

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Baseline Survey

Project title: “Girls Thrive – Integrated Pathways to End Child Marriage in Lai Chau” –
Lựa chọn của em - Tương lai của em: Giải pháp toàn diện chấm dứt tảo hôn tại Lai Châu

Location: 06 communes: Đào San, Khổng Lào, Sìn Suối Hồ, Sìn Hồ, Tủa Sín Chải and Nậm Tăm, Lai Chau Province

Duration: Expected October – December 2026

1. About Plan International Vietnam

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children’s rights, with a special focus on equality for girls. Plan International has over 80 years of experience and works in more than 75 countries across the world.

Plan International has been working in northern and central Vietnam since 1993. Our work supports marginalized children and youth, especially adolescent girls, to start life and grow up physically and mentally healthy and as adolescents so they are leading the way to shape their own future. We believe girls have the power to change the world. Our ambition is to work alongside them and together take action so that 2 million girls in Vietnam can learn, lead, decide and thrive by 2027.

2. Project Background and Objectives

2.1 Rationale of project:

The project “Girls Thrive – Integrated Pathways to End Child Marriage in Lai Chau” is implemented in 06 communes in Lai Chau Province, with a focus on ethnic minority girls and groups at high risk of child marriage, school dropout, adolescent pregnancy and various forms of violence.

The project applies an integrated approach through three main models: (i) comprehensive sexuality education and empowerment of girls in schools; (ii) community dialogue to change social norms and build a supportive environment for girls; and (iii) climate-adaptive value chains to strengthen the economic resilience of vulnerable households.

2.2 Project implementation period: July 2026 – June 2029

2.3 Geographical area:

Communes: Đào San, Khổng Lào, Sìn Suối Hồ, Sìn Hồ, Tủa Sín Chải and Nậm Tăm, Lai Chau Province

3 Purpose of the Baseline

3.1 Purpose:

The baseline survey aims to establish reliable initial data for the project indicators, providing a basis for monitoring progress and assessing changes throughout project implementation. The survey findings will be used to:

- Establish baseline values for relevant impact and outcome indicators;
- Provide a basis for comparison for monitoring, mid-term and endline evaluation;

- Support PIV and partners in reviewing and refining targets and indicator measurement methods where necessary;
- Provide evidence on the current situation of girls, boys, parents/caregivers, teachers, communities and service providers;
- Provide a basis for adjusting and refining the implementation plans for the three project models.

3.2 Scope of work:

The consulting firm/team will be responsible for:

- a) Reviewing the results framework, indicator framework and project design documents to identify indicators requiring data collection at baseline.
- b) Establishing baseline values for relevant indicators, particularly impact- and outcome-level indicators.
- c) Assessing the current situation related to:
 - Safety of children, adolescents and young people at home, school and in the community;
 - Marriage/marital status before the age of 18;
 - Knowledge, skills, confidence and decision-making agency of girls and adolescents;
 - Gender norms, attitudes towards child marriage, gender-based violence and girls' decision-making rights;
 - Access to and use of child protection, psychosocial counselling and sexual and reproductive health services;
 - Education status, risk of dropping out and factors affecting school retention;
 - Access to livelihood, employment and income-generating opportunities among adolescents and young people, particularly young women;
 - Economic, social and community norm factors associated with the risk of child marriage.
- d) Identifying barriers and enabling factors affecting the achievement of the project's intended outcomes.
- e) Providing recommendations on measurement methods, target values or additional data required if issues affecting the feasibility or comparability of indicators are identified.

3.3 Geographic coverage

The survey will be conducted in the 06 project communes: Đào San; Khổng Lào; Sìn Suối Hồ; Sìn Hồ; Tủa Sín Chải; Nậm Tăm.

3.4 Target groups

Depending on the indicators, the survey may include:

- Girls and boys, particularly those aged 11–15;
- Adolescents and young people;
- Married girls, girls at risk of early marriage and girls who have dropped out of school;
- Parents and caregivers;
- Men, husbands/partners and family members who influence girls' decision-making;
- Teachers and school staff;
- Child protection and health service providers;
- Local government officials and other relevant stakeholders.

The project is expected to reach approximately 39,975 direct participants, including children, students, parents/caregivers, teachers, service providers and local authorities.

4 Users of the Baseline

The intended users of this report are project management team, Plan International Viet Nam, project stakeholders, and relevant partners.

Dissemination of findings:

Findings of the baseline survey will be disseminated to the donors, the project stakeholders and beneficiaries in order to get their feedback/comments. Dissemination activities will be logistically organized by PIV through project's workshops among project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. The consultants will be invited to participate and give presentations online.

5 Methodology

It is expected that the consultant(s) will develop a detailed methodology for data collection, data management and analysis in their proposal. This methodology should be in direct response to the project indicators and other baseline research questions regarding the project context. This methodology will be further unpacked in the Inception Report by the consultant(s) once the baseline is underway.

5.1 Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

The consultant(s) will be responsible for describing the overall baseline evaluation design, data sources to be used (including sampling), methodology and data collection tools that are best suited to the assignment and local context. The consultant(s) are recommended to use different data collecting methods, such as:

- Desk review (external literature, key project documents): review the relevant documents, including the project proposal, resources and results framework, documentation, reports, and other relevant research.
- Direct observation
- Key informant interviews
- Questionnaires
- Focus group discussions

The survey design and methodology will be discussed and agreed with PIV project team and with the implementing partners at the beginning of the consultancy. The consultants/ experts are also expected to provide friendly and simple methods so that youth and adolescents, vulnerable people can participate. Child participation methods are required to guide and support youth and adolescents during the survey.

5.2 Sample

The consultant(s) will propose an appropriate sampling methodology and size that is statistically valid and cost-effective, based on information provided by the project team to ensure that necessary information can be collected. All data, qualitative and quantitative collected through the study must be disaggregated by sex. Both the sample size and tools will be discussed and agreed with PIV project team before the commencement.

The consultant(s) are expected to develop and suggest a sampling strategy including a description of:

- Sample size (or expectations of the consultant(s) in calculating it).
- Necessary respondents' disaggregation
- Number and type of locations
- Sampling approach

Sample size submitted to PIV should follow table format below:

Indicator	Data collection methods	Sample				Notes
		Tools	Stakeholder	Location	Minimum number	
	Questionnaires		- With men, women (Parents, teachers) - With adolescent girls and boys - With people with disabilities (if any)			
	FGDs		- With adolescent girls - With adolescent boys - With people with disabilities - Teachers			
	KII with partners & stakeholders		Leaders of project partners & government agencies			

6 Ethics and Child Protection

PIV is committed to ensuring that the rights of those participating in data collection or analysis are respected and protected, in accordance with [Ethical MERL Framework](#) and our [Global Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People](#). All applicants should include details in their proposal on how they will ensure ethics and child protection in the data collection process. Specifically, the consultant(s) shall explain how appropriate, safe, non-discriminatory participation of all stakeholders will be ensured and how special attention will be paid to the needs of children and other vulnerable groups. The consultant(s) shall also explain how confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be guaranteed.

A risk assessment will be conducted by the safeguarding focal points and the consultant team before implementing the baseline survey to mitigate foreseen risks for children, youths and participants in the survey.

Note: Before implementing data collection, the consultant must get Ethics Approval by a recognized university or a national ethics committee or PLAN-Ethics Review Team. Feedback from ERT will be provided within 3-4 weeks' timeframe from submission. For sensitive applications initial feedback may take longer, and there may be multiple rounds of feedback (with adequate time needed to action and review feedback/ revisions).

Level of Contact with Children:

High level: *Interaction with children in consultations are required. The consultant must comply with Plan's child protection policy and standards throughout the research process*

7 Key Deliverables

The consultant(s) are expected to provide the following key deliverables, at a minimum:

- a) Inception report, including:
 - Research methodology;
 - Indicator matrix;
 - Sampling approach;
 - Survey tools;
 - Fieldwork plan;
 - Quality control and safeguarding plan.
- b) Complete survey toolkit, including the quantitative questionnaire, FGD guidelines and in-depth interview guidelines.
- c) Electronic survey dataset, including cleaned and coded data.
- d) Baseline indicator value table, clearly specifying definitions, calculation formulas, data sources and measurement methods.
- e) Baseline survey report, including:
 - Summary of the process;
 - Methodology;
 - Key findings;
 - Baseline values of the indicators;
 - Analysis by key target groups;
 - Survey limitations, if any;

- Conclusions and recommendations.
- f) Presentation of findings for PIV and relevant stakeholders.
- g) Necessary qualitative notes/information in anonymised form.

8 Timeline and Estimated Working Days

The total consultancy period is expected to be 30–35 working days, subject to adjustment based on the technical approach approved by PIV. A detailed timeline will be worked out jointly with the consultants after recruitment but a preliminary timeline for the key deliverables is:

Task/ Deliverable	Estimated No. of working days
Kick-off and document review	2 days
Inception report, methodology and tools	6–7 days
Piloting and finalisation of tools	2–3 days
Training and fieldwork preparation	2 days
Data collection in 06 communes	8–10 days
Data cleaning, analysis and draft report	5–6 days
Presentation and validation of findings	1 day
Finalisation of report and data handover	2 days

The specific timeline will be agreed between PIV and the consulting firm/team upon contract signing.

9 Budget

The consultants are required to propose a detailed budget for this consultancy together with the technical proposal, and submit to PIV for review and approval. The budget should include number of working days and daily rate in VND for the lead consultant(s) and in-country team members. The consultancy fee does not include travel, field work and logistic costs that will be paid for directly by PIV.

Table of Payment Schedule:

Milestone	Amount to be Paid (%)
Submission of Inception Report to PIV and upon Plan Vietnam's approval	30
Submission of final reports and remaining key deliverables (mentioned in Section 7) to PIV and upon Plan Vietnam's approval	70

10 Management

10.1 Consulting team

- Carry out all work in accordance with the TOR and approved plan;
- Ensure the independence, objectivity and quality of the data;
- Be responsible for methodology, sampling, data collection, processing and analysis;
- Comply with Plan International Vietnam's policies;
- Maintain confidentiality of all information collected;

- Fully hand over all deliverables and data as required.

10.2 Plan International Vietnam

The Lai Chau Program Unit will serve as the focal point for coordinating the recruitment of the consulting firm/team and the work plan, and will be responsible for coordinating and arranging fieldwork, meetings, and inviting key relevant stakeholders to participate in interviews, FGDs, etc. during the field data collection process. The Lai Chau Program Unit will also provide inputs and comments during the finalisation of the report.

The M&E Team Leader at PIV will be responsible for coordinating with the Lai Chau PU to recruit a suitable consultant/team, review the survey tools and methodology, and review the reports to ensure that they meet the required criteria.

- Provide project documents, results framework, indicators and necessary information;
- Support connections with local authorities, schools, communities and stakeholders;
- Provide comments on and approve the methodology, tools and deliverables according to the agreed timeline;
- Support field coordination without interfering with the independence of the data collection and analysis process.

11 Qualifications and Experience of the Consultants

PIV is looking for a consultant (or a group of consultants) with strong records in conducting evaluation related to community development and empowerment, participatory development and methodologies, asset-based community development, gender-based violence, mental health, youth activism, particularly in Vietnamese and mountainous, ethnic minority community's context. The consultants/experts will need respect and credibility within the field, excellent knowledge of monitoring and evaluation in theory and practice, and a good understanding of policy work.

Required Competencies:

- Demonstrable experience (5 to 10 years) in designing and conducting quantitative and qualitative research/evaluation of complex programs and ability to conduct high quality research, meet deadlines and respond to requests and feedback provided timely and appropriately;
- Demonstrable expertise (5 to 10 years) on community development and empowerment, child protection, children's mental health, and GBV with gender sensitizing.
- Strong analytical skills and previous experience in data entry using statistical analysis software;
- Experience in undertaking participatory research and consultations
- Knowledge of Vietnam governance and cultural context.
- Knowledge of women's and children's rights: previous experience conducting research with children and vulnerable groups would be considered an asset;
- Excellent and demonstrated understanding of Child Protection and ethical issues in research.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and reporting skills in English.

12 Applications

Interested applicants should provide a proposal covering the following aspects:

- Detailed response to the TOR
- Proposed methodology
- Ethics and child safeguarding approaches, including any identified risks and associated mitigation strategies
- Proposed timelines
- Recent consultants' CVs
- Two examples of previous work (summary or partial work will be accepted)
- Detailed budget estimation, including daily fee rates, expenses, taxes, etc.

13 Proposal evaluation Criteria

PIV will assess proposals based on the following key criteria:

- Relevance and quality of the research methodology;
- Understanding of the project objectives, results framework and indicators;
- Experience in conducting similar surveys/evaluations;
- Capacity and experience of the expert team;
- Sampling plan and data quality assurance;
- Experience in gender, child protection and working with ethnic minority communities;
- Feasibility of the implementation plan;
- Reasonableness and competitiveness of the financial proposal.

14 Contact

Consultant(s) who are interested in taking this consultancy, please submit the proposal package in English and Vietnamese via email to: luu.lexuan@plan-international.org or

Referencing Baseline for “Girls Thrive – Integrated Pathways to End Child Marriage in Lai Chau” project in the subject line, and including support documents as outlined to:

Plan International Vietnam

Address: 6th Floor, Capital Building, Lane 36, Giang Van Minh str., Kim Ma Ward, Ba Dinh Dist., HN

The deadline for submitting the proposal package will be **no later than 22 october 2026**

We appreciate your interest. Please note that only selected applicants will be invited to the interview stage.