

Ministry of Education /OAS

Revision of the Early Childhood Curriculum in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)

Terms of Reference

Background and Introduction

Research has well document that the education of the young mind is an important step in preparing the child for readiness skills and the curriculum plays a pivotal role in facilitating this process. However, a number of problems have surfaced over the past years with regards to the curriculum being used in the Early Childhood Centres in St Vincent and the Grenadines. The fact that over 90% of the preschools are privately owned and operated has resulted in the lack of uniformity in the curricula that are used. Some persons use internet sources to teach while others rely heavily on the past curriculum which has been in existence for over 15 years.

The Ministry of Education is cognizant that this curriculum is heavily teacher-directed and does not lend itself to the use of technology or the project based approaches in the early years. As a result, some preschoolers who transit into the primary schools lack the readiness skills that are required for this level. Consequently, the repetition rate in Kindergarten has generated cause for concern. While the current materials and curricula have many commendable traits, there is need for a curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of the Vincentian child in the 21st Century. This can be done by examining the past curriculum and extracting the pertinent areas that can be combined with the current trends in early childhood education to create an emergent curriculum.

There are currently one hundred and thirty 130 preschools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines; only eleven (11) of these are owned and operated by the

government. Over 60% of the preschool teachers are not formally trained in Early Childhood Education and less than 10% have degrees in the related field.

Exposure to a new curriculum will enable the preschool teachers to become au-fait with the current trends in early childhood education and upgrade the methodologies used in the early learning settings.

In this regard, the OAS/Ministry of Education is seeking technical assistance to undertake the restructuring of the Pre-Primary Curriculum in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Objective

The consultant will create a unified, project-based and student-centred curriculum that effectively integrates ICTs in Early Childhood Education.

Scope of Services

- Obtain copies of Pre-Primary Curricula used in 5 OECS countries – (Dominica, St Lucia, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts Nevis) with whom networking will be done
- Network with OECS countries about the Pre-Primary Curriculum used in Early Childhood Education in their individual countries
- Review Pre-Primary curricula used in OECS countries
- Produce a first draft of ECE Curriculum
- Train 25 teachers to pilot the drafted curriculum
- Hold consultations with relevant stakeholders to discuss the findings of the drafted curriculum
- Conduct training with 25 teachers to create the final draft of the revised curriculum
- Produce final curriculum document
- Present the final curriculum

Methodology

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the consultant will develop a revised Pre-Primary Curriculum which will enable preschool teachers to upgrade the methodologies used in the early childhood learning settings.

Specifically, the consultant will:

- Network with other OECS countries about curricula used in Early Childhood Centres (using SKYPE or similar applications)
- Undertake a study of other curricula used in the 5 OECS countries (Antigua/Barbuda, St Lucia, St Kitts Nevis, Dominica and Grenada) to examine the current trends and practices in the region
- Hold a one-week consultation to revise the current Pre-Primary Curriculum using local facilitators and a combination of preschool teachers, primary teachers and other stakeholders in education, non-governmental organizations, Ministry of Health and Ministry of National Mobilization
- Produce the first draft of the curriculum
- Present the document to key stakeholders for input and validation
- Deliver Training workshop for 25 teachers to pilot the curriculum
- Undertake a 2- day consultation to discuss the findings of the drafted curriculum
- Deliver a one week workshop with 25 preschool teachers to create the final draft of the revised curriculum
- Conduct meetings with key stakeholders on the final draft of the revised curriculum
- Facilitate a one week training workshop in using the newly crafted curriculum

Duration

The assignment will run for 40 days over a 12 month period

Key Output and Deliverables

The assignment is schedule to be undertaken between the periods May 2019- April 2020. The key activities of the assignment and the expected outputs are detailed in Table 1 below

The consultant is expected to produce the following key outputs and deliverables:

- a) The first draft of the revised curriculum
- b) The final draft of the revised curriculum

Activity	Outputs/Deliverables	Timeframe
1. Networking with other OECS countries	Report on current curriculum practices being used in the OECS region	May – June 2019
2. One week consultation to revise pre-primary curriculum	First draft of the pre-primary curriculum prepared	June 2019
3. One week training workshop to equip teachers with the skills needed to implement the curriculum	25 teachers trained to pilot the curriculum	July 2019
4. Piloting the drafted curriculum in 25 preschools in 13 districts in St Vincent and the Grenadines	Report on discussion with preschool supervisors and other staff members on the success of the document	September 2019 – November 2019
5. 2 day consultation to discuss the findings of the drafted curriculum	Provision of feedback from 25 preschool teachers on the drafted curriculum and observers	December 2019
6. One week workshop with 25 preschool teachers to create the final draft of the revised curriculum	Training for 1 week in using the newly crafted curriculum	January 2020
7. Develop final draft	Final report and Preprimary Revised curriculum	February 2020

Institutional and Implementation arrangements:

- The Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation and Information is the executing agency. The consultant will work under the direction of the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation and Information
- Technical Assistance will be executed through the Senior Project Officer, Ministry of Education National Reconciliation and Information
- The Focal Point Ms Ethny Williams Senior Education Officer(Ag) Early Childhood Department will assist in coordinating arrangements for consultations, piloting curriculum and group meetings
- The Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation and Information (Early Childhood Department) will be responsible for making logistical arrangements for the consultations and workshop training.

Qualifications and Experience

The Consultant shall possess:

- At least a Master's degree in Curriculum Development; training in Early Childhood Education will be an asset
- At least two years experience in undertaking consultancy
- Excellent organizational and communication skills
- Experience as a trained teacher in classroom teaching at the Pre K or K – 2 grades will be an asset
- Fluency in English is essential with excellent writing and verbal skills