TERMS OF REFERENCE

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDEANCE FOR LOCAL HOSTING OF THE CSE ONLINE COURSE FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

As part of the ESA Ministerial Commitment for scaling up Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the region, UNESCO, UNFPA, Johns Hopkins University/HC3 and the Foundation for Professional Development have collaborated to design an in-service teacher training course. Ministries of education from across 21 ESA countries and the SADC and EAC Secretariats are key partners in the course. The online course is currently hosted and implemented by the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) and Medical Practice Consulting (MPC) under the leadership of FPD.

This online training course on sexuality education was designed for teachers in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region who have the responsibility for teaching Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) to learners. Specifically, the online course was created to contribute to the following regional outcomes:

• Increased number of teachers in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region who are qualified to teach sexuality education;
• Strengthened capacity of ministries of education to provide education and training for teachers to teach sexuality and HIV education lessons in the classrooms;
• Improved quality of school-based sexuality and HIV education programs – evidence informed and effective to reduce risky behaviours amongst school-going youth; and
• Improved learner knowledge and health-seeking behaviours for sexual and reproductive health and rights achievement and related life skills.

BACKGROUND

Over the last decade, countries in the East and Southern African (ESA) region have taken major strides towards the development and incorporation of life skills education (LSE) and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in their school curricula. These strides have been made to counter the threat of HIV and other STIs, and to help protect girls against early and unintended pregnancy, provide the necessary skills to develop effective decision making and communication skills, explore values and attitudes and be made aware of risk reduction skills.

Evidence shows that effective comprehensive sexuality education programmes consistently increase student knowledge about HIV and other health issues, delay age of sexual debut, and increase use of contraception including condoms by young people. Effective HIV and sexuality education requires the capacity and guidance of highly skilled and motivated educators. The International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (UNESCO, 2018) argues, for example, that these teachers need appropriate training, skills in the use of participatory methods and ongoing support. The UNFPA Operational Guidance for Comprehensive Sexuality Education: A Focus on Human Rights and Gender (2014) articulates that effective CSE calls for an explicit mainstreaming of gender throughout all aspects of CSE and a focus on sexual and reproductive rights as components of human rights. This means that young
people have a right to scientifically accurate information, bodily integrity and a right to access sexual and reproductive health services.

School settings provide an important opportunity to reach large numbers of young people with sexuality education before they become sexually active, as well as offering an appropriate structure within which to do so systematically over time. Teachers remain central to the process given their critical role in delivering sexuality education and with the right knowledge, skills and comfort levels for effectively delivery of sexuality education helps to ensure that learners receive accurate and age-appropriate information. This information guides the learners through adolescence and enables them to make responsible decisions that impact their current and future sexual and reproductive health and overall well-being.

This online course, therefore, was developed as an accessible resource to support the training of teachers and other educators to deliver school-based sexuality education in East and Southern Africa. For many countries in the ESA region, the capacity and performance of teachers in delivering comprehensive sexuality curricula remains a significant implementation challenge. Sexuality-related topics can be culturally and religiously sensitive. Teachers may live and work in areas that require a great deal of travel and resources in order to obtain professional development and support. If teachers are to empower the young people in their care with the potentially life-saving knowledge, they will need to be competent and comfortable to deliver the information that life skills based comprehensive sexuality education offers. The course was created online to be as accessible to as many educators in the ESA region as possible.

WHY AN ONLINE COURSE FOR CSE?

This learning approach:

- allows flexibility for different learning styles, including the various generational learning styles,
- is self-directed and empowers learners to take ownership for their learning in the workplace,
- is more interactive,
- allows learning to be broken down into nuggets that can be accessed on demand, and
- streamline the learning process to minimize learners’ out of duty station time.

WHO IS THIS COURSE FOR?

This course targets teachers and other educators across Eastern and Southern Africa who need to obtain or update their knowledge and related skills on comprehensive sexuality education, and who are actively involved or intend to be involved in the delivery of sexuality education in the region.

THE OVERALL COURSE GOAL

The overall course goal is to support effective implementation of life skills based/life orientation curriculum by equipping teachers with knowledge and skills related to the delivery of age appropriate, human rights and gender-based-comprehensive sexuality education in schools through the use of ICTS.
**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the online course, the teachers and educators should be able to:

- Provide accurate information and knowledge on sexuality education, its importance and benefits;
- Acknowledge how personal values, beliefs, biases can influence the teaching of sexuality education and the importance of not asserting one's beliefs and biases onto learners;
- Use the knowledge and skills acquired to deliver an effective life skills-based sexuality education in participatory, culturally sensitive and age-appropriate ways.

**COURSE DURATION**

The online course can be accomplished in about 40 hours depending on the pace of the participant which is an equivalent of 4 -5 days. Participants are however not allowed to undertake the course for more 3 months from the time they have been enrolled on the course.

**CURRENT COURSE MODALITIES**

Initially, the course was administered mainly through distance learning, where teachers could take in in the comfort of their environment. But as the course was rolled out, it became clear that completion rates were significantly low, and teachers faced challenges such as lack of access to computers and internet. The modality was then tweaked, and teachers would be asked to convene in person at one place, go through some value clarification, be provided with computers and internet, be assisted with registering for the course, and also be given an opportunity for teach-backs. Currently, the course consists of three main learning components, namely the face to face component, the distance learning, and the mentorship and support supervision component.

a) **The face to face component:** this component is undertaken at the start of the course and towards the end of the course for one day.
   a. At the start of the course face to face sessions focus on introducing the course and providing all information related to the course, the course delivery methodology and rationale for undertaking the course. This session is expected to boost the participants’ confidence towards undertaking and also ensure that participants have logged in to the course. The first to face sessions also focus on norms clarification to help participants identify and challenge their own biases and stereotypes
   b. At the end of the course, another face to face session is held to focus on the review of participants’ progress, provide participants an opportunity to process the content acquired and well provide participants an opportunity to apply effective teaching methods for CSE through ‘teach backs’.

b) **The online learning component:** This is large component of the programme and then the assessment component that examines the knowledge and personal experiences acquired by the learners. The online education component can be completed 100%. It gives teachers an opportunity to study at their pace (but within the stipulated time-frame). Expert resource is available in the premises for support, and FPD assigns remotely who assists with troubleshooting any ICT related challenges. The online component is accompanied by a printed version of the content which also includes samples of the scripted lesson plans.

c) **Mentorship and support supervision:** the component of support supervision remains a critical and integral part of the online course towards supporting teachers in utilizing effectively the knowledge and skills acquired. It is therefore recommended that each teacher that has completed the online
course becomes part of the **Regional Learning Platform**, where they can access and share information and lessons with others. The platform also offers an opportunity for teachers and CSE experts to share lessons from different countries. It is functionally a community of practice on CSE.

**ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT**

Since the beginning, the course has been hosted and administered centrally (at regional level) by FPD, with support from UNESCO and UNFPA. It however has become clear that hosting the course centrally is not sustainable and not easily implementable at the country level. UNESCO and UNFPA have received interest from countries, for them to independently host and administer the course from their respective countries. This means that a country would identify an institution with the capacity and IT infrastructure to host the online course and be able to deliver it to teachers.

In this vein, UNESCO is seeking the services of an Information Technology (IT) or online learning Specialist to study the architecture of the current course hosted by FPD, and make recommendations for the decentralized hosting of the course to countries.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY**

- Study the current CSE Online Course being hosted by FPD
- Provide requirements for hosting the course by any institution, highlighting the required IT infrastructure and necessary support. The infrastructure must include a functionality where data for enrollment and completion is centralized to ensure real-time reporting of numbers
- Explore requirements to make the online course an accredited examinable course within the host institution’s structure

**DELIVERABLES**

- A report indicating the minimum requirements necessary for hosting the course at an institution. The report should include but not be limited to details about the IT infrastructure, internet requirements (bandwidth, speed), server requirements, website standards, real-time data tracking functionality and human resource expertise
- A cost estimation for hosting the course, bearing in mind that the course content is already available.
- The analysis should be balanced between east and southern Africa, that is, include countries from both regions.

**REQUIRED EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATION**

- Consultant must have an advanced degree in computer science, information technology or other related field
- Must have experience working on an online course of a similar nature
- If the consultant is an institution, the lead consultant must possess the above

Interested consultants should send a cover letter, CV, proof of previous work, and a costed work plan for this assignment to d.cheta@unesco.org no later than 13 March 2020.