio-economic dimensions. The assessment also explored coping strategies applied by children’s parents/caregivers to minimize negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on children in Viet Nam, and proposed policy options (with short- and long-term recommendations) to mitigate negative COVID-19 impacts on children in Viet Nam and ensure the wellbeing of children and their families. A followed up in-depth analysis is also undertaken to access selected critical socioeconomic dimensions in the impacts of COVID-19 on children and their families.

Despite of existing studies on the impact of COVID-19 on children well-being, it is found a lack of linkage to child labor or only focusing on child labor issue. Hence, this research aim to fill in this gap.

Intended audiences and use of this study are:

- Primary audiences: the Alliances of WNCB project, implementing partners at both national and local levels, children and parents in research areas.
- Secondary audiences: other interested stakeholders.

4. SCOPE OF STUDY

4.1 Purpose, Objectives, and Scope

The research will study the impacts of COVID-19 on children's well-being, both children at risk of child labour and children already in child labour which includes reviewing current services and support from the child protection mechanism during the pandemic. It is expected that findings and recommendations from the study for the child protection system will be made available to inform the project’s programming and interventions and the policy making at the national level. Recommendations to SCI, UNICEF and other key stakeholders on how the child protection system can be made more effective in reducing the vulnerability of children to child labour in times of shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic in Viet Nam. In addition, lessons learned from the study could be shared and useful for other actors in hopes of better coordinating child protection activities.

Specific objectives of this assignment are:

- I. Understanding impact of COVID-19 on children and families and correlation with facilitators/vulnerabilities to child labour;

¹ Rapid assessment on the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on children and families in Vietnam. UNICEF, August 2020.

2. Understanding operations and effectiveness of current child protection mechanism in the context of COVID-19 and recommended approaches in reducing the vulnerability of children to child labour in times of shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic in Viet Nam.

Research questions:

The study is expected to answer the following questions:

- What were impacts of COVID-19 on children and their families' socio-economic status?
- What are the contributing risk factors/vulnerabilities to child labour, especially for vulnerable children coming from poor and near-poor households, children with disabilities, child laborers, orphans, and migrant children in the context of Covid-19?
- How were operations and effectiveness of current child protection mechanism in the context of COVID-19? What support is important for children to ensure their well-being during and after COVID-19 to prevent school dropout and child labor and support to children already in child labour?
- What kinds of support/actions are needed and recommended for the child protection system to provide timely and need-based assistance for children and parents/caregivers to reduce the vulnerability of children to child labor in general and in pandemic period in particular?

Scope of work:

The consultant is responsible for conducting the following tasks:

- i) Reviewing available secondary data/reports and relevant documents to answer research questions;
- ii) Developing and finalizing research instruments; pretest research tools are required;
- iii) Developing sampling strategy;
- iv) Recruiting and training enumerators;
- v) Data collection; closely quality control to ensure timing is respected and quality standards are met;
- vi) Analyzing data; and
- vii) Developing report;
- viii) Presenting key findings and recommendations

4.2 Study Design

A mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative studies will be applied to data collection. The qualitative method will cover focus group discussions and in-depth interviews and the quantitative method will have a semi-structured questionnaire. Besides that, desk review for relevant documents and observations will be included in the research to enrich the research data.

Focus group discussions and key informant interviews will employ a gender lens and seek to understand the different experiences of girls and boys, and the reasons for these different experiences. FGDs will include indicators of discrimination and explore key gender issues including sexual harassment. At least 50% of the FGD respondents will be girls.

The following table presents suggestion for data collection. This suggestion will be further discuss with the consultant.

<i>Name actor</i>	<i>Role actor</i>
<i>Vulnerable boys and girls under 18, including those in poor or near-poor households, children with disabilities, child labor, orphans, and migrants;</i>	<i>Participate in surveys and interviews. Gain an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on their education access, well-being and child labor involvement and how risks can be mitigated.</i>
<i>Parents, caregivers, teachers in respective provinces and cities</i>	<i>Participate in interviews and FGDs.</i>
<i>Key Informants (e.g., CSO, Child Protection Officer)</i>	<i>Participate in interviews. Engagement in the study will indirectly contribute to key informants' organizational goals.</i>

4.3 Research targeted groups

The research will focus on the following groups:

- Vulnerable boys and girls under 18 years old, including those in poor or near-poor households, children with disabilities, child laborers, orphans, and migrants;
- Parents, caregivers, teachers in respective provinces and cities; and
- Stakeholders involved in the Child protection system.

Data collection will be conducted both online and in person in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap province.

The Consultant is requested to design an appropriate methodology that includes sampling methodology, data collection methodology, and quality control methodology for primary data collection. In addition, the bidder will be responsible for developing, testing, and finalizing the instrument for the study. The final sampling strategy will be determined and approved by the SC team in the inception phase.

During data collection, the consultant and MEAL focal point of SC will also work in close consultation to ensure a streamlined process of randomly selected respondents in the study. The consultant will determine the sample size selection method of the Households, children, district stakeholders, artisans, companies, and institutions to reach out to for comprehensive and triangulated information to report on.

4.4 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods / Tools

Data collection tools

The consultant will be responsible to develop data collection instruments for this study. All instruments must be approved by the Project team, SC MEAL CO, donors and relevant stakeholders before going to the field. A pre-efore the large-scale survey is requested. The consultant will be developed the pre-test plan and report to ensure that the large-scale survey will conduct properly.

All primary data collected during the study must facilitate disaggregation by gender, age, [disability, location or remoteness, vulnerability status]. Save the Children [will/will not] provide guidance on tools and classification schemes for this minimum dataset.

Data collection medium

The survey is suggested using ICT tools (preferred to KOBO) for data collection to ensure the representative, minimal recording errors, and ease of consolidation. Bidders must specify whether it will provide tablets for this effort and if so which platforms they operate on. If the consultant does not own tablets, please budget for rentals, the project or SCI CO will provide them.

If the consultant suggests using another data collection medium, they must elaborate the data entry format with quality control methodologies.

The Consultant must clarify a Data Collection Quality Control Plan in the proposal. This must include the number of back-checks, spot checks, and any other quality control mechanism to be used during the data collection.

Data Management, Storage, and Processing

The Consultant must submit all data in a clean, well-labelled format.

For quantitative data, the Consultant must complete data cleaning according to well-documented, replicable procedures, as in through a STATA or replicable SPSS program. All variables and values must be labelled. Datasets and corresponding codebooks should be submitted in syntax file or STATA/SPSS format (.do file). If necessary, the Consultant may submit data in .xls or .xlsx files. If the ICT is applied in the data collection process, VN WNCB must have access to view data on the cloud periodically for quality control purposes.

For qualitative data, the Consultant must provide VN WNCB with transcripts as well as interview notes with metadata such as respondent characteristics, date, and interviewer information. Audio recordings should also be submitted. All files must be labelled clearly according to a consistent naming convention.

The Consultant is required to adhere to the [Save the Children Child Safeguarding: Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Anti-Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying](#); and Data Protection and Privacy policies throughout all project activities.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

It is expected that this study will be:

- **Child participatory.** Where appropriate and safe, children should be supported to participate in the evaluation process beyond simply being respondents. Opportunities for collaborative participation could include involving children in determining success criteria against which the project could be evaluated, supporting children to collect some of the data required for the evaluation themselves, or involving children in the validation of findings. Any child participation, whether consultative, collaborative or child-led, must abide by the [9 Basic Requirements for meaningful and ethical child participation](#).
- **Inclusive.** Ensure that children from different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds have the chance to participate, as well as children with disabilities and children who may be excluded or discriminated against in their community.

- **Ethical:** The study must be guided by the following ethical considerations:
 - Safeguarding – demonstrating the highest standards of behaviour towards children and adults.
 - Sensitive – to child rights, gender, inclusion and cultural contexts.
 - Openness - of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties.
 - Confidentiality and data protection - measures will be put in place to protect the identity of all participants and any other information that may put them or others at risk.²
 - Public access - to the results when there are not special considerations against this
 - Broad participation - the relevant parties should be involved where possible.
 - Reliability and independence - the study should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

It is expected that:

- Data collection methods will be age and gender appropriate.
- Study activities will provide a safe, creative space where children feel that their thoughts and ideas are important.
- A risk assessment will be conducted that includes any risks related to children, young people's, or adult's participation.
- A referral mechanism will be in place in case any child safeguarding or protection issues arise.
- Informed consent will be used where possible.

The study team will be required to obtain approval from a Human Research Ethics Committee.

4.6 Known limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic has had serious consequences to people, society, and the economy all over the world, including Vietnam, which has affected project implementation since 2020. Given the new normal status, it is also possible that this research could be affected so the Consultant should prepare an adaptive methodology, approach, and plan to ensure the research stays on schedule and meets its objectives.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES & TIMELINE

The study deliverables and tentative timeline (subject to the commencement date of the study) are outlined below. The Consultant and SC Project Manager will agree on final milestones and deadlines at the inception phase.

Deliverables

SCI expects the following deliverables to be provided:

No.	Deliverable / Milestones	Format
1	An inception report in English with research methodology and instruments	Electronic file

² If any Consultancy Service Provider, Freelancer or Contingent worker will have direct contact with children and/or vulnerable adults and/or beneficiaries and/or have access to any sensitive data on safeguarding and/or children and/or beneficiaries, it is the responsibility of the person receiving the consulting service to contact the local HR team and child safeguarding focal point to ensure vetting checks and on-boarding are conducted in line with statutory requirements, local policies and best practices guidance.

No.	Deliverable / Milestones	Format
2	Dataset	Electronic file with raw and cleaned, qualitative and quantitative, data sets
3	Fieldwork report	Electronic file
4	Final Report (in Vietnamese and English)	Electronic files
5	PowerPoint presentation of Study findings	Electronic files

Timeline

Activity	Timeline
The Consultant is contracted and commences work	5 Nov
A kick-off meeting between the Consultant and the Project team to develop the inception report.	7 Nov
An inception report in English	10 Nov
Finalization of data collection tools and Fieldwork plan	18 Nov
Data collection	30 Nov
Data management and analysis and draft Report in English (No more than 30 pages)	15 Dec
A presentation on the validation workshop to sharing key findings with SC team and stakeholders and discuss to finalize report	16 Dec
Final Evaluation Report (in Vietnamese and English)	30 Dec

It is noted that the Save the Children will provide the template for reports requested.

All documents are to be produced in MS Word format and provided electronically by email to the SC Project Manager. Copies of all PowerPoint presentations used to facilitate briefings for the project should also be provided to Save the Children in editable digital format.

All survey materials, raw data, electronic data, and other information will remain the property of SC and should be transferred to SC upon completion.

6. STUDY TEAM AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested Consultant will be required to submit an Expression of Interest in line with the provided template, which should demonstrate adherence to the following requirements.

Understanding of Requirements and Experience

To be considered, the Consultant must have demonstrated skills, expertise and experience in:

- The consultant(s) will be selected on the basis of their proven experience, qualifications and ability to deliver a quality product in a timely and efficient manner. Particular qualifications and experience of the lead consultant team members include:
- The lead Consultant or a core member of the team should hold a Master's degree in Social Sciences or related area;

- At least 5-year experience in quantitative and qualitative research, data collection, analysis, and reporting;
- Experience in conducting a multi-sectoral assessment;
- Experience in conducting research on labour and migration is an asset;
- Knowledge and experience working with the welfare system and gender assessments in Viet Nam are an advantage;
- Demonstrated ability to produce work with high quality in a short span of time;
- Fluency in English and Vietnamese and excellent report writing, presentation, and communication skills;
- Work experience with SC is preferred.

Financial Proposal

The Financial Proposal shall specify a total lump-sum amount all-inclusive and payment terms around specific and measurable deliverables (i.e. whether payments fall in instalments or upon completion of the entire contract). Payments are based upon output, i.e. upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR. In order to assist the requesting unit in the comparison of financial proposals, the financial proposal will include a breakdown of this lump-sum amount (including travel, per diems, and number of anticipated working days).

Save the Children seeks value for money in its work. This does not necessarily mean "lowest cost", but the quality of the service and reasonableness of the proposed costs.

7. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT

The following payments will be made to the consultant using and agreed mode of payment

- Upon approval of inception report and tools: 30%
- Upon submission of Fieldwork report: 30%
- Upon approval of Final study report: 40%

8. HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultant(s) send their application to Save the Children via Vietnam.Consultancy@savethechildren.org by 16 October 2022. The application should include the following documents:

- Detailed technical proposal in response to TOR, with specific focus on the interpretation of TORs, methodology, budget and work plan to be used and key selection criteria. You could use the Consultant EOI Form provided in Annex 3
- Initial work plan based on methodology.
- CV(s) including a minimum of 3 references.
- Detailed budget breakdown based on expected daily rates and initial work plan (separate file)
- A soft copy of two recent assessment reports to demonstrate the previous experience;
- Certificate of service/consultancy's accomplishment (optional);
- A list of 3 recent organizations for which services have been provided.

ToR prepared by:	Nguyen Thu Ha 
ToR approved by:	Giang Hoang Hieu, MEAL Manager
	Nguyen Lu Gia, WNCB Project Manager
Date of sign off:	05/10/2022

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9. ANNEX

Annex 1: Consultant EOI Form



Expression%20of%20
Interest%20Templa

Annex 2: Inception report template



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Annex 3: SC report template



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