

Call for Concept Notes

Revive and expand the functions of youth centres in youth skill and career development in the Maldives.

Introduction

As part of its Promoting Resilience in the Maldives (PRIME) program, Transparency Maldives invites Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) registered in the Maldives to submit Concept notes for grants to develop and implement projects to work with youth centres to strengthen their capacity in providing career guidance, skill development and vocational training.

Background

PRIME is a four-year program aiming to build the resilience of vulnerable populations and at-risk groups such as youth, men and women alike in order to create an atmosphere for young people to grow into being contributing citizens of the Maldivian society. The program includes both preventive and rehabilitative interventions targeting youth in general as well as targeted rehabilitative interventions for youth at risk who are excluded and/or participated in criminal activities and or anti-social behavior.

Unemployment and underemployment of youth are one of the key drivers that make youth vulnerable to substance abuse, gang violence, violent extremism and radicalization (*Youth Vulnerability in the Maldives*, UNDP 2019). The lack of job opportunities in the outer atolls to cater to the hundreds of youths entering the job market every year and the mismatch between the education system and the limited scope of the labor market results in a large percentage of youth who are neither in employment or in training. Absence of targeted career guidance, skills development and vocational training within the education system means many out of school youth lack the necessary skills needed to access the limited entrepreneurial opportunities available. Over dependence on tourism industry and lack of investment in developing other creative industries that interest youth coupled with low wages and limited access to investment opportunities has created a national phenomenon of “voluntary unemployment” amongst the youth.

Limited educational and employment opportunities in the outer islands have led to youth and families migrating to the Greater Male region at a young age to pursue education and employment. While youth in outer islands struggle to find employment closer to home, several young people living in Male’ are struggling to make ends meet in the expensive capital city. With the high rate of internal migration within the country in search of opportunities, youth often find themselves isolated and disconnected from their communities making them more vulnerable to bad neighbourhoods, delinquent friends, drug use, negative subcultures such as gangs, gang recruitment, glamorization of gang activity, drug use and violence through media and radicalization.

Furthermore, more recent changes in political environment including political polarization, lack of youth representation and inclusion in the democratic process, widespread corruption, favoritism, and patronage, have further led to widespread disillusionment that discourage youth to seek employment and are often driven towards crimes to make ends meet. Once they are in the system, it remains a

blotch on their record, and end up being sucked into the vicious circle of despondency. This stigmatization leads to increased isolation, social distress, and difficulty finding job. Reintegration and rehabilitation pathways are still extremely limited and remains a challenge for incarcerated youth making them targets radical groups capitalize upon.

The gender dimension of these issues and challenges faced by women are also noteworthy. Despite the progress the country has made in gender equality, systemic and traditional/cultural demands of a patriarchal society continue to hinder active participation of women in employment. The traditional care taker's role of women and the lack of supportive services such as affordable day care, force women to leave or take a break from their careers. Over dependence on tourism and its work model, have vastly excluded women in this dominant economic sector. Furthermore, mostly men being employed in resorts, women bear disproportionate burden of raising children. Due to these challenges women are mostly employed in informal sector with little security and limited access to finance and resources. Lack of women representation, inclusion and participation continue to marginalize girls and women making them susceptible to be victims of child abuse, domestic violence, and harassment. Hindered empowerment and agency and economic dependency could also make girls and women vulnerable to violent extremism.

The PRIME program's **Objective 3 include: Improving career prospects and employment opportunities for youth vulnerable to violent extremism.** As such, it aims to address issues of un-and underemployment of youth. Interventions under this objective aims to conduct targeted activities designed to improve the employment opportunities of youth such as career guidance, skill development and vocational training.

Under **sub-objective 3.2, Revive and expand youth centres to address issues of un-and-underemployment and other drivers of VE**, the functions of youth centers will be expanded and strengthened in coordination with Ministry of Youth, Sports & Community Empowerment, and other relevant stakeholders in areas of skill development. The existing facilities are limited to avenues where youth gather to engage among themselves and play sports. Often the facilities lack funds and professional counsellors and mentors to coach the youth. The scope of this funding opportunity will be expanded to provide career guidance, especially for youth who are out of school and without jobs.

To ensure sustainable partnerships within the communities and to encourage CSO involvement, inclusion, and partnership in building community resilience and social cohesion; programs under the grant will be implemented through CSOs.

Scope

Projects can include (but are not limited to) those that aim at:

1. Building specific skills needed to increase employability in the job market.
2. Building CSOs capacity to develop and implement programs in youth skill and career development
3. Strengthening capacity of youth centres through:

- Life skills facilitators training programs through activity-based youth engagement to promote positive behaviour change.
- Peer educators' content and facilitators training program
- Skill Bridging/Skill development programs (photography, graphic design, short film making etc.)
- Capacity development of volunteers registered in the National Volunteers Program
- Career guidance facilitators training

4. Targeted activities conducted for at-risk youth (for eg: youth out of school, without jobs, involved in risky behaviors) in order to build capacity and skills.

Target Beneficiaries:

- Youth centres, including other similar infrastructures targeted at youth.
- Youth at risk of VE, more specific targets include school dropouts, youth who are out of school, unemployed, university students, and young mothers. The project's specific age groups of focus include youth aged 12 to 17, and young adults aged 18 to 34. Equal gender representation between boys and girls, men and women will be strived for in all activities.

Target Reach:

- Location: Greater Male' area, Addu City, Fuvahmulah City, Kulhudhufushi City. Additional locations with justifications on the relevance of the project can be considered.
- Beneficiaries
 - Direct and indirect beneficiaries: Reach at least 100 youth (aged 12 – 17, young adults ages 18-34) through different program interventions.

Grant Value: minimum USD 8,000 – maximum USD 11,000 per grant

Grant Duration: 12 – 24 months

Eligibility Criteria for CSOs

CSOs shall meet the following criteria to be eligible to participate in this program:

- Must be a registered Civil Society Organization (CSO) of the Maldives under the Ministry of Youth, Community Empowerment and Sports.
- Must have at least a basic accounting and reporting system in place.
- Currently active in the community with existing programs
- Commitment and flexibility to work in partnership with TM
- Credibility and proven relevant experience
- Must not have affiliations with a religious or political party, and must not utilize funds for religious or political purposes
- Must NOT subgrant the funds to a third party
- Must not be a government entity or a politically elected individual/entity, or an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO).
- Must demonstrate an ability to manage funds and have a designated person to manage finances of this grant.

- Must submit a completed application (as explained below) including all requested supporting information

Concept Note Application

Concept Notes can be submitted in English or Dhivehi, should not exceed five pages in length and must include the following:

- **Project Description:** Project rationale, objectives (Concept note should highlight how the planned program will contribute towards achieving the project’s sub-objective 3.2, objective 3 and hence contributes towards the attainment of the overall goal of the project) and briefly explain the outcomes, outputs and activities. Specify the target locations and beneficiaries of the project with justification. Highlight the sustainability strategy of the planned program together with the summarized estimated budget.
- **Organization's profile:** Name of the organization, year of establishment, brief information on history and mission of the organization (please provide details of formal registration under local or national authorities).
- **Relevant experience:** Description of prior work relevant to working with vulnerable groups, geographical working areas (May provide supporting documents if any).
- **Organizational capacity:** Number of staff, staff expertise and physical resources, organization's technical competence, prior history managing donor funds, governance (details of board members) and finance structure, and accomplishments to date. If applicable, please submit most recent audit and or annual reports. Include organigram for the implementation and management of this award. Include organigram for the implementation and management of this award.
- **Details of Focal Point:** Contact information of person responsible for the concept note including email address, postal address, phone number and web address, if available.

Concept Note Process

Concept notes will enable Transparency Maldives to select local CSO best placed to support and achieve the program objectives set out above. Transparency Maldives will review and reach out to selected CSOs. Those CSOs not selected will also be notified via email.

The following tentative schedule will apply to this concept note, but it may change in accordance with Transparency Maldives’ needs or unforeseen circumstances. Changes will be communicated by email to all CSOs.

Timeline

Event	Date
Grant Application stage 1	
Release of Concept Note	2 May 2021
Information session for interested CSOs	10 May 2021
Workshop on Developing Successful Concept Notes	17-18 May 2021

Questions from CSOs due	23 May 2021
Answers from Transparency Maldives - Answers will be provided in the online document here	27 May 2021
Deadline for Concept Note Submission	9 June 2021
Evaluations completed	10-22 June 2021
Successful applicants informed	24 June 2021
Grant Application stage 2 (Applicable to successful applicants only)	
Successful applicants develop the full proposal	25 June -15 July 2021
Final deadline to submit the full proposal	16 July 2021
Evaluation of the full proposal and donor approval	27 July 2021
Award the Grant	1 August 2021

***Concept note is the first stage of the grant application process. Shortlisted listed applicants will be informed and given 3 weeks to develop their concept notes into full project proposals. Successful grant applicants will be informed within 2 weeks after receiving full proposals. DO NOT submit full proposals at this stage.**

Selection Criteria

Evaluation criteria for Concept Note	100%
<p>Technical</p> <p>The proposed project description in the Concept Note will be assessed based on following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevance of proposed activity to the scope of the Concept Note - Clear strategy proposed to achieve the outputs and outcomes of the proposed project. - An effective approach to engaging key stakeholders - The sustainability of the project - Plan on ensuring gender equality (if applicable) 	50%

- Proposed use of different/ wide range of advocacy tools types of advocacy tools.	
Management and Staffing Capacity of the applicant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management structure, staffing and resources are adequate for implementation and results oriented management of the project. - The team demonstrates sound experience in successfully implementing similar donor funded projects in the Maldives. - Demonstrated ability to disburse project funds on time - Documents such as audit and annual reports are in order. 	20%
Past Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The applicant has successfully managed and implemented community-based projects in areas relevant to the scope of Concept Note. 	15%
Cost Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Cost, flexibility and transparency of applicant's financial application. 	15%

Deadline

Deadline for the submission of concept notes is 4pm on 9 June 2021. Concept Notes should be emailed to:

grantsmaldives@transparency.mv copied to shaziya@transparency.mv

Questions for clarification can also be forwarded to grantsmaldives@transparency.mv before 4pm, 25 May 2021.