

Terms of Reference for Research Analyst Service

Background

Thailand has long served as a humanitarian shelter for individuals fleeing conflict and instability in Myanmar. Over the past four decades, tens of thousands of Myanmar nationals have sought refuge in Thailand, and the 2021 military coup in Myanmar triggered a new wave of displacement, pushing over 3.3 million people into internal displacement and prompting more than 126,000 to cross into Thailand. Currently, the nine refugee camps along the Thai–Myanmar border shelter over 107,000 refugees, including about 91,000 verified by the Thai government and the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR.¹ Among them, approximately 33.2% (34,173 children) are of school age.² Inside and outside of these camps, an estimated 200,000 to 400,000 migrant and stateless children live³ in precarious conditions throughout the country. Children make up approximately 35.7% of these displaced populations, representing a significant portion of those in shelters and border areas.

Education for these displaced and migrant children is not only a fundamental right acknowledged by Thailand’s Education for All policy but also a critical tool for protection, psychosocial well-being, and long-term development. However, the education sector along the Thai–Myanmar border has faced chronic underfunding, relying heavily on international aid, local NGOs, and community-based organizations. The recent influx of displaced children has strained already limited resources, leading to overcrowded classrooms, insufficient learning materials, and undertrained teachers.

Migrant Learning Centres (MLCs) have emerged as the primary education providers for Myanmar migrant children in Thailand,⁴ largely in Tak province. These centres offer instruction in familiar languages and curricula aligned with Myanmar’s education system, reflecting communities’ hope for eventual return. Despite Thailand’s Education for All policy, uptake among migrant children remains low due to language barriers, lack of documentation, and financial burdens. MLCs are often unregistered and underfunded, with enrolment surging from 8,000 in 2021 to 17,824 by the end of 2024. Most MLCs lack Thai government recognition, resulting in unaccredited curricula and limited transition pathways to Thai public schools.

The situation has been further exacerbated by significant cuts in U.S. funding, which have impacted food assistance, healthcare, and livelihoods.⁵ These ripple effects have led families to deprioritize education, increasing dropout rates and exposing children to heightened risks of exploitation and abuse. The reduction in protection services has weakened the role of schools as safe spaces, undermining the broader ecosystem of care and support for displaced children. These involving situations compounded by Myanmar’s political instability, foreign aid cuts and RTG’s recent decisions to potentially close camps by the end of 2026, complicate education governance and delivery, stressing the need for integrating Myanmar children in Thailand into Thai education system.

In this content, it is essential to conduct comprehensive research to understand existing barriers preventing migrant and refugee children from Myanmar from integrating into the Thai education system. Evidence generated through such research will inform relevant stakeholders in designing more targeted interventions, investing and coordinate support, to enable the education access for Myanmar refugee and migrant children.

Save the Children Thailand is designed to deliver a rigorous, inclusive, and context-sensitive data collection survey that responds to the complex educational realities of Myanmar refugee and migrant children along the Thailand–Myanmar border. This approach integrates a mix method research with both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to ensure a holistic understanding of access to education across MLCs, refugee camp schools, and Thai public schools. The survey, scheduled for implementation in the final quarter of 2025, aims to examine the key issues, challenges, and good practices in educational service provision for displaced and migrant children from Myanmar. It will focus on how access to education is being facilitated or hindered across different modalities, and assess the extent to which the Thai Policy Framework’s commitment to “promoting access to education for children affected by conflict in Myanmar” is being realized in practice.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- To provide an update on the current educational situation for refugee and migrant education service providers, and identify key issues during the transition period.
- To examine documentation-related barriers that hinder access to educational pathways for Myanmar children.
- To identify good practices and challenges in enabling Myanmar children to access education within the Thai education system.
- To offer policy, administrative, and school-level recommendations for effective implementation of the Policy Framework, with particular emphasis on Thai language learning.

METHODOLOGY:

Primary Data Collection:

Using both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the educational landscape for Myanmar refugee and migrant children along the Thailand–Myanmar border.

Qualitative Data Collection: The qualitative component will focus on capturing in-depth, narrative insights into the lived experiences of children, parents, teachers, and education stakeholders. Data will be collected through key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and direct observations.

Quantitative Data Collection: The quantitative component will involve structured surveys to collect statistical data from education providers and households.

The target sample includes:

- 600 teachers and children in 10 MLCs
- 600 parents of MLC students
- 1,200 students from refugee camps (including 200 enrolled in Thai language classes)
- 110 teachers from refugee camps (including 50 teachers conducting Thai language classes)

- 200 students from Thai public schools accommodating Myanmar children

Secondary Data Collection:

To complement the primary data, the study will include a desk review of existing literature and secondary data sources. This will provide essential contextual background and inform the design and interpretation of the primary data collection.

Consultancy Description

Purpose and Scope of the services

The Research Analyst will play a central role in the design and execution of research initiatives. This includes leading hands-on research activities across the full research cycle:

1. Inception phase

- Support the development of inception report and preparation for ethical approval.
- Develop data collection tool for KII, FGD, and survey.
- Develops training materials for data enumerators, or field staff.
- Support the research assistant to deliver enumerator training.

2. Data Collection

- Ensures adherence to research protocols, ethical standards, and data protection policies.
- Supervises Research assistant and enumerator team, monitors progress, and ensures data quality through spot checks and validation.

3. Data Analysis

- Cleans, organizes, and manages datasets using statistical software (e.g., Excel, SPSS, Stata, R, or Python).
- Conducts quantitative and/or qualitative analysis depending on the research design.
- Interprets findings in alignment with research objectives and contextual understanding.

4. Reporting

- Drafts comprehensive research reports, briefs, and presentations tailored to different audiences (e.g., internal teams, donors, stakeholders).
- Visualizes data through charts, graphs, and infographics to enhance communication of findings.
- Contributes to the development of actionable recommendations based on evidence.

5. Cross-Cutting Responsibilities

- Collaborates with program teams to ensure research is aligned with strategic priorities.
- Participates in the design of research methodologies and tools.
- Maintains documentation and archives of research tools, datasets, and reports for institutional learning.

Deliverables

The Research Analyst will be engaged to deliver on the following objectives within a total duration not exceeding 48 days. The schedule shall remain flexible to accommodate the partners' availability.

Deliverable / Milestones
Kick off and regular meeting with research team and field team.
<p>The Research Analyst will submit an inception report* in line with the <u>provided template</u>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study objectives, scope and key study questions ▪ description of the methodology, including design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, data sources, and study matrix against the key study questions ▪ data analysis and reporting plan ▪ caveats and limitations of study ▪ risks and mitigation plan ▪ ethical considerations including details on consent ▪ stakeholder and children communication and engagement plan ▪ key deliverables, responsibilities, and timelines ▪ resource requirements ▪ data collection tools (in line with the study matrix)
<p>Ethics submission:</p> <p>The Research Analyst will prepare for an ethics submission include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ study protocols (participant recruitment, data security and storage, consent and confidentiality etc.) ▪ considerations for consulting with children and other vulnerable groups (if applicable) ▪ participant information statement and consent forms ▪ Survey instrument ▪ Data collection mechanism
<p>Data collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training materials for data enumerators, or field staff. ▪ Support the research assistant to deliver enumerator training. ▪ Monitors progress, and ensures data quality through spot checks and validation. ▪ Cleans, organizes, and manages datasets using statistical software (e.g., Excel, SPSS, Stata, R, or Python). ▪ Quantitative and/or qualitative analysis depending on the research design.
<p>A Power point including a summary of formative findings from the study. The focus will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summary of interim findings ▪ Any emerging program issues or risks (if applicable) ▪ Any changes that have had to be made to the study design (if applicable) ▪ Key tasks for the next stage of the study and any proposed refinements or changes to methodology (if applicable)
<p>A Study Report* (Draft Version – <u>template available</u> if useful though external actors may want to use theirs) including the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive summary ▪ Background description of the Program and context relevant to the Study ▪ Scope and focus of the study ▪ Overview of the study methodology and data collection methods, including a Study matrix ▪ Findings aligned to each of the key Study questions ▪ Specific caveats or methodological limitations of the evaluation ▪ Conclusions outlining implications of the findings or learnings ▪ Recommendations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annexes (Project logframe, study ToR, Inception Report, Study schedule, List of people involved)
Data and analyses including all encrypted raw data, databases and analysis outputs
Final Study Report* incorporating feedback from consultation on the Draft Study Report
Knowledge translation materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PowerPoint presentation of Study findings ▪ Evidence to Action Brief**

Management

The Research Analyst will report to MEAL technical Expert with dot line reporting to Education Technical Advisor and REL Coordinator. The Research Analyst will supervise research assistant as partner his/her responsibility. The consultant will work closely with Measot field team. Save the Children will approve all plans and documents developed by the consultant.

The Research Analyst will be both, remote and in-person. Any costs due to travel and stay in Measot related to the consultancy will be covered by Save the Children in addition to the service fee.

Budget

The applicant is requested to submit the proposal, work plan, and detailed budget (including estimated cost per day) with their application. The financial competitiveness of application will be considered in the selection process. All costs associated with delivery must be included; Save the Children will not pay for non-work travel, per diem, translation, supplies, or any additional staff support time needed.

Qualifications

Education:

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field such as Social Sciences, Economics, Statistics, Public Health, Development Studies, or a related discipline.
- Master's degree is preferred, especially for roles involving complex analysis or research design.

Experience:

- Minimum of 2–3 years of experience in research, monitoring & evaluation, or data analysis.
- Proven experience in conducting field research, including training and supervising data collectors.
- Experience working with NGOs, international organizations, or academic institutions is an asset.
- Experience working with migrant and refugee context is an asset.

Technical Skills:

- Proficiency in data analysis software such as SPSS, Stata, R, or Python.
- Strong skills in Excel for data cleaning, analysis, and visualization.
- Familiarity with qualitative analysis tools (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti) is a plus.

- Experience with digital data collection platforms (e.g., KoboToolbox, ODK, SurveyCTO).

Research & Analytical Skills:

- Strong understanding of research methodologies (quantitative and qualitative).
- Ability to design surveys, interview guides, and sampling strategies.
- Skilled in interpreting data and translating findings into actionable insights.

Communication & Reporting:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to produce clear, concise, and well-structured reports and presentations.
- Experience in tailoring communication for different audiences (e.g., technical, donor, community).

Other Requirements:

- Fluency in English (spoken and written); proficiency in local languages is an advantage.
- Willingness to travel to field sites as needed.
- Understanding of ethical research practices and data protection principles.

Submission for the consultancy application

Submissions for the consultancy must address the TOR and include:

- Name and contact details of the applicant
- Resume of the lead consultant
- A cover letter outlining the relevant experience and expertise of the consultant as well as initial ideas on the approach to be taken to achieve the consultancy objectives
- A draft summary proposal (design, methods, approach) to meet the scope of the consultancy (max 5 pages)

Close date for submission: 15 September 2025