

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## Survey of ICT and Education in India and South Asia

### Background:

In particular, there is a requirement for clearer guidance on how to help countries in using ICTs to meet internationally agreed goals. These include:

- the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of achieving universal primary education and eliminating the gender disparity in education by 2015; and
- the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) goals of connecting all schools and adapting curricula to the challenges of the Information Society by 2015.

With the objective of bridging this gap in the shortage of policy guidance on the use of ICTs for education, *infoDev* is commissioning a series of regional surveys of ICT and Education. The regional study for Africa was completed in 2007 (see: <http://www.infodev.org/en/Project.7.html>) and for the Caribbean in 2008 (see: <http://www.infodev.org/en/Article.336.html>). This survey, of ICT and Education in India and South Asia, will be the third in the series which should eventually cover all developing regions.

In South Asia, as in the other regions surveyed, there is no up-to-date and comprehensive documentation of what is actually happening in this area. Although there are a growing number of initiatives, for instance in the use of low-cost computer devices in education, there is a lack of evaluation of their impact. This has negative repercussions:

- *Lack of information impacts planning.* Anecdotal evidence suggests that many countries and donor agencies are struggling to keep track of ICT/education projects development projects over which they have no control and about which they often have little knowledge so that the lessons learned from these projects -- let alone their existence -- can inform strategy and planning related to ICT use in education going forward. Many private sector firms and civil society organizations with an interest in supporting education programmes and technology initiatives in South Asia (especially where such projects may intersect) have expressed similar frustrations.
- *No consolidated information resource.* Much relevant data collection has already occurred, but the results are scattered across a number of publications and databases (many of which are not widely known), held within individual organizations, not easily accessible to the education community, out-of-date, or, where public, not widely disseminated. Examples of useful resources in this area include the GeSCI/CSDMS (2009) study [\*Towards a national policy on ICT in school education in India\*](#), World Bank (2007) publication [\*The knowledge\*](#)

[economy and education and training in South Asia](#), the UNESCO Institute of Statistics [Global Education Digest](#), the work of UNESCO's Bangkok office including the [Metasurvey on the use of Technologies in Education in Asia and the Pacific](#). (2004) and [Asia-Pacific: Seeking innovative practices in ICTs and Education](#) (2008), Sally Berman's (2008) article on [ICT-based distance education in South Asia](#), or the Asia Policy Forum Report (2007) on [ICT integration in education](#).

- *Need for coordination.* Conversations with colleagues at a number of organizations -- donors, governments, civil society, universities, and the private sector -- interested in ICT and education issues in South Asia suggest that many are contemplating similar or related types of data collection efforts in this area. As part of its support for activities outlined in this Terms of Reference, *infoDev* is seeking to identify and collaborate with interested groups to help coordinate some of the data collection activities (where feasible) and share the resulting data as widely as possible. While different organizations have different objectives in collecting such data to serve various constituencies, it may make sense to coordinate efforts in certain areas, and *infoDev* is willing to help lead such coordination efforts. At a minimum, this should help prevent duplication of efforts, as well as 'survey fatigue' on the part of potential information sources 'on-the-ground'. The results of the survey will be publicly available, via the *infoDev* website.

This project seeks to gather together in a single resource the most relevant and useful information on ICT in education activities in India and South Asia. It is envisioned that data collected as part of this survey process can help to form a set of baseline data, against which future survey work and research could be compared. This data can be combined with data from other regions already surveyed or to be surveyed to help form a global database of information related to ICTs in education in developing regions.

### **Scope of work:**

**In general, this study will explore answers to the following basic questions:**

- How are ICTs currently being used in the education sector in India and South Asia, and what are the strategies and policies related to this use, notably best practices in policy and school case studies?
- What are the common challenges and constraints faced by South Asian countries in this area?
- What is actually happening on the ground, and to what extent are donors involved?

### **More specifically:**

The survey should result in an **overall report** as well as a **series of country studies** for each of the eight countries in the South Asia region. In the special case of India, it is

proposed that, in addition to the overall case, a series of detailed studies of individual states will be developed (say, at least five) to give a representative flavour of local developments. A similar approach may be followed in Pakistan. In addition, the report and case studies should be complemented by a series of **thematic essays** on topics of particular relevance to the region, such as gender, higher education, national research and education networks (NRENs) etc.

Data will be collected related to a variety of themes and could, for example, be divided into the following general categories:

- (a) General state of ICT use in education
- (b) National and regional policies & strategies
- (c) How Ministries of Education (MOEs) treat ICT issues from an internal organizational and staffing perspective (including organograms of ICT responsibilities at the MOE), as well as their inter-relations with other governmental entities (e.g., Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry with responsibility for the ICT sector, etc.), as relevant/appropriate;
- (d) Current levels of ICT access and use in the sector and the level of connectedness of schools, colleges, universities etc.
- (e) Notable initiatives and programs, including best practice case studies;
- (f) Important thematic topics, such as the development of NRENs or the treatment of gender in education;
- (g) Constraints on the use of ICT in education, including on achieving a gender balance;
- (h) Donor activities;
- (i) Use of ICTs in non-formal education and for skills development;
- (j) Other notable and relevant information (e.g. gender, literacy);
- (k) A resource base of additional information resources;
- (l) A contacts database of experts and practitioners within the region that can assist in ongoing work.

Particular note will be made of how ICTs are used in education at various levels of an education system, namely:

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Tertiary or Higher education
- Vocational education

Where information about ICT use to facilitate lifelong learning, distance learning and non-formal education is available, this should be included as well.

**Important additional information:**

- It is expected that this survey will encompass and be relevant to both the "ICTs in education" and "distance education" communities (the lines between which are rapidly blurring).
- ICTs are to be broadly defined, covering the computing, telecommunications and broadcasting sectors (see the definition of the Sector in the OECD (Rev. 2007) "Guide to the Information Economy", available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/49/17/38217340.pdf>.)
- In 2003-2004 UNESCO-Bangkok completed work on a landmark *Metasurvey on the use of Technologies in Education in Asia and the Pacific* (available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001422/142239e.pdf>) including country case studies. *infoDev* proposes to use this survey and the related survey collection methodology, as a baseline and a rough methodology for its data collection activities.
- The data collected will be synthesized and published online, free of charge, to serve as a general 'international public good'. It is expected that these data could serve as an important resource for a variety of follow-on studies and work.

The **primary audience** for this study are policy-makers in the countries of the region and their partners in donor agencies. However, the study's exploration of issues related to the use (and misuse) of ICTs in Education should be of great interest to a broader audience; in developing countries that are pursuing the Education For All agenda and similar goals, as well as those pursuing large scale investments in ICTs in their educational systems.

This study is one in a series of publications for policy-makers commissioned by *infoDev* focusing on issues related to the appropriate use of ICTs in education to help countries meet the Millennium Development Goals. More information about other publications in this series is available at <http://www.infodev.org/education>.

### **Fixed Budget selection**

The Consultant, to be chosen through a fixed budget selection, is expected to include a team of experts in the area of ICT use in education. Key staff will include personnel with demonstrated expertise and at least five years' experience working with ICTs in developing countries, including demonstrated knowledge of, and experience with, working with ministries of education, NGOs and the private sector, and in supervising multi-country survey work related to ICT use and/or education in developing countries. Specific experience and expertise with ICT use in education in South Asia is preferred, but not required. At a minimum, the project team should include:

- Senior ICT for Education Specialist
- Education Specialist
- South Asia regional Specialist

## **Deliverables**

1. Preliminary workplan – 10 days after signature of contract with *infoDev* (“Effective Date”)
2. First Interim report, including draft thematic essays – 4 months from Effective Date
3. First draft of full survey, including thematic essays and case studies – ~6 months from Effective Date
4. Detailed listing of organizations, sources and people consulted (with contact information) – ~7 months from Effective Date
5. Review workshop – ~ 8 months from Effective Date.
6. Final version of survey – ~ 9 months from Effective Date

The consultants will also be expected to participate in a review workshop in Washington, DC (or in a regional hub, if *infoDev* and the consultants jointly agree that an alternative venue is preferable) to receive expert reactions to the draft study shortly after the submission of the draft.

## **About *infoDev***

The Information for Development Program (*infoDev* – [www.infodev.org](http://www.infodev.org)) is an international consortium of official bilateral and multilateral development agencies and other key partners, facilitated by an expert Secretariat housed at the World Bank. Its mission is to help developing countries and their partners in the international community use information and communication technologies (ICT) effectively and strategically as tools to combat poverty, promote sustainable economic growth, and empower individuals and communities to participate more fully and creatively in their societies and economies. *infoDev* pursues this mission through an integrated set of programs financed by its consortium members and administered by the *infoDev* Secretariat in active cooperation with all members and other key strategic partners, public and private. Its work is rooted in the conviction that information and communication are indispensable elements of effective and responsive institutions (including governments), markets and societies.

## **Contact Information**

Tim Kelly, *infoDev*  
1818 H Street., NW Washington, DC 20433 USA  
E-mail: [tkelly@worldbank.org](mailto:tkelly@worldbank.org)