PLAN
INTERNATIONAL

Until we are all equal

Terms of Reference
(ToR)
Consultant for Baseline of Space to Lead in Timor-Leste

Country Programme Timor-Leste

1. About Plan International

Plan International (PI) is an independent development and humanitarian organization that advances children's rights and equality for girls in developing countries and around the world. For over 80 years PI has been building powerful partnerships for Children, Adolescents and Youths (CAY) and the organization is active in over 80 countries and has no political or religious affiliations. We believe that gender equality is central to achieving long-term change. We have a vision of a world that values girls, promotes their rights and ends injustice. We engage people and partners to empower children, young people and communities to make vital changes that tackle the root causes of discrimination against girls, exclusion and vulnerability. We support the safe and successful progression of children from birth to adulthood, and work with children and communities to prepare for and respond to crises and to overcome adversity. We drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels through our reach, experience and knowledge of the realities children face.

2. Project Background

Space to Lead! is a global programme funded by Sida through Plan International Sweden, implemented between **October 2025- December 2029 (39 months)**. It is a continuation of Plan International Sweden's former framework programme, Generation Change! Programme, that was implemented between July 2019 – September 2025.

The Space to Lead! Programme consists of **5 country programmes** implemented in Bangladesh, Benin, Togo, Zambia and Timor-Leste that is implemented in Bolivia, Colombia and Guatemala. The partner portfolio consists of around 40 **partner-CSOs.**

The overall aim of the programme is to contribute to a vibrant and pluralistic civil society where children and youth, particularly girls and young women aged 10-24, are empowered, exercise their rights and enjoy gender equality. The programme has an overall strategic focus on civil society strengthening, particularly for youth-led organisations, and a thematic focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and Protection from Violence (PfV). It has been developed to be relevant for the Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation with Civil Society (2024)[1] that funds it.

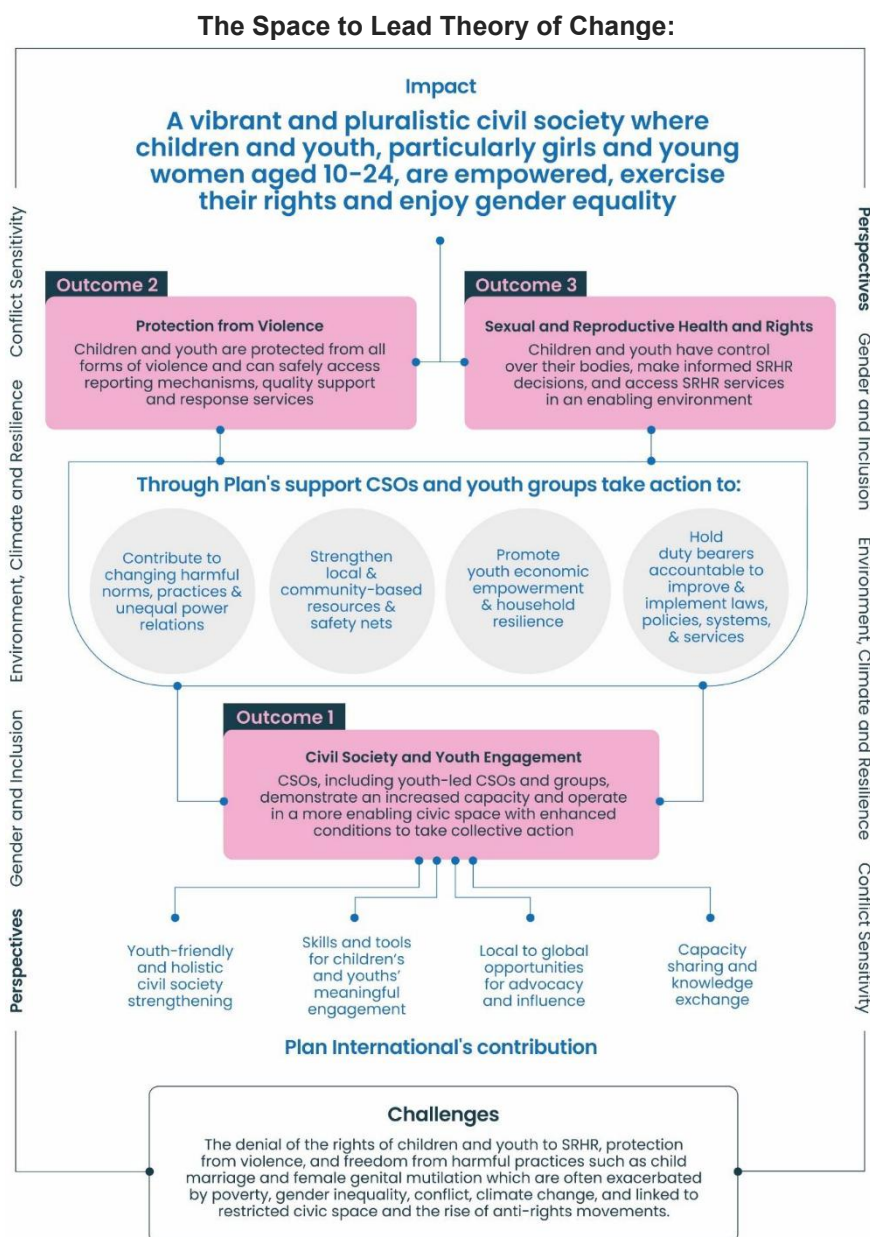The Space to Lead programme has **three outcomes:**

Outcome 1: CSOs, including youth-led CSOs and groups, demonstrate an increased capacity and operate in a more enabling civic space with enhanced conditions to take collective action.
Outcome 2: Children and youth are protected from all forms of violence and can safely access reporting mechanisms, quality support and response services

Outcome 3: Children and youth have control over their bodies, make informed SRHR decisions, and access SRHR services in an enabling environment.

In addition, it has three **crosscutting perspectives** that will be integrated in all programming: (i) gender and inclusion, (ii) conflict sensitivity, (iii) environment, climate and resilience. The programme uses a harmonized approach, where all country programmes report to the same global outcomes, using a set

of mandatory indicators. This allows for an aggregation of data from the country programme to the global level.

The Space to Lead Theory of Change:

In the programme, Plan International supports a mix of youth-led CSO partners, and CSOs with a thematic focus on SRHR, Protection from Violence, or gender equality, including feminist or women/girl-led CSOs. Approximately 20 percent of the partners in the country programmes are youth-led organisations.

Plan International support partner CSOs organisational capacity and space for influence, action and civic space, which is assumed to lead to the results under outcome 1. Plan International will facilitate the engagement of children, youth and partner CSOs in policy dialogues and influence laws and policies. This will enhance CSOs and youth groups space for action and influence, across the social ecological framework and allow them to strengthen their impact both on different societal levels and outcomes 2 and 3. Economic empowerment is an integrated approach in the programme, as economic vulnerability exacerbates vulnerability of children and youth in relation to SRHR and violence.

Timor-Leste Country program

In Timor-Leste, children and youth particularly girls, young women, and those from diverse backgrounds face systemic barriers to realizing their rights. These include high rates of violence, limited access to quality education and adolescent-friendly health services, and deeply rooted gender inequality. Gender-based violence is widespread, with 59% of women experiencing partner violence (UNFPA, 2020), while harmful traditional practices like barlake continue to restrict women's autonomy. Weak child protection systems and limited parental awareness contribute to high rates of child abuse, labor, and school dropouts. Rural adolescents face additional barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, resulting in early pregnancies, increased maternal mortality, and poor health outcomes.

Under its Country Strategy IV, Plan International Timor-Leste is committed to empowering adolescents and youth especially girls, young women, and marginalized groups to make informed decisions about their bodies and futures, strengthen their leadership, and thrive in safe, inclusive communities free from violence. This will be achieved through comprehensive sexuality education, access to SRHR services, psychosocial support, life skills development, and active youth engagement in decision-making. The program also promotes community and systems-level transformation by engaging families, men and boys, and institutions to challenge harmful gender and social norms and advance gender equality and inclusion

Plan Timor-Leste is known for strengthening partnerships with diverse local actors, including Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Women's Rights Organizations (WROs), and youth led organizations and groups, and prominent actors. These partnerships ensure that its programs are inclusive, locally driven, and sustainable, reinforcing our commitment to community-led change. It aims to expand and deepen these collaborations, ensuring that civil society organizations are increasingly recognized as equal partners in local and national development efforts. Plan Timor-Leste enhances locally led development, making sure that grassroots organizations have the resources and influence needed to implement impactful and sustainable programs. Over 230 civil society organizations (CSOs) operate in Timor-Leste, with 50% being local, presenting strong partnership opportunities for localized development (FONGTIL, 2023). This approach will also help reduce duplication of efforts and enhance coordination, ensuring that Plan's work complements national development strategies and fills critical gaps where government services are limited.

Partners Portfolio – Space to Lead Program

Under the Space to Lead program, eight partner organizations comprising six adult-led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and two youth-led organizations (YLOs) will lead, or support key outcome areas based on their technical expertise and field experience. NAFOFILA and SABEH will lead on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) with NAFOFILA focusing on child protection and improving access to Adolescent and Youth-Friendly Health Services (AYFHS), while SABEH delivers mobile healthcare services in rural communities and strengthens referral systems – under outcome 3. TALATA and ALFELA will lead on Protection from Violence (PfV), with TALATA contributing its experience in child protection, conflict resolution, and life skills, and ALFELA offering legal assistance and advocacy for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) - outcome 2. MDI will lead on environment and climate resilience, using its strengths in disaster preparedness, agro-ecology, and social auditing to support climate advocacy and resilience-building. FADA will serve as the CSO Network Hub, leveraging its strong municipal-level government partnerships and experience advocating for children and young people's (CAY) rights, particularly in SRHR and GBV prevention. The two youth-led organizations will play a cross-cutting role, providing flexible support across all CSOs, mobilizing young people, and amplifying youth participation and leadership within the program. All six adult-led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and two youth-led organizations (YLOs) AJHJ-TL and YAFC will be supported for their organisational capacity assessment (OCA) and organisational capacity development (OCD) led by Plan International - under outcome 1.

The Space to Lead program will be implemented in three municipalities **Aileu, Ainaro, and Manufahi** with Dili serving as the coordination hub for national-level advocacy and networking. TALATA and FADA will be based in Aileu, NAFOFILA in Ainaro, and SABEH in Manufahi. ALFELA, based in Dili, will travel

to the municipalities to support TALATA on Outcome 2. MDI, also based in Dili, will provide technical assistance to all seven CSOs on environmental and climate-related issues. The two youth-led organizations based in Dili and will travel as needed to support the six CSOs in community mobilization, youth engagement, and advocacy activities.

3. Purpose of the Baseline

3.1 Assessment of Baseline Values for Project Indicators

The purpose of the baseline study is to measure the status of the programme's outcome indicators and indicators for crosscutting perspectives (if included in the Country Programme Results framework). The baseline will feed into Space to Lead's global baseline and will be used by Plan International Sweden to set a benchmark for the programme and to monitor progress on indicators at global level, including for reporting to Sida. It is expected that the baseline findings will contribute with conclusions and recommendations to the implementation of the country programme.

3.2 Additional Baseline Research Questions

NOTE: The baseline study questions will be developed in collaboration with the consultant once they have been hired by Plan International.

3.3 Child rights, gender and inclusion

Plan International is firmly committed to upholding the rights, dignity, and safety of all individuals involved in data collection, analysis, and reporting activities, in line with our Ethical MERL Framework, Global Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People, and our Child Rights, Gender Equality, and Inclusion (CRGI) Policy.

All applicants must demonstrate a clear and robust plan for integrating ethical standards and safeguarding measures throughout the research or evaluation process. This includes minimizing risks, preventing harm, and promoting the meaningful and equitable participation of all individuals—especially children, adolescents, women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable or marginalized groups.

Specifically, the proposal should outline:

- Inclusive and Safe Participation: Measures to ensure that participation is voluntary, respectful, non-discriminatory, and accessible to all stakeholders, with special attention to the rights and needs of children, young people, and vulnerable populations. The process must be gender-sensitive and inclusive of diverse identities and experiences.
- Data Protection and Confidentiality: Strategies to safeguard the privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, including secure data storage and management protocols for handling sensitive information.
- Informed Consent and Assent: Ethical protocols for obtaining informed consent from adult participants and caregivers, as well as age-appropriate assent procedures for children and young people, in accordance with international child rights standards and Plan International's safeguarding requirements.

All ethical and safeguarding considerations must be embedded throughout the entire process—from planning and data collection to analysis, reporting, and dissemination. These measures are critical to maintaining ethical integrity, upholding the rights of participants, and ensuring that the study contributes positively to the wellbeing and protection of all involved.

4. Users of the Baseline

The primary users of the baseline are Plan International and partner CSOs in Space to Lead country programme in Timor-Leste.

5. Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

It is expected that the consultants will use the existing Plan's tools and methods needed to set the baseline values of the Results Framework's indicators and provide quantitative and qualitative analysis in relation with them. All the data needs to be disaggregated at least by gender, age, and disability. Washington Group short questions will be used to establish data on disability status. Other variables of disaggregation will be integrated in the tools in relation with other factors of vulnerability, e.g. indigenous populations, ethnic minorities etc. (depending on context). These other variables will be validated with Plan beforehand.

In addition to the mandatory survey tools (see table below), the consultant is expected to realize focus group discussion (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KII) with relevant stakeholders, such as community representatives, duty bearers as well as Partner CSOs. Group discussions and interviews aim to give additional qualitative insights for the expected outcomes and especially cross-cutting perspectives, such as (i) gender & inclusion, (ii) conflict sensitivity, and (iii) environment, conflict and resilience.

Outcome	Indicators	Tools	Sampling	Note
Outcome 1	LDI.CSS.1.1 Progress in relation to partner CSOs organisational capacity development	*Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) Organisational Capacity Development Plans (OCD) (tool existent – and already developed for most Parner CSOs)*	8 CSO partners	***For data collection on all outcome 1 indicators:*** Consultant will support the analysis of the already-available OCA results and OCD activities of 5 out of 8 CSO partners and will identify capacity needs of the other 3 CSO partners (2 national organisations and one Youth-led organisation) where the assessment has not been conducted. This can be done based on the available / existing data of each CSO partner. For Civic Space analysis, the results of last two analysis (end of December 2024 and June 2025) including the action plans should be included for the triangulation data analysis.
	LDI.CSS.1.2 Progress of partner CSOs and youth groups participation within the broader civil society.	CSO-survey (tool existent)	8 CSO partners	
	LDI.CSS.1.3 Progress on partner CSOs and youth groups access to civic space and participation in policy dialogue on a national, regional or global level.	CSO-survey/ civic space (tool existent)	8 CSO partners	
Outcome 2	PROO1.1.1 % of CAY who demonstrate knowledge of child protection risks and behaviours.	Tool existent	(random survey e.g. school, community	Tool includes 8 questions related to (i) identification of main types of violence, (ii) self-protection against violence and (c) talking about feelings
	PRO.3.3.1 % (and #) of community-based child and family protection mechanisms which meet minimum quality standards.	Survey tool existent	All community-based child and family protection mechanisms	Tool includes around 15 questions (to be scored) while if CBCPM does not exit in any community, please provide recommendation.
Outcome 2	PRO.5.8.1 Level of progress on the development, budgeting for and enactment of gender and age responsive legal frameworks, policies and programmes to end VAC and GBV by government policy makers and authorities.*	Review of public records and media reports, key informant interviews	FGD/KII with relevant CSO partners, networks, policy makers	The tool includes the definition of: (i) thematic focus area targeted for change, (ii) influencing objectives, (iii) incremental milestones toward long-term changes as well as (iv) the monitoring, analysis and reporting on progress check context analysis on legal conditions, etc already done by PO
	SRHO1.2.1 % of adolescents and youth aged 13-24	Survey tool existent	Only programme participants ***OR*** random approach	3 questions

Outcome	Indicators	Tools	Sampling	Note
Outcome 3	who feel able to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health		(e.g. community level, school)	
	SRH.O.6.2.1. % of adolescents and youth who consider services to be adolescent- and gender-responsive, at the time asked	Survey tool existent	random sampling of CAY in targeted areas	9 questions (scores)
Outcome 3	SRHO6.1.2 Level of progress in key milestones towards change in laws, policies and strategies relevant to young people's SRHR	Review of public records and media reports, key informant interviews, (tool existent)	FGD/KII with relevant CSO partners, networks, policy makers	The tool includes the definition of: (i) thematic focus area targeted for change, (ii) influencing objectives, (iii) incremental milestones toward long-term changes as well as (iv) the monitoring, analysis and reporting on progress
Crosscutting elements				
LEAD (integration to be defined based on country programme)	LEAO1.1.1 % of young people who demonstrate empowerment.	Tool existent	FGD/KII with young people, and YLOs	Individual self-assessment tool 18 questions four-point likert scale (Can be included into the survey for CAY)
	~~LEAO3.2.2~~ ~~% of consultation processes, in which young people report being meaningfully engaged.~~	Tool existent	~~Depending on type of programme participants (only for YG who started / plan to start advocacy / influencing work)~~	~~As overall BL indicator not appropriate for Youth Clubs / CoC that have started CoC or self-organization process. In this case the tool should be integrated into training approach once starting engagement~~
Gender & inclusion	' Degree to which country office and partner CSOs have operationalised gender equality & inclusion in programming.	LDI.GI.1 qualitative analysis of programme (key questions to be developed)	FGD/KII with CO staff, and CSO partners	refers to: (i) staff / membership / policies of Partner CSO (ii) Gender, Age & Inclusion Analysis in Design, Application of Gender Marker (iii) Gender trans-formative interventions (six dimensions) (iV) MEAL: indicators, data disaggregation, indicators, learning reg. GEI
Conflict Sensitivity	Degree to which country office and partner CSOs have operationalised conflict sensitivity in programming.	Guidance	FGD/KII with CO staff, and CSO partners	Include Conflict Sensitivity Analysis during the FGD/KII with CO staff and CSO partners

Outcome	Indicators	Tools	Sampling	Note
Environment, climate & resilience	Degree to which country office and partner CSOs have integrated environment climate and resilience in programming and contributed to mitigation of negative impact or positive	Tool existent	FGD/KII with CO staff, and CSO partners	e.g. PI Environmental Assessment tool Using the Environmental and Climate Resilience analysis result for the FGD/KII with CO staff and CSO partners

In terms of analysis, it is expected that the consultant will provide, beyond the setting of the baseline values, a descriptive and inferential statistics analysis of the surveys' databases to better understand the dynamics of the targeted groups (aligned with the indicators and considering the disaggregation variables, with a statistical hypothesis testing to be validated previously with Plan) and will triangulate the quantitative data with the qualitative data also collected, as relevant.

5.1 Sample

The sample strategy aims to be statistically valid and cost effective. The total number of sampled project beneficiaries, per target group and gender/disability will be defined by the consultant, with support and agreement of Plan International.

The consultant is expected to develop and suggest a sampling strategy including a description of:

- Sample size per target group
- Necessary respondent disaggregation (sex, age, disability, location,
- Number and type of locations
- Sampling approach

In alignment with Plan International's Child Rights, Gender Equality, and Inclusion Policy, the consultant must also incorporate additional vulnerability and identity factors relevant to the country context. These may include but are not limited to: (1) LGBTQI+ individuals; (2) Indigenous communities; (3) Ethnic or religious minorities; (4) Children and youth at risk of exclusion or exploitation

Simple random sampling or stratified random sampling should be used for the quantitative data collection. Stratified random sampling or purposeful sampling should be used to guarantee inclusion of vulnerable groups in data collection. It is expected that the consultant will detail and argument the sampling approach selected.

For the qualitative data, the consultant is also expected to describe the respondent participants, per type of data collection method.

The data collection will cover 15 sucos in these three municipalities **Aileu, Ainaro, and Manufahi.** The name of sucos will be discussed and agreed with the selected consultants.

5.2 Participant selection and recruitment

As a minimum requirement, representatives from key specific stakeholders among the target groups – such as youth leaders, peer-to-peer educators, representative from youth centre and youth council, community leaders, people with disability, education authorities, health facilities directives, civil society organisations and networks, policy makers, government representatives, must be given the opportunity to provide information on the current situation in 15 sucos of **Aileu, Ainaro, and Manufahi**to the consultant(s)

6. **Ethics and Child Protection**

Plan International 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 Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy (see annex). 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.

All staff working with children throughout the baseline should, where possible, provide an expanded police certificate of good conduct and that no work will start without signature of Plan International's Child and Safeguarding Policy by the consultant(s).

Ethical approval will be determined through an Ethics Review process undertaken by Plan International. This process will comply with expectations and requirements outlined under Plan International Research standards.

7. Key Deliverables

Deliverable	Format	Length	Due	Detail
Inception report including 1. an updated timeline; 2. detailed methodology, including draft sampling methodology and size ("Baseline-Matrix"); 3. ethical considerations; 4. consent forms for any primary data collection; 5. (draft) methods for data analysis and management (incl. data quality assurance); 6. risks (incl safeguarding risks assessment)	Word	Max 15 p.	August 28, 2025	At least one round of feedback and revision with Plan International to ensure high quality and adherence to these TOR and Plan's MERL policy and standards.
Completed Consent Forms (including for children and their caregivers and adults)	PDF	Max 1 p.	August 28, 2025	In used language
Final Data Collection Tools	Excel, PDF	N/A	September 10, 2025	In English
Cleaned Data (including data files (e.g. Excel), transcripts of qualitative data, syntax/ code books etc.	Excel, Word	N/A	September 15, 2025	In used language and in English
Draft baseline Report With the baseline values and descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis for each indicator of the baseline indicators' table. Including insertion of baseline data in standardized Indicator Tracking Table (as part of CO´s DIP)	Word	Max 40 p.	September 30, 2025	In English
Final baseline Report	Word, PDF	Max 40 p.	October 15, 2025	In English
PPT with main conclusions in relation with indicators baseline values and analysis (for de-briefing workshop)	PPT	30 slides	October 15, 2025	In English
De-briefing workshop with CO and partner CSOs	PPT, Word		October 15, 2025	In English

8. Timeline

Activity	Time	Days of work	Responsible	Individuals involve
Tendering	1- 14 Aug 2025	14 days	Procurement, P&C and Programme	Procurement Officer, P&C Manager, Programme Manager, Finance Focal Point
Background Checks and Contracting;	15-19 Aug 2025	5 days	Procurement, P&C and Programme	P&C Manager, Procurement Officer,
Inception Call/ Inception Workshop	20-21 Aug 2025	2 days	Consultant with input from MERL (CO and SNOs, Programme Team)	MERL Manager (CO), MERL (SNOs), program team Consultant

Activity	Time	Days of work	Responsible	Individuals involve
Submission of Inception Report	22-28 Aug 2025	7 days	Consultant with input from MERL (CO and SNOs, Programme Team), feedback, resolve and finalized	Consultant, MERL Manager, Programme Team
Preparations for Data Collection: Develop tools & tool translation	29-31 Aug 2025	3 days	Programme team, Field Coordinators, Local Gov	Consultant, MERL, enumerator and Program Team
Field piloting	1 Sep 2025	1 day	Consultant, MERL and Program team	Consultant, MERL, Program team and enumerators
Tools finalisation & enumerator training	2-3 Sep 2025	2 days	Consultant, MERL team	Consultant, MERL, Enumerators,
Data Collection	4-10 Sep 2025	7 Days	Consultant, Enumerators, Field supervisor	Consultant and Enumerators
Data Entry and Cleaning	11–15 Sep 2025	5 days	Consultant, MERL team	Consultant, enumerators and MERL team
Data Analysis	16-20 Sep 2025	5 days	Consultant, MERL Team	Consultant, MERL Team
Validation of findings with key stakeholders and respondents & feedback incorporation	21 Sep 2025	1 day	consultant	Consultant, MERL Team, Programme team Local Stakeholders
Submission of Draft	22–30 Sep 2025	9 days	MERL (Cos and SNO), Programme Team	MERL, program Team, Consultant
Submission of Final Report	By 15 Oct 2025	15 days	Consultant	consultant
Submission of Other Deliverables	By 15 Oct 2025		consultant	consultant

9. Budget

Milestone	Detail	Amount to be Paid (%)	Expected Timeframe
#1	Submission and approval of the Inception Report, including finalized methodology, tools, sampling plan, and workplan	30%	Within 1–2 weeks after contract signing
#2	Completion of data collection, submission of cleaned datasets and preliminary findings (e.g., PPT or summary brief)	40%	Within 4–5 weeks after contract signing
#3	Submission and approval of the final baseline report (including annexes, recommendations, and integration of feedback)	30%	Within 7–8 weeks after contract signing

10. Expected Qualifications:

The consultants are expected to as a team have the following qualifications:
- Documented experience and excellent skills of results-based management, monitoring and evaluation, including carrying out baseline studies
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis
- Knowledge of civil society strengthening programming and protection from violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Knowledge on evaluation or baseline in the programme's cross-cutting issues gender and inclusion, conflict sensitivity and environment climate and resilience

11. Contact

For further information or clarifications regarding this Terms of Reference (ToR), kindly contact: Joaninha.Vitoria@plan-international.org or Etha.Mota@plan-international.org

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*
- *CVs*
- *Police Certificates of Good Conduct – especially where there is primary data collection*
  - *Example of previous work*
  - *Detailed budget, including daily fee rates, expenses, etc.*

Please send your application to Plan International through email to:
- *PlanTL.Jobs@plan-international.org*
- Aurelia.Soares@plan-international.org
  CC
- Joaninha.Vitoria@plan-international.org
- Etha.Mota@plan-international.org

The submission document *referencing to "Baseline for Space to Lead in Timor-Leste"* **are due by Thursday, 14 August 2025**

Annex 1: Global Policy: Safeguarding Children and Young People
Annex 3: Project Details
Annex 4: Programme results framework and indicators to be assessed with indicator definition
Annex 5: Ethical MERL Framework
Annex 6: Completed Consent form