

Terms of Reference for Gap Analysis on Employability Assessment for NEET Youth

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1. PROJECT SUMMARY

Youth living in Bangkok's urban high-density communities face significantly higher risks of dropping out of school due to poverty, unstable family conditions, and the need to contribute to household income. Many experience barriers such as hidden education costs, low academic support at home, overcrowded living environments, and limited access to alternative learning pathways. These factors contribute to high levels of disengagement from education, particularly among those aged 15 - 19.

Although Thailand's national unemployment rate remains low, the situation for young people differs dramatically. Youth unemployment can reach up to 25% in urban high densities, while nearly 1.4 million Thai youths aged 15 - 24 (15%) are categorized as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). This points to a deep mismatch between the skills youth possess and the expectations of the labor market, alongside limited accessible pathways to gain employability competencies. For drop out of school youth, the absence of career guidance, flexible training models, and real-work exposure further compounds their vulnerability.

The Gap Analysis aims to generate evidence-based insights into the opportunities and unmet needs within the labor market that affect dropped out youth. The study will examine two major dimensions including; demand-side factors - including hiring needs, sector-specific skills shortages, and employer perceptions regarding youth readiness. The supply-side factors - covering youth aspirations, existing skill levels, barriers to training participation, and the relevance of current vocational or life-skills offerings. The research will also explore how the current training ecosystem aligns with labor market trends, whether technical and vocational skills currently provided meet industry needs, and which sectors demonstrate the greatest potential for youth employment. The analysis will incorporate data from labor market assessments, interviews with employers in growth sectors, and consultations with youth to understand their motivations, constraints, and expectations.

The overall purpose of this study is to identify the critical gaps between existing youth skills and labor market expectations, assess the constraints that prevent dropped-out school youth from benefiting from current training systems, and recommend practical, market-informed solutions. The results will enable the project to design more responsive, inclusive, and contextually grounded employability pathways that address the unique vulnerabilities of young people living in Bangkok's high-density communities.

Type of evaluation	Gap Analysis (Formative Research)
Name of the project	Uniqlo Youth Employability
Project Start and End dates	
Project duration	

Project locations:	Bangkok
Thematic areas	Livelihoods
Donor	UNIQLO
Estimated beneficiaries	n/a (formative research)

2. INTRODUCTION

This document provides the Terms of Reference for the data collection, data analysis, and report writing tasks under the Gap Analysis on Employment Opportunities for Dropped-out school Youth in Bangkok, developed as part of the formative research underpinning the youth employability programming within urban high-density communities. This study aims to examine the key barriers and opportunities related to labour demand, skill requirements, and employment pathways for young people who have disengaged from formal education. The assessment will explore the labour market realities in Bangkok through engagement with private-sector stakeholders, local enterprises, and vocational training actors, while analysing the socioeconomic and structural factors that hinder dropped-out school youth from accessing decent work.

This Gap Analysis will serve as a foundational evidence base to inform the design of the upcoming achieve for youth employability interventions, including the identification of relevant market-driven skill areas, prioritisation of employability and 21st century life skills, and strengthening of linkages with existing TVET and training providers in Bangkok. The study findings will support the project team in tailoring youth skill-building activities to reflect real labour market needs, emerging growth sectors, and the lived realities of vulnerable adolescents across targeted high density communities.

The assessment will focus on youth aged 15-25 years living in Bangkok's high-density, low-income settlements, where poverty, family instability, and limited access to flexible education pathways contribute to high drop-out rates among adolescents. While the project will not directly implement vocational training provision, it will rely on existing market actors and government-led TVET institutions as third - party providers - drawing from best practices and coordination models established under Save the Children's previous youth skills programming in Thailand. The study will seek to ensure that proposed interventions remain inclusive, feasible, and responsive to the needs of dropped-out school youth, particularly those facing heightened risks of unemployment and social exclusion.

Additionally, this Gap Analysis aims to establish the initial status of key programmatic indicators and strengthen the project's understanding of youth needs before implementation of core activities. The assessment will allow for reflection on the relevance and potential effectiveness of the planned employability interventions and will contribute to ongoing monitoring and learning once activities commence.

The scope of the study, key research questions, reporting structure, governance arrangements, expected deliverables, and indicative timelines for implementation are detailed in the sections that follow.

2.1 Purpose, Objectives and Scope

This study is being conducted as formative research before the launch of the youth capacity building for employment interventions in the Bangkok, Khlongtoei area. The research objective include:

- To assess the needs and aspirations of youth regarding labor opportunities in Khlongtoei and analyze the socio-economic background of youth and identify their primary sources of income.
- To assess the current vocational and life skills level among youth in Khlongtoei and identify gap for improvement.
- To examine the current local labor market landscape in Khlongtoei including available opportunities and trends.
- To identify what constitutes decent work in the local context and map out key employers in Khlongtoei.

2.2 Intended Audience and Use of the Study

Primary intended audience of the study are the project implementors themselves to set baseline values and the design of the major activities depends on the result of this assessment.

Moreover, the study will be shared with the following stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Further information
Project donor	UNIQLO
Primary implementing organisation	Save the Children Thailand (Child Poverty team; Research Evidence and Learning team, BKK Program Team)
Implementing partners	Khongtoei Deejung
Community groups	Communities, Local Business Owners & Private Sectors, Local TVET Providers, Local Service Providers, Community Leaders
Beneficiaries	Youth (15-25), Adults (26+)
Government	Relevant government bodies on provincial level, as well as District level authorities
Other NGO	N/A

The study findings will be used for curriculum development of TVET courses, transferable life skills and business skills development. The types of TVET courses to be implemented solely depends on this gender sensitive labour market assessment and convergence of the findings from industry representatives, community leaders and youth as the primary stakeholder.

2.3 Key Study Questions

Objective 1: To assess the needs and aspirations of youth regarding labor opportunities in Khlongtoei and analyze the socio-economic background of youth and identify their primary sources of income.

- What types of jobs do youth in Khlongtoei aspire to have?
- What factors influence their career aspirations (e.g., income, stability, personal interest)?
- What challenges do youth face in accessing labor opportunities?
- What is the average household income of youth in Khlongtoei?
- What are the main sources of income for youth (e.g., agriculture, informal work, remittances)?
- How does socio-economic status affect youth's access to decent work?

Objective 2: To evaluate the current life skills level among youth in Khlongtoei

- What essential life skills (communication, problem-solving, financial literacy, etc.) do youth currently possess?
- Which life skills are most lacking among youth in Khlongtoei?
- How do life skills impact youth employability in the local labor market?

Objective 3: To examine the current local labor market landscape in Khlongtoei

- What are the major sectors providing employment in Khlongtoei?
- What skills are most in demand in the local labor market?
- Are there seasonal or gender-specific trends in employment opportunities?

Objective 4: To identify what constitutes decent work in the local context and map out key employers in Khlongtoei

- How do youth define “decent work” in Khlongtoei?
- Which employers currently offer decent work opportunities?
- What gaps exist between youth aspirations and available decent work?

3. STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

It is expected that this study will take approach of formative research, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (including survey, focus group discussion and key informant interviews).

The consultants are expected to include study design details in the technical proposal.

3.2 Sampling

The assignment will investigate three stakeholder groups:

1. Primary Stakeholders: young/adult women and men, decent employment seekers through self-employment or as an employee
2. Secondary Stakeholders: Private sector: employers, local businesses, MSMEs, (optional) large companies
3. Boundary Stakeholders: Service providers: non-formal and technical training providers, education actors, labor/employment offices, unions/associations of workers, media, civil society actors.

The sampling will be conducted for each of the stakeholder groups. For each stakeholder group, stratum will be created based on the specific targeted locations. The consultant will apply purposive sampling, while ensuring highest representation possible for each of the stakeholders groups. The consultant will propose further sampling details as part of the technical narrative.

3.3 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods / Tools

All primary data collected during the study must facilitate disaggregation by gender, age, disability, location (township level) and location type (urban, rural, remote). Save the Children

will coordinate with consultant to provide guidance on tools and classification schemes for this minimum dataset.

Save the Children has existing data collection tools that can be adapted to support the study. These include:

- 1. *Youth Focus Group Discussion Guide*
- 2. *Employers and Market Actors - In-Depth Interview Guide*
- 3. *Schools and Training Centers In-depth Interview Guide*
- 4. *Local Government Officials – Interview Guide*
- 5. *Green Economy Experts - Interview Guide*
- 6. *Youth – Green Jobs Questionnaire*
- 7. *Key Informants – Green Jobs Questionnaire*

Further support will be provided to consultant to complete the quantitative tool in order to ensure quantifiable data from the primary stakeholder group.

Save the Children and consultant will agree on provision of enumerators to assist with primary data collection. This will be based on the proposed timelines in order to ensure efficiency of the study development.

It will be a requirement of the study team to source additional external data sources to add value to the study, such as government administrative data. The team should also indicate how data triangulation will be realised.

The study team 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.

3.4 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. 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.¹
- 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.

4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The study deliverables and tentative timeline (subject to the commencement date of the study) are outlined below. The Technical Lead, Project Manager and Research, Evidence and Learning team will agree on final milestones and deadlines at the inception phase.

Deliverables and Tentative Timeline

Deliverable / Milestones	Timeline
The study Team is contracted and commences work	January 2026
<p>The study Team will submit an inception report* in line with the provided template, 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>Once the report is finalised and accepted, the evaluator/researcher study team must submit a request for any change in strategy or approach to the study manager or the steering committee.</p>	End of January 2026
<p>Final data collection tools (in the report language):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey instrument ▪ KII guides ▪ FGD guides ▪ Data collection mechanism 	Mid-February 2026
Data collection	By the end of February 2026

¹ 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.

Data and analyses including all encrypted raw data, databases and analysis outputs	5 March 2026
Draft Study Report*	25 March, 2026
Final Product: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study Report ▪ PowerPoint presentation of Study findings ▪ Evidence to Action Brief** 	10 April 2026

*All reports are to use the Save the Children [Final Study Report template](#). Please also refer to Save the Children technical writing guide.

** The Evidence to Action Brief is a 2-4 pages summary of the full report and will be created using the Save the Children Management Response template.

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.

The consultant is to provide reporting against the project plan. The following regular reporting and quality review processes will also be used:

Verbal reporting fortnightly to the SCT MEAL focal by outlining progress made over the past two weeks and plans for the coming period.

A written Progress Report (1-page) by email to the Save the Children Project Manager every month, documenting progress, any emerging issues to be resolved and planned activities for the next month.

5. REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE

The study team lead is to provide reporting against the project plan. The following regular reporting and quality review processes will also be used:

- Verbal reporting each week to the Save the children study Manager by outlining progress made over the past month.
- A written Progress Report (1-page) by email to the Save the Children study Project Manager every fortnight, documenting progress, any emerging issues to be resolved and planned activities for the next month.

6. STUDY TEAM AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested consultants are 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 study team members together must have demonstrated skills, expertise and experience in:

- Designing and conducting labour market surveys, formative research, baseline and evaluation studies with complex sets of quantitative and qualitative data
- Conducting studies in the field of livelihoods, technical and vocational training and labour market, particularly in relation to [youth employment and empowerment](#)
- Leading socio-economic research, evaluations or consultancy work in Thailand that is sensitive to the local context and culture, particularly [in the current fragile context of the Mae Sot area](#)
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving children and child participatory techniques
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving marginalised, deprived and/or vulnerable groups in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways
- Managing and coordinating a range of government, non-government, community groups and academic stakeholders
- Experience conducting study in humanitarian contexts
- Sound and proven experience in conducting evaluations based on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, particularly utilisation and learning focused evaluations
- Extensive experience of theories of change and how they can be used to carry out evaluations
- Strong written and verbal skills in communicating technical and/ or complex findings to non-specialist audiences (especially report writing and presentation skills)
- A track record of open, collaborative working with clients

There is a high expectation that:

- Members (or a proportion) of the study team have a track record of previously working together.
- A team leader will be appointed who has seniority and experience in leading complex study projects, and who has the ability and standing to lead a team toward a common goal.
- The team has the ability to commit to the terms of the project and have adequate and available skilled resources to dedicate to this study over the period.
- The team has a strong track record of working flexibly to accommodate changes as the project is implemented.

Financial Proposal

Save the Children seeks value for money in its work. This does not necessarily mean "lowest cost", but quality of the service and reasonableness of the proposed costs. Proposals shall include personnel allocation (role / number of days / daily rates / taxes), as well as any other applicable costs.

7. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT

The following payments will be made to the consultant using and agreed mode of payment. The Fees are inclusive of all costs, overheads, and expenses, including travel, subsistence, and accommodation (amend as appropriate).

- Upon approval of inception report and tools: 25%
- Upon submission of final report to SCT: 55%
- Upon addressing of donor comments (no later than 30 days upon donor submission): 20%

8. HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying for this position, please send an email to Kittiphan.samana@savethechildren.org (Krist) with the subject line: **Your Name_Gap Analysis on Employability Assessment for NEET Youth.**

Please include the following documents:

- CV / Company Profile
- Quotation
- Workplan / Proposal

Only shortlisted applicants will be notified by email.

9. ANNEXES

Annex 2: List of project documents to be consulted

- Labor Market Assessment Toolkit
- Existing data collection tools

Annex 3: SCI Evaluation Scoring for perspective consultants

Category	Evaluation Quality Criteria (used for internal scoring after completion)
Purpose, Design and Methods	1. Does the evaluation report clearly identify the evaluation's purpose (including its key objectives, questions and criteria) as set out in the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR)?
	2. Are the data collection and analysis methods a clearly justified approach to addressing the evaluation's purpose and questions? (Do they provide valid, reliable and ethical data?)
	3. Is the methodology suitably tailored to the context and population groups to which the evaluation questions relate (e.g. re gender, disability, socio-economic status, geographic location, cultural context, ethnicity)?

Analysis and Findings	4. Is the size and composition of the sample in proportion to the conclusions sought by the evaluation?	
	5. Does the evaluation build on what is already known, for example existing tried and tested frameworks and tools, existing data/evidence, and previous lessons learned?	
	6. Are the methods used to collect and analyse data and any limitations of the quality of the data and collection methodology explained and justified?	
	7. Has any personal and professional influence or potential bias among those collecting or analysing data been recorded and addressed or mitigated ethically?	
	8. If evaluating impact, is a point of comparison used to show that change has happened (eg. a baseline, a counterfactual, comparison with a similar group)?	
	9. Is the explanation of how (e.g. theory of change, logframe, activities) the intervention contributes to change explored?	
	10. Is the data well triangulated, such as by using different data collection methods, types of data and stakeholder perspectives?	
	11. Are alternative factors (eg. the contribution of other actors) considered to explain the observed result alongside an intervention's contribution?	
	12. Are unintended and unexpected changes (positive or negative) identified and explained?	
	13. Are the perspectives of children & communities included in the evidence, including the most deprived and marginalised? Note: For evaluations focused on young children, caregiver perspectives are adequate instead.	
	14. Are the findings disaggregated according to sex, disability and other relevant social differences?	
	15. Is there a clear logical link between the data that was collected and analysed, and the conclusions and recommendations presented?	
	16. Are conflicting findings and divergent perspectives presented and explained in the analysis and conclusions?	
	17. Are the findings and conclusions of the assessment shared with and validated by a range of key stakeholders (eg. communities, partners, Save the Children staff)?	
	Communication and Use	18. Is the analysis and interpretation of the data well communicated through accessible language and helpful visuals (diagrams, graphs, tables as needed)?
		19. Are references, annexes and links included that provide additional relevant data, analysis or references (including key documents and which individuals/stakeholders were involved)?
		20. Is there a clear plan for how to use the results, including recommendations that are 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) and directed toward the appropriate 'end users', a dissemination plan, and specific actions for implementing these recommendations?