

Terms of Reference for a national consultant to develop a non-formal education policy for the National Institute of Education, Maldives

1. Purpose of assignment

Background

Non-formal education activities started in the Maldives during the late 1970s when the Education Project Office was formed with the mandate to cater for the needs of those who did not get or faced challenges to get opportunities to gain education through formal avenues. The work of Education Project Office was expanded with the formation of the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) on January 1, 1986. The activities conducted by the Centre for Continuing Education was aimed at providing education and teaching skills through the utilization of non-formal methods to pave way for social and economic participation and development of the island communities. Hence, the center conducted programmes such as the Second Chance Programme and certified vocational programmes such as computer hardware, electrical wiring along with Dhivehi text production and computing, network and administration and distance learning activities. From these programmes, a lot of out-of-school children and youth got the opportunity to learn skills that they could use to earn a living for themselves or paved the way for employment and further studies.

However, during the past few years provision of non-formal education suffered major setbacks. Amongst these were the changes that came about to the Non-Formal Education Department’s mandate which narrowed down its focus on non-formal education. The Department which was a separate entity until then was merged into another institution and hence it became a smaller department where the number of trained staff was limited. This affected the services it previously provided, namely the vigor that was given into distance education became less.

Nevertheless, non-formal education is being revived through the Sustainable Development Goals. Specifically goals 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 place an emphasis on the establishment of inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This includes ensuring equal access for all men and women and increasing the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills which include technical and vocational skills. According to the 2014 census, there are there are 408 children between ages 12 to 15 who are

out of school while 759 children in the Higher Secondary School age (16-17 years) are out of school in Male' and 1,647 children within the atolls.

One of the pledges of the current government is to strengthen decentralization. With this pledge, the mandate of community education and responsibilities related to non-formal education falls under the island, atoll and city councils.

The National Institute of Education (NIE) greatly believes that non-formal education is the solution to address the growing need of education for the population that does not fall under the formal education category. Moreover, educational, skill development and competency development for youth, women, out-of-school children, children who cannot be sent back to school for various reasons, vulnerable youths and disadvantaged groups of children need to be planned and implemented to fulfill their right to education.

It is to this effect that The Government of Maldives is seeking the technical expertise of a national consultant to support the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop a policy on non-formal education to guide NIE and MoE in supporting the expansion and implementation of non-formal education in the Republic of Maldives.

Objectives of the consultancy:

The objectives of the intervention are:

1. To conceptualize a model for the provision of non-formal education in the Maldives
2. Build institutional capacity at NIE and MoE to guide the island, atoll and city councils to conduct and improve non-formal education activities within communities and to strengthen support provided to the island, atoll and city councils by NIE to implement the non-formal education.

3- Scope of work and major tasks to be accomplished

1. Conduct an assessment on the provision of non-formal education in the country, through literature and key informants.
2. Conduct focus group discussions and key informant interviews with key stakeholders on how they wish non-formal education to be expanded in the country.
3. Conduct discussions with key population groups that will benefit from non-formal education, such as children out of school, young people who would like to get a second chance, men and women who would like to have access to learning opportunities and new ways of learning skills. Obtain information on the types of programs they would like to have on offer and how they would like these programs to be conducted.

4. In consultation with local councils identify how the councils can provide these services and the resources they need to operationalize non-formal learning programs.
5. Produce a report on the findings from the consultations and literature review, including recommendations for the provision of non-formal education in Male' and in the atolls.
6. Based on the findings, propose a model/models of providing non-formal education in the Maldives, through councils.
7. Validate the model/ models through a stakeholder consultation.
8. Once the model/models are finalized, develop a policy on non-formal education in the Maldives and an action plan to implement the policy.
9. Provide technical support to organize a two day conference on non-formal education in the Maldives, aimed at engaging with all the relevant stakeholders to validate the concept of NFE and the deliverables produced under the consultancy.
10. Present the deliverables at the 2-day national conference on the provision of non-formal education in the Maldives.
11. Revise the deliverables with feedback from the stakeholder consultation and finalize the documents with NIE.

4- Deliverables:

- 1) Report on the assessment of provision of non-formal education in the Maldives.
- 2) Paper on the non-formal education model/models for Maldives.
- 3) Policy on provision of non-formal education in the Maldives.
- 4) Action plan to implement the non-formal education policy.

5- Estimated duration of the work: 60 working days, excluding weekends.

6- Travel:

The consultant is expected to undertake at-least 3 travels to the local islands to conduct stakeholder consultations and key informant interviews. The cost of travel will be borne by the NIE.

7- Payment.

Payment will be made against deliverables.

8- Qualification/ specialized knowledge and experience required.

- Must have an advance university degree in education or social sciences
- Must have at least more than 8 years of experience in the Maldives in providing education or non-formal education
- Must be familiar with the local education system and the governance systems.
- Must have experience in formulating policies and action plans.

9- Application requirement and deadline for application.

Interested applicants are requested to submit a proposal for undertaking the consultancy including a schedule of work, and CV along with supporting documents to the National Institute of Education by 13th June 2019.

