



ASEAN Cooperation Project Proposal

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1. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Identification Code: SCD/EDU/19/012/IAI

Project Title:

Increasing Access to Basic Education in CLMV Countries through Flexible Learning Programmes

Brief Project Description – 300 words max:

The proposed project aims at assisting Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) governments to increase access to basic education for out-of-school children (OOSC) through flexible learning strategies and non-formal education (NFE)/alternative education (AE)/equivalency programmes. The activities in this project include: desk reviews, national consultations, regional workshops, the production of report, communication materials and policy frameworks and institutional capacity building activities. The expected outputs are the collation of research data on scale and causes of OOSC; strengthened policy framework(s); and improved and expanded Flexible Learning/NFE/AE/equivalency programmes.

Recurring Project: Yes No If Yes, Previous Project Identification Code:

Project Classification:

Indicate the Scope and Pillar

Scope: Single Sector Cross-Sector

Pillar:

(Main) Blueprint:

(Main) Characteristic:

Education

Action Line(s): I

Action(s): Study the scale and causes of out-of-school children and assist in furthering the development of alternative approaches to increasing their access to basic education, with particular focus on disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

Connectivity

IAI

Linkage:

Strategy:

Key Action(s):

Information below to be completed by the ASEAN Secretariat:

Nature of Cooperation:

Confidence Building

Harmonisation

Special Assistance

2. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION, REGIONALITY AND BENEFICIARIES – 600 words max

(a) Current Problem

In CLMV countries, more than **471,282** primary-aged children and **6.3 million** secondary-aged adolescents remain out of school, and many more in school are at risk of dropping out (UNESCO Institute for Statistics [UIS], 2016). The education system has not been responsive enough to embrace children in poverty, in gender discrimination, with disability, of ethnic minorities, under post/conflicts, undocumented/stateless and in rural areas. While the number of enrolment in primary education increased for the last decades, the number of OOSC has not reduced since 2007. A key challenge for governments is to ensure that these children, who often cannot be served by formal school systems, are provided with **learning opportunities through innovative and flexible approaches**. Successful ASEAN integration will also require education systems in ASEAN to equip individuals with requisite basic skills and skills for a rapidly evolving labour market. Developing human capital is a critical challenge for CLMV countries – levels of educational attainment are well below other ASEAN Member States and the resultant skills gaps are major drivers of poverty and inequality. While CLMV countries have increased enrolment ratios in basic education and maintained strong gender parity, dropout rates are high and significant numbers of children are still not in school.

[Number of OOSC in CLMV]

	Primary School Age		Lower Secondary School Age		Upper Secondary School Age	
	Number	Proportion ¹ (%)	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion
Cambodia (2017)	184,824	9.44	119,327 (2015)	13.6	557,837 (2008)	56.13
Lao PDR (2017)	50,332	6.66	124,443	21.73	162,284	38.11
Myanmar (2017)	109,055	2.29	992,076	24.03	958,985	46.4
Viet Nam (2013)	127,071	1.98	918,822 (2002)	11.06	2,520,743 (2002)	48.24
Total	471,282		2,154,668		4,199,849	

(Source: UIS Database, accessed in November 2018)

The [ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth](#) (“Declaration”) was adopted by the Heads of State and Governments of ASEAN at the 28th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR on September 7, 2016. The Declaration marks the first time a regional grouping, drawn from some of the region’s most marginalized people, has made a unified commitment to addressing the needs of OOSC. These children face barriers to education that can include gender and racial discrimination, geographical distance, inadequate support for children with disabilities, costs related to schooling, languages, and humanitarian situations caused by conflicts, natural disasters, statelessness and migration. The Declaration, led by Thailand’s Ministry of Education with support from the ASEAN Secretariat and UNESCO Bangkok, takes a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of these vulnerable groups. The Declaration lists seven key principles: inclusivity, equity, accessibility, continuity, quality, flexibility and sustainability.

¹ Number of out-of-school children per the total number of relevant school aged children

ASEAN Member States also agreed under the Declaration to guide domestic legislation and policies to address the challenges faced by OOSC in each unique country context, including plans to promote “awareness of ASEAN as a caring and sharing community and as a people-centred and people-oriented region.” ASEAN Member States also committed to improved coordination and cooperation between and within countries “anchored on the understanding that long-term equitable investment in education yields economic and other benefits for sustainable development.”

The ultimate goal of the Declaration matches the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, the guiding framework for the global 2030 education agenda, as it promotes inclusive and equitable quality education for educationally underserved children. In particular, SDG 4 Target 5 is “By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations”. It is precisely where the Declaration is aiming. The Declaration also supports the sub-goal 2 of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020 i.e. “Enhance the quality and access to basic education for all” and specifically mentioned its follow-up regional and country level activities. In addition, as acknowledged in the IAI Work Plan III on Education (2016-2020), the project’s goal of providing OOSC with more and better learning opportunities closely aligns with the its objective (A)² and action (I)³. This project will focus on 1) research and evidence-gathering; 2) policy development/improvement; and 3) service delivery (piloting). Through these components, this project will contribute to undertaking the actions under the IAI Work Plan III on Education’s objective (A) by 1) identifying the scale and causes of OOSC in CLMV and 2) supporting them in developing and implementing alternative approaches to provide OOSC with learning opportunities.

Considering the fact that CLMV has a bigger OOSC population compared to the rest of the ASEAN community and the ASEAN community as a whole strives to collectively address the issue, it is the right time to assist CLMV in improving the situation.

Details on the current situation in each CLMV are provided in **Annex 3.2**.

(b) Regionality

The Declaration signifies the region’s concern on marginalised people and also the commitment to address the problem of OOSC. It also acknowledges that this common problem should be addressed in regional cooperation. CLMV countries have limited capacity in addressing the problem and strengthening education for OOSC and youth. This project will provide additional assistance to CLMV countries through capacity building, policy support and data collection.

This project addresses paragraph 6 of the ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action (POA) to Implement the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity

² „Increase access to basic education (primary and lower secondary)” (The ASEAN Work Plan on Education, 2016-2020)

³ “Study the scale and causes of OOSC and assist in furthering the development of alternative approaches to increasing their access to basic education, with a particular focus on disadvantage and marginalized groups” (The IAI Work Plan III, 2016-2020, p.21)

(2016-2020), specifically paragraphs 6.1 and 6.3, which relates to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration and Narrowing Development Gap:

“6.1 Continue to contribute to narrowing development gaps in the region through the implementation of Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan II 2009-2015 and its successor document and...”;

“6.3 Continue to support CLMV Countries, in the implementation of the IAI”.

Supporting the implementation of the POA, the New Framework for the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund (AKCF) 2017-2020 was adopted on 28 February 2017. It comprises three focal areas namely, education, environment and culture. This project contributes to the objective of the focal area on education, which is to *“reduce development gap at a regional (ASEAN-wide) level”*. In addition, the project fulfils the policy dialogue programme with the participation of UNESCO as the project proponent and implementing agency.

ROK’s active participation in the international community’s efforts to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction through various sectoral approaches, including education, will provide valuable assessments and recommendations to CLMV countries in benefiting OOSC and, ultimately, achieving education for all.

(c) Project History

Following the adoption of the Declaration in September 2016, UNESCO Bangkok, the ASEAN Secretariat and UNICEF’s East Asia and Pacific Regional Office organized three workshops between 2017 and 2019. During the [first workshop](#), AMS representatives developed a country action plan framework, proposed regional activities that can link to national policies, plans and programs, and discussed the possibility of establishing a regional working group on the declaration for effective monitoring and reporting. Building on these outputs, AMS recently gathered again to come up with more concrete regional and national plans and activities. During the [second workshop](#), AMS met again to brainstorm regional proposals⁴ that will be submitted to the upcoming ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED), finalize a national action plan matrix and agreed to establish a Regional Working Group on the Declaration⁵. The third workshop was held consecutively to further develop the outputs from the previous one. In February 2019, AMS gathered again in Bangkok to establish the Declaration’s Working Group, which will be chaired by Thailand’s MoE to review the progress for the past two years and assess areas for improvement in these outputs.

As mentioned previously, the issue of OOSC is more prevalent in CLMV among AMS. This means that the project has great potential for supporting AMS and the Working Group in implementing the Declaration at both regional and national levels. At the regional level, the project’s results can be incorporated into one of the regional project ideas, which focuses on advocacy and communication, and help the Working Group to reach out to wider audience. At the national level, developing/strengthening and piloting an equivalency programme in each country and enhancing the knowledge of the status of OOSC in these countries will help the Working Group to improve draft regional and country action plans as well as provide a basis for

⁴ Three proposals were agreed to be developed: 1) the development of regional EP framework; 2) the development and roll-out of regional advocacy and communication strategies and activities; and 3) the enhancement of data, research and M&E.

⁵ The Working Group will be officiated only if SOM-ED approves.

developing a regional equivalency programme.

Additionally, the lessons learned from the project can contribute to developing the next ASEAN Work Plan on Education (2021-2025) as well as the IAI Work Plan IV on Education and suggesting ways to support OOSC in the region more effectively and efficiently.

To maximize the project's impact in the longer term, collaborating with other ongoing initiatives will be considered. For example, Thailand is currently taking a national initiative with various regional and international actors on equitable education, especially disadvantaged children, by enacting the [Equitable Education Act of 2018](#) and formation of the [Equitable Education Fund](#) (EEF). The EEF is supervised by the Prime Minister and governed by the Board of Governance from the Education, Finance, Social Development/Human Security, Interior and Public Health Ministries. As the Act and the EEF are the first of their kind in the world, the CLMV project can serve as an entry point for CLMV, where such laws and legislations are not yet put in place, to replicate this meaning initiative in their own context and benefit those who are in the greatest need at the system-level.

(d) Beneficiaries

i. Direct beneficiaries

- CLMV MoE officials in charge of flexible learning/NFE/Alternative Education(AE) and Equivalency Programmes (EPs)
- Teachers/facilitators recruited for the pilot project
- Primary and/or lower secondary-school aged children in CLMV countries

ii. Indirect beneficiaries

- CLMV MoE officials who may work closely with the NFE/AE department
- Parents of OOSC and their community

3. PROJECT RESULTS

Objective:

CLMV governments increase access to basic education for OOSC through flexible learning strategies and NFE/AE/Equivalency Programmes.

Specific Objectives:

1. Understanding the situation and profiling of targeted children in CLMV countries
2. Strengthening national monitoring systems
3. Strengthening policy framework of Flexible Learning Programmes, including NFE/AE programmes, and equivalency in CLMV countries
4. Initiating, improving and expanding the Flexible Learning Programmes in CLMV countries

Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification
<u>Project commencement</u> Organization of a kick-off meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants attended the meeting 	Summary report

<p><u>Main Activities:</u></p> <p>A proposed kick-off meeting will build consensus on the most important aspects of the project, such as main objective, scope, timeline, communication and management standards/plans and decision ownership.</p>		
<p><u>Output 1:</u> Collation of research data on scale and causes of OOSC and develop institutional capacities on OOSC monitoring system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research data collected • Number of the national monitoring systems reviewed 	<p>Report from the research, including results and recommendations.</p>
<p><u>Main Activities:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct desk reviews of existing relevant researches and studies like the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) by UNICEF and UIS and current education programmes for OOSC and review current and relevant policy frameworks, accreditation systems and current monitoring systems 2. Conduct national consultations with selected CLMV government officials and stakeholders to obtain inputs and comments on the initial report 3. Develop a comprehensive report, including recommendations on OOSC in CLMV 4. Organise a regional (CLMV) workshop to brief CLMV officials on the results of the report, share best practices as well as identify next steps and assistance/capacity building required 		
<p><u>Output 2:</u> Policy framework of Flexible Learning Programme/ NFE/ AE/ Equivalency Programmes (“Programmes”)</p>	<p>Policy framework drafted</p>	<p>Draft of policy framework</p>
<p><u>Main Activities:</u></p> <p>Provide technical assistance to CLMV officials to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the current policies and programmes for OOSC 2. Develop recommendations on how to improve current policy framework and accreditation systems which link the Programmes to a formal education (for CLMV) 		
<p><u>Output 3:</u> Implementation of improved or expanded Programmes in selected provinces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved or expanded Programme in selected provinces • Programme assessed based on monitoring/accreditation systems in Output 2 	<p>Report on the implementation of the Programmes, assessment results and recommendations for follow-up activities submitted to the ASEAN Secretariat</p>
<p><u>Main Activities:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work closely with national government to identify selected provinces (a maximum of two provinces per CLMV countries) for pilot implementation. This support includes establishing criteria for selection of participating provinces e.g. institutional capacity. Preference will be given to provinces that have not received any external assistance in implementing such Programmes 		

2. Deliver training to government officials and/or NGOs that will implement the Programmes
3. Support and mentor government officials and/or NGOs in implementing the Programme through regular check-ins and help them to address challenges as they emerge
4. Assess project implementation based on monitoring/accreditation systems in Output 2.
5. Convene a regional workshop between stakeholders (e.g., trainers and government officials) to provide feedback on the implementation results, share experience on implementation challenges, and discuss promising practices for expansion of the Programmes

4. PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS – 600 words max

(a) Management Arrangements

- The ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) will be the sponsoring ASEAN Body for the project and will be responsible for overseeing the project's overall implementation. The SOM-ED as well as SOMED+3 and IAI Task Force meetings will also monitor and provide guidance on the content and implementation, as necessary
- The IAI focal points in CLMV countries will appoint project focal points (from the related Ministry/agency) to coordinate with implementing agency in the course of project implementation. The appointed CLMV project focal points will assist the implementing agency to organize meetings with relevant government agencies or national consultations, among others.
- As the project proponent, Good Neighbors International (GNI) is responsible for the project implementation and management. Also, GNI will implement the project with UNESCO Bangkok by concluding a separate contract between GNI and UNESCO Bangkok as Implementing Agency (IA).
- The Implementing Agency(IA) is responsible for the following:
 - Preparation of necessary documents, including invitations, administrative arrangements, tentative programmes and all of the activities that they entail, as well as other logistical arrangements which relate to the organisation of proposed activities;
 - Coordination with all of the relevant sectoral bodies and stakeholders in order to identify activity participants;
 - General preparations, which should be undertaken with the assistance of the ASEAN Secretariat, as well as carried out in reference to Summary Records/Minutes relating to the respective activity, so that they can be adopted by all of the participants; and
 - Submission of the project's completion and financial reports to the ASEAN Secretariat within 60 days of the implementation of the project

(b) Human Resource Inputs

- A maximum of two UNESCO staff (1 Project Officer and 1 Project Assistant) will support the Programme Specialist in implementing the project.
- International and/or local experts will be contracted to carry out the following tasks, but not limited to;
 - Collect data and information
 - Assist the proponent/IA and CLMV governments in drafting and/or improving policy frameworks and conducting national consultations

- A mid- to senior level international expert(s) should be able to:
 - demonstrate their knowledge of regional as well as CLMV countries' education systems, NFE/AE/equivalency programmes, relevant policies
 - consult with CLMV countries' government officials on relevant policies and related challenges into the abovementioned project activities
- Junior to mid-level local experts are expected to:
 - provide their experience and knowledge of the respective country's education systems and their challenges in providing OOSC with education
 - work and cooperate with international consultant, especially for outputs 1 and 2

Project Team Composition

Proponent (3)	Name	Position	Role
Good Neighbors International (GNI)	Sungwon Moon	Chief Manager, Program Planning Team, International Program Division	1) Providing overall coordination of the whole project process - Reflecting monitoring results in adjusting programmatic and financial plans as necessary 2) Organizing and coordinating a kick-off meeting, regional workshops and seminars - Issuing contracts for travel, accommodation, meeting package, etc. - Collecting documents from travellers for reimbursement - Providing inputs and feedback on concept notes and programmes for finalization - Attend meetings, seminars, and workshops 3) Providing advice and technical assistance to MoE and relevant national counterparts on developing and strengthening national education systems for OOSC - Contributing to the recruitment of consultant - Providing inputs and feedback on consultants' work assignments - Closely monitoring the deliverables submitted by consultants 4) Working with UNESCO team and GNI to liaise with NGOs, CSOs, UN agencies and other NFE partners to promote the project - Representing GNI to introduce and promote the project at relevant events
	Seunghui Woo	Assistant Manager, Program Planning Team, International Program Division	
	TBD(1)	Project Officer	

International Consultant (2)	Name	Position	Role
-	TBD	Senior Project Manager (1) Project Assistant (1)	1) Conduct a desk review of existing relevant research and studies (Activity 1-1) 2) Conduct consultation with selected government officials and stakeholders in each CLMV to obtain inputs and comments on the initial report (Activity1-2)

			<p>3) Develop a comprehensive report, including recommendations on OOSC in CLMV (Activity 1-3)</p> <p>4) Organize a regional (CLMV) workshop to brief CLMV officials on the results of the report, share best practices as well as identify next steps and assistance/capacity building required (Activity 1-4)</p> <p>5) Draft and/or improve the policy framework and accreditation systems which link the Programs to formal education (Activity 2-2)</p> <p>6) Assess project implementation based on monitoring/accreditation systems in Output 2 (Activity 3-4)</p>
National Consultant (4)	Name	Position	Role
-	TBD	Senior Project Manager (4)	<p>1) Collect data and information on NFE/AE/FLS-related policies, framework, programmes and accreditation system in the country</p> <p>2) Conduct a thorough review of the data and information collected</p> <p>3) Prepare a synthesis report that will be shared with International Consultant, who will use it as a reference for his assignment under Activity 2.1</p>
Implementing Agency (2)	Name	Position	Role
UNESCO Bangkok	Ichiro Miyazawa	Program Specialist, Section for Education Innovation and Skills Development	<p>1) Providing overall coordination of the whole project process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following up on the project work plan by supporting UNESCO and GNI to periodically review and refine program activities and adjusting programmatic and financial plans as necessary - Sharing field insights with GNI to contribute to project quality <p>2) Organizing and coordinating a kick-off meeting, regional workshops and seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting concept notes and programs - Coordinating with UNESCO national commissions or field offices to invite relevant government officials <p>3) Providing advice and technical assistance to MoE and relevant national counterparts on developing and strengthening national education systems for OOSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with consultations to assure the quality of outputs by providing inputs and feedback on interview questions, drafts and reports - Providing technical support and backstopping in planning,
	Hyunjeong Lee	Project Officer, Section for Education Innovation and Skills Development	

			monitoring and evaluating activities - Undertaking missions regularly to monitor project implementation 4) Working with UNESCO team and GNI to liaise with NGOs, CSOs, UN agencies and other NFE partners to promote the project - Representing UNESCO to introduce and promote the project at relevant events
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2) Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

The project will be monitored according to the deliverables and corresponding timeline indicated in the inception report.

- GNI will prepare and submit 4 reports including the i) Annual Financial Interim report, ii) Annual Interim report, iii) Project Completion report (PCR) and iv) Final financial report.
- In the case that the implementation of the project spans between two financial years, the annual interim report and annual financial interim report including original invoices and receipts or certified true copies will be submitted within 30 days after end of the ASEAN Secretariat fiscal year (i.e. 31 December 2020).
- UNESCO Bangkok is responsible for i) liaising with CLMV governments to record progress; ii) drafting a technical report based on these inputs; iii) sharing it with GNI for review and inputs; and iv) finalizing it per reporting cycle.
- The project completion report (PCR), with a full accounting of the fund disbursed from the AKCF, will be submitted within 60 days after the end of the project. The IAI&NDG Division will be responsible to circulate these reports to the Finance and Budget Division and External Relations Division
- At the end of the project, an international external evaluation consultant, who is mutually agreed upon between GNI and the ASEAN Secretariat, will be recruited to assess overall results of the project. Specifically, the external evaluator will provide main findings of each output in term of achievements, challenges and good practices, and recommendations.

5. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY – 300 words max

Each of the CLMV country’s education policy and legislation recognise the importance of NFE/AE for providing equivalency, literacy and skills development. Among the three focused areas in the Cambodia’s Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018 is equitable access to education services. The Lao PDR’s 5-year Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (2016-2020) and Myanmar’s National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021 specifically mention NFE/AE to improve access to quality education. Viet Nam’s 1992 Constitution and Law on Education of 2005 clearly states priority in education for disadvantaged population in the country.

Project sustainability will be ensured as this project aims to provide the foundation for AMS with big OOSCY populations, in terms of policy framework and activities, and recommendations to develop the sector of national education. In addition to supporting CMLV governments in implementing the project, the project focuses mainly on strengthening the capacities of government officials and local implementers, which will help the countries to continue to implement the project or develop a new one(s) with improved strategies and approaches, even after the proposed project ends. Proponents will consider the development of a 2nd phase programme if any gaps are identified during the project

6. GENDER AND OTHER CROSS CUTTING ISSUES – 300 words max

The research activity will include gender-related issues to ensure that recommendations provide equal education opportunities for male and female children.

7. POTENTIAL RISKS – 300 words max

Risk / threat	Mitigation strategy
Little to no reliable primary data on OOSC in CLMV countries	Secondary data will be triangulated with interview results from national consultations in CLMV countries.
Limited national resource allocation (human and financial) by CLMV governments on this education sub-sector to deliver and evaluate flexible learning programmes	For countries that have limited resources, alternative means of delivery, such as through non-governmental or international organisations, will be considered.

Annex 1 – Budget Proposal

Annex 2 – Indicative Work Plan

Annex 3 – Notation on Additional Supporting Documents

- Annex 3.1- TORs for Project Activities and Implementation
- Annex 3.2 – A summary of the current situations of OOSC in CLMV

Annex 4 – AKCF Project Initiation Brief

- Annex 4.1 – Project Assignment Table
- Annex 4.2 – Project Implementation Plan(PIP)