Call for Consultancy (Institution/Organization)

Situation Assessment of Sexuality Education in Digital Spaces and Opportunities for Formal Education in Thailand

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Type of Contract: Contract for Services

Duration: August 2020 – January 2021

Closing date for expression of interest: 15 July 2020 17:00 hrs Bangkok Time

Objective:

To carry out a situation assessment that explores the potential for bringing together offline and online learning platforms and approaches for sexuality education in Thailand and informs efforts in the education sector to leverage the opportunities of sexuality education in digital spaces.

1. Background:

1.1 Sexuality Education in Thai Formal Education

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is defined as an “age-appropriate, culturally relevant approach to teaching about sexuality and relationships by providing scientifically accurate, realistic, non-judgmental information”. CSE promotes and improves the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of young people. In addition to promoting good SRH and a positive, affirming approach to sexuality, CSE aims to reduce poor health outcomes in young people such as teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortions, gender-based violence, exploitation, sexually transmitted infections -including HIV, and to increase age of sexual debut, safe sex and condom use. CSE thus plays a critical role in equipping young people with knowledge, skills and attitudes for their healthy relationships and socio-emotional development.

Among a few countries in the Asia-Pacific region, by law, Thailand requires the provision of sexuality education in schools. The Prevention and Alleviation of Adolescent Pregnancy Problem Act (2016) mandates that all educational institutions need to give sexuality education and to ensure provision of and access to sexual and reproductive health services for all adolescents between 10 to 20 years of age. There are six topic areas covered in Thailand’s CSE
Curricula content including i) human development ii) relationships iii) personal skills iv) sexual behaviour v) sexual health and society and, (vi) culture. A 2016 review of CSE implementation in Thailand observed that the delivery and scope of CSE content is varies across the country. Some schools may include CSE as a part of Health Education, some teachers tend to focus on biology and the negative consequences of sex more than other aspects. Instruction methods are a mix of lecture-based and activity-based ranging from classroom discussions, small group work, role-plays, and video presentation. At present, an e-learning teacher training course to support teachers’ classroom delivery of CSE is being implemented by the Ministry of Education.

1.2 Thailand’s Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Digital Spaces

Digital spaces are where young people seek information, spend their leisure time, generate content to share with others and learn from influencers, peers and experts. Therefore, they provide entry-points for sexuality education since the internet and digital media serve as private and personalized sources for young people who are seeking answers on sexuality and relationships. Content-providers and influencers take full advantage of digital spaces to deliver information and engage with young people directly via online platforms at the user’s convenience.

In comparison to other countries in East Asia and the Pacific, Thailand has the most digital sexuality education platforms and tools available. The content and the target audiences of these platforms and tools may vary, but overall they aim to raise awareness, maximize reach and create engagement with young people on issues concerning their sexual and reproductive health. Although Thai youths usually spend an average of 9 hours 38 minutes online per day, these statistics do not reveal the full picture of young people’s engagement when it comes sexuality education in digital spaces.

Previous studies on sexuality education in digital spaces in the region lack valuable, primary information such as young people’s practices, perceptions and preferences. In order to minimize gaps and risks and explore quality learning opportunities in digital spaces, understanding Thai young people’s needs and challenges in that space is key to shaping sexuality education digital initiatives that align with their demands and preferences.

In complement to the above, and with the current position of CSE in Thai formal education, there is opportunity to expand access to sexuality education teaching and learning content through digital platforms and learner-centred, interactive approaches that are enabled by information and communication technologies (ICTs). Capacity building of teachers with knowledge and skills that allow them to engage with sexuality education in digital spaces and

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1 For the purposes of this work, digital spaces are defined as websites, chat rooms, social media platforms as well as messaging platforms that are not online. Traditional media such as radio, print, television are not included.
make use of digital platforms and tools is critical, more so in the current context of COVID-19 that requires flexible learning approaches. However, understanding the needs and challenges faced by teachers in bringing together online and offline learning, including for a blended teaching approach, and the complementary needs and challenges of learners, needs first to be investigated and discussed.

2. Nature of Consultancy

Through a mix of desk review and primary data collection among key stakeholders in Thailand, such as teachers and learners, the institution/organization will conduct a situation assessment that:

(i) addresses outstanding evidence gaps on the nature of young people’s engagement with digital sexuality education spaces in Thailand;

(ii) generates new data on this theme from among teachers; and,

(iii) makes recommendations for capacity building efforts in the education sector for expanding access to innovative teaching and learning on sexuality education.

3. Work Assignment:

Under the authority of the Director of UNESCO Bangkok Office, the direct supervision of the Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education, and the Regional Advisor for HIV and Health Education, the institution/organization is expected to carry out the following tasks:

i. Support obtaining ethical research clearance for the study

ii. Conduct a targeted desk-review of studies on digital sexuality education in Thailand

   The task involves reviewing literature on sexuality education in digital spaces relevant to Thailand and preparing a desk review report.

   While mappings of the digital sexuality education spaces in Asia already exist\textsuperscript{xy, xvii}, which include Thailand, the present review will further expand this scoping to describe any new digital sexuality education platforms emerging since the earlier 2017/2018 mapping. Particular attention will be placed on Thai-language digital sexuality education spaces. The desk review will be informed by any new data reported by digital platform moderators and owners on where Thai adolescents are going online to engage with digital sexuality education content.

iii. Carry out primary data collection (quantitative and qualitative data),

   • with Thai adolescents to investigate their engagement, practices, perceptions and preferences on sexuality education in digital spaces in Thailand.

   The following questions – among others - remain unanswered and demand further
exploration in the context of Thailand: where do young people go; how they come to the spaces that they visit; their initial motivation and what keeps them coming back; what it is they are looking for; what they would like from those digital spaces; and, their perspectives on formal education that taps into these resources for use in both in-person and remote learning modalities.

- with Thai educators to understand their current practices and perceptions on the use of digital spaces and resources for supporting classroom delivery of sexuality education in formal learning settings.

The situation assessment aims to identify and understand the opportunities for teachers to leverage digital sexuality education content, platforms and approaches for CSE classroom delivery, including through blended approaches. It also intends to search for answers on the role that Thai schools have been, or could better be playing in building young people’s digital literacy on CSE and the use of digital spaces for teacher training (including distance training modalities) and parental engagement. The target audience for data collection is comprised of Thai educators, including teachers and/or key informants in the Ministry of Education.

This task involves the design of relevant data collection instruments and approaches, in consultation with UNESCO.

In carrying out data collection activities in relation to the above task, iii, online formats for interviews, focus group discussions and surveys may be applied in favour of in-person meetings given the local situation in relation to COVID-19.

iv. **Compile and analyze quantitative and qualitative data from the various sources described above and write up a report that describes and critically assesses the situation; reflects any gaps; highlights stakeholder needs and perspectives, and proposes recommendations for UNESCO and national education partners.**

*This task involves summarizing the findings of the qualitative and quantitative data collected and drafting an analytical report for the review and feedback of UNESCO and partners. It also involves the finalization of the draft report based on the feedback provided by UNESCO.*

The final report will include results and analysis of the scoping, quantitative and qualitative data collected from Thai adolescents and educators. The situation assessment findings will be disseminated by UNESCO and partners through various, targeted channels. The findings will inform the prioritization of next steps, in particular to support education sector efforts is expanding access to innovative teaching and learning on sexuality education.
v. **Take part in all activities related to UNESCO’s overall coordination of the situation assessment during the period of the consultancy.**

*This task involves the preparation of a PowerPoint presentation of the findings of the assessment, and participation in project meetings with UNESCO and partners as required.*

The institution/organization will engage, by invitation, in discussions of the small technical advisory group of key partners and stakeholders that will be convened by UNESCO to give oversight to the situation assessment and which will operate for the duration of the project activity. The institution/organization will also lead the preparation of a PowerPoint presentation on the process and findings of the situation assessment to be presented to external audiences and will support, in dialogue with UNESCO, public presentation of the assessment’s findings in online or in-person meetings organized by UNESCO during the duration of the project activity.

In line with UNESCO’s overall gender mainstreaming strategy, the institution/organization is expected to integrate a gender perspective and apply gender analysis and mainstreaming concepts whenever feasible.

4. **Work Schedule and Expected Deliverables**

The work schedule is envisaged to comprise the following deliverables by the following due date:

i. Detailed work plan following an inception meeting with UNESCO, including methodology and timeline; maximum 5, A-4 pages; within 4 days of contract signing date

ii. **Draft desk review report**; maximum 16 pages including references and appendices; within 4 weeks of contract signing date

iii. Draft data collection instruments; within 6 weeks of contract signing date

iv. Summary results: quantitative and qualitative data from Thai adolescents; within 15 weeks of contract signing

v. Summary results: quantitative and qualitative data from Thai educators; within 17 weeks of contract signing

vi. **Draft situation assessment report**; maximum 55, A-4 pages, including references and appendices, not less than six weeks before contract end date.

vii. **Final situation assessment report and Powerpoint Presentation in English and Thai languages**; maximum 55, A-4 pages, including references and appendices, not less than three weeks before contract end date contract.

All deliverables should be submitted in the English language with the exception of the final report and PowerPoint presentation, which will both be submitted in English and Thai languages.
5. Estimated duration of the contract

August 2020 – January 2021

6. Official Travel Involved:

This consultancy may include duty travel, within the country, to facilitate data collection or attend meetings organized by UNESCO. Other workdays included in this consultancy would be based at the institution/organization’s usual place of work.

If the applying institution is located outside of Bangkok, please include travel and accommodation costs in the proposal submission related to the specific activities that may require travel.

7. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience:

**Required:**

- Advanced academic degree in a related field (preferably education, international development, public health promotion/health education);
- Experience in producing scientific reviews, academic publications and other professional written work;
- Strong skills in research methods including the development and administration of online surveys, conducting focus groups discussions with youth, and data analysis;
- Excellent analytical, writing and communication skills in both English and Thai languages.

**Desirable:**

- Previous experience working with the UN/multilateral/bilateral institutions is an asset;
- Previous work experience in Asia-Pacific and an understanding of the social and political sensitivities associated with sexual and reproductive health and CSE is preferred;
- Familiarity with Thailand education system (formal and non-formal) is an advantage.

8. Eligibility

The consultancy is open to suitably qualified institutions/organizations.

9. Application

Interested institutions are invited to submit the following in writing:

a. a short (3-5 pages) proposal outlining the approach to carrying out the work, including budget/consulting fees expressed as a lump sum, relevant examples of successfully undertaking such assignments and sample of technical writing in keeping with the expectations of the assignment
b. CV of the individual(s) that will lead this assignment.

c. A cover letter with contact information stating expression of interest in the assignment.
Your email application should be submitted no later than **15 July 2020, 17h00 Bangkok time (GMT +7:00)** to the attention of:

Chief, IQE Section
UNESCO Bangkok Office
E-mail: iqe.bgk@unesco.org

Subject line: Thailand Situation Assessment of Sexuality Education in Digital Spaces

*Only short-listed proposals will be contacted.*

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