

# **Terms of Reference for the consultancy on Curriculum review of the Foundation and Key stage 1 of the National Curriculum and capacity development of curriculum developers at National Institute of Education, Male', Republic of Maldives.**

## **1-Background**

National Institute of Education (NIE) was established in 2012 by merging Education Development Centre and Centre for Continuing Education. The mission of NIE is to facilitate life-long learning through collaborative research and innovation. The institution envisions for educational empowerment, innovation, and excellence.

NIE currently consist of school for curriculum development, school for teacher development and school for non- formal education with a broader mandate of leading learning and acting as a professional hub for education. The main responsibilities of NIE includes design and development of curriculum, development of instructional materials, provide awareness programs for teachers to orient them on the curriculum. Furthermore, NIE is responsible to provide in-service training to teachers to upgrade on content and pedagogy. Moreover, it is also responsible to conduct programs on community development and establish alternative learning pathways for school drop outs and under-qualified students.

In this regard, School of Curriculum development having the mandate of curriculum design and development embarks on major task of capacity development of curriculum developers. NIE consist of 95 staff, out of which 15 members work in the school of curriculum department. With this capacity limitation, curriculum department has designed and developed curriculum for k-12. In 2015- 2019 NIE has rolled out the new National Curriculum from k-11. However, this target was achieved with a host of challenges including:

Limited number of people with varying level of capacity

- Short span of time
- Lack of strong leadership
- Lack of professional guidance
- Low retain rate of professional staff

Hence, the technical capacity of NIE was stretched in the process of curriculum development and roll out. The next cycle of curriculum development is to reflect on the curriculum and its implementation for improvement. To undertake this task, NIE is in the process of restructuring and upskilling the existing technical curriculum team. Curriculum department has in particular identified their capacity gaps and weaknesses in the following areas:

- Curriculum design and development
- Development of Instructional materials
- Embedding key competencies in teaching learning materials
- Assessment
- Imparting the pedagogical shift to teachers
- Creating awareness in developing content and integrating 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into teaching and learning materials.

To embark on this huge task, in 2019, NIE convened a series of consultations on the implementation of the new national curriculum to identify issues and challenges. As such regional consultation were held in three regions of the country. A wide consultation with school heads from 216 schools were held and a national symposium on the new national curriculum were held.

The general consensus from these consultations were as follows:

## **Discussion forums**

- Teachers identified issues regarding textbooks. Some textbooks and teacher guides are not well aligned and also there is a huge gap between the foundation stage and grade one in terms of content
- A large number of teachers have mentioned that they feel that their teaching is not effective.
- Students expressed views that the content and layout of books were appealing whereas having to learn too many subjects is not so favourable. Students also highlighted that some teachers teach their subjects in an interesting manner while some teachers just go through the content to “cover” the book.
- Parents shared some conflicting views regarding formative and summative assessment techniques practiced in schools.

## **Curriculum Symposium**

### **Teaching and learning /Implementation**

- Teachers lack the confidence and know how to teach and assess students by integrating key competencies.
- Need explicit focus on development of communication skills, critical thinking and lifelong learning.
- Unable to adopt active learning methods in the implementation
- Need to revisit the assessment policy
- Not ready to implement Social studies and health PE in key stage 4
- Need to strengthen in-service training
- Need a platform to share good practice

### **Curriculum, textbooks and resources**

- Overloaded curriculum content
- Mismatch between curriculum and textbooks
- Too much emphasis on covering the content in the books
- Need to have a professional development guideline

## **Principals’ conference**

The heads conference also identified similar issues with regard to teaching and learning. The major concerns raised in the conference were:

- Lack of content and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers
- Difficulty in carrying out assessment procedures mentioned in the curriculum.
- Lack of capacity in implementing a huge curriculum
- High content in some textbooks and overloaded curriculum

Furthermore, review of 216 schools in the year 2016 also shows that teaching methodologies were ineffective and does not practice active learning methods and this is reflected in the findings of National Assessment of Learning Outcomes (NALO) in 2016 and 2017.

Considering these consultations and internal reflections, it is deemed necessary to review the curriculum with the possibility of revising the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) if required, the subject syllabi and instructional materials.

It is to this effect that The National Institute of Education is seeking the services on an international institution, experienced in curriculum development, undertaking curriculum reviews and providing policy advice to Governments on Curricular reforms.

## 2- Objectives of the consultancy

This consultancy will have two components:

<b>Component 1: Capacity development of NIE</b>
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The objective of component 1 is to build the institutional capacity of NIE in:

- a) Curriculum design, development and monitoring of the curriculum.
- b) Development of Instructional materials for the Maldives national curriculum
- c) Embedding key competencies in teaching learning materials
- d) Creating awareness in developing content and integrating 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into teaching and learning materials.
- e) Assessment of acquisition of competencies and knowledge
- f) Knowledge and skills on imparting the pedagogical shift envisaged in the curriculum to teachers.

### Key tasks to be undertaken under this component are:

- 1- Develop a comprehensive training package consisting of the key areas to achieve below outcomes.
  - a) Curriculum design and development
    - Become aware of the general features of curriculum design and development focusing on early and primary years of schooling.
    - Examine the respective syllabi to identify areas for strengths and weakness
    - Explore ways to integrate within and across key learning areas
    - Prepare a component of syllabus which reflects the above mentioned features (sample)
  - b) Development and delivery of instructional materials
    - Identify effective ways to incorporate key competencies and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in instructional materials
    - Observe classroom practices where key competencies are effectively taught and assessed (through video materials)
    - Examine the respective instructional materials to identify areas for strengths and weakness
    - Prepare sample instructional materials for selected topic/area.
  - c) Assessment
    - Identify ways to assess key competencies through various subjects
    - Analyse the current instructional materials in terms of enhancing effective assessment procedures and techniques
    - Prepare a sample instructional material by embedding key competencies and content highlighting features of effective assessment.
  - d) Imparting the pedagogical shift to teachers
    - Identify effective training strategies/techniques used for adult learning
    - Develop sample training module for teachers on translating the intended curriculum in classroom delivery
    - Carry out demonstration sessions
- 2- Conduct an analysis of the level of knowledge in the above areas among the participants before the training.
- 3- Deliver a 7-day training using the above package.
- 4- Conduct an analysis of the level of knowledge and learning in the participants after the training,

Duration of the training: 7 working days (8 hours/day)

No. of participants: 20

Participants: Curriculum developers of various subjects in key stage 1 and Foundation stage.

**Time frame: 7<sup>th</sup> July – 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

**Deliverables for component 1:**

- 1) A comprehensive training package covering the above-mentioned learning areas and outcomes.
  - 2) Provision of the training for the 20 participants of NIE staff.
  - 3) A report on the pre and post analysis of learning in participants.
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<b>Component 2: Review of Foundation and Key stage 1 of the National Curriculum</b>
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The objective of component 2 is to review the syllabuses, instructional materials for teachers (Teacher guides) and text books for Foundation stage and Key stage 1 to address the gaps and issues highlighted above, affecting the implementation of the 2 key stages.

**Key tasks to be undertaken in the review.**

1. In collaboration with the National Institute of Education, School of Curriculum, review the syllabi and teaching and learning materials within and across the Key Learning Areas (Foundation stage and Key stage 1) to identify strengths and weakness in terms of
  - Balance of content, knowledge and skills
  - Consistency in inclusion of content (Topics, Big ideas or concepts)
    - Content coverage
      - Depth and breadth of content
      - Opportunities for deep learning and integration
      - Opportunities for adaptation/differentiation
      - Embedding of key competencies and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
      - Adequate inclusion of literacy and numeracy skills
      - Language consistency
2. Undertake a gender review of the curriculum materials including the syllabi, teaching and learning materials. In this regard:
  - a) Analyze how gender norms and gender roles are included and depicted in the textbooks and teaching and learning material. Examine if explicit gender bias is present in the textbooks. Three different dimensions of gender bias in textbooks must be analyzed and addressed if there is any:
    - (i) underrepresentation,
    - (ii) stereotyped depictions of gender roles, occupations and attributes, and
    - (iii) negative/limited presentation of gender content and role models.
  - b) Identify gender related attitudes and beliefs of
    - (i) Foundation stage teachers and
    - (ii) key stage 1 teachers and how these attitudes and beliefs could impact student's acquisition of gender norms.

- c) Assess whether the NIE has procedures and guidance to textbook writers and publishers on: the need for explicit positive and equality language, and that clearly define what publishers have to do in terms of
    - (i) explicit and implicit gender sensitive and gender inclusive content:
    - (ii) gender inclusive language,
    - (iii) iconography (graphics and illustrations)
  - (d) Include the findings of the gender review in a separate chapter in the review report.
3. Produce a detailed report on the findings of the review, including a set of clear recommendations, and a detailed plan on how to bring the required revision.
    - a. Present the preliminary findings, recommendations and the plan to the senior management of the NIE for Validation.
    - b. Finalize the report with input from the NIE.
    - c. Present the final report to the NIE with all the presentations.

#### **Deliverables for component 2:**

- Final report on the findings of the review with recommendations and the plan for the required revisions.

#### **3- Time frame for the consultancy:** 1<sup>st</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> September

#### **4-Qualifications required.**

- The consultancy team must have at least 10 years of experience in curriculum development and undertaking evaluations of curriculum and providing policy support for curricular reform.
- The Review team should have at least one member with expertise in gender and education and in undertaking similar work.

#### **5-Application process:**

All bidders are expected to submit a technical proposal with their bid which shall include and not limited to:

- A submission letter,
- A profile of the bidding institution including samples of previous work undertaken and at least 3 reference letters.
- A detailed proposal consisting of a methodology and work plan with a lime line for undertaking the above tasks.

#### **Financial proposal.**

The financial proposal shall be prepared and submitted by the consultants and shall contain the following.

- Summary of costs
  - Breakdown of fees per items of work and activities.
  - Breakdown of any reimbursable costs or expenses per activity.
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