

Description of the study request

Diagnostic Study of the Quality of Education in Nepal: past accomplishments, present situation and future scenarios - A Nordic (Finland, Norway) Perspective

1. Topic of the study

Finland's and Norway's development cooperation in Nepal dates back to the 1970s/1980s. Both countries have been active and consistently committed partners, especially in the education sector. Education and improving the quality of education, has been the main priority in Finland's development cooperation and one of key impact areas. It has also been a focus area for Norway, the only other Nordic country present at Embassy-level in Nepal and working with development cooperation. In addition to both countries sharing the same area of work, Finland and Norway are celebrating in 2023/2024 their 50 years of diplomatic relations with Nepal. 2024 will also mark 20 years of cooperation for both countries on on-budget sector support.

This commissioned study will give an overview and raise awareness of Finland's and Norway's past two decades of on-budget education sector support and cooperation with Nepal. The study should highlight key priorities that these countries have helped put on the agenda, good practices, and results on key educational outcomes. Additionally, the study should provide recommendations for Finland's and Norway's future relations in cooperation with Nepal in education development cooperation. The study shall cover both school sector education and higher education institutions' contribution to the school sector education.

As a guideline, the study should answer to the following questions:

- What has the Nordic perspective in Nepal offered? What has the added value been?
- How would an increased visibility of Nordic collaboration in Nepal look like and how can the education sector support be used for this?
- How will future Nordic collaboration continue in Nepal and what is the role of education in this regard?

The study will particularly focus on examples of the quality of education on specific topics, listed below.

1. A short overview of how Nepal's educational context has changed in the past 20 years.
2. How Finland and Norway have supported/outcomes of the work on:
 - access to education, safe and inclusive learning environment
 - quality of teaching (pedagogy) and quality of learning (learning outcomes)
 - digital (ICT integrated) education (Capacity building through higher education programmes and university cooperation)
3. Future opportunities e.g., supporting climate-smart/resilience education

Furthermore, the study will celebrate Finland's and Norway's long-term relationship with Nepal and give visibility to the work of these Nordic countries, also as part of Finland's development communications.

2. How the studies will be used

The study will be disseminated in Finland and Norway. The Ministries involved will support in making the studies known and available, especially disseminating to those embassies of Finland and Norway which have focused on education in their development cooperation.

Specifically, the policy brief 's analysis and recommendations will feed into the preparations of Norway's and Finland's next country programming in Nepal as well as future priorities and focus in education sector. The current country programme is valid until 2024 (Finland) and 2023 (Norway).

In addition, the policy brief can provide valuable information and insight for the Ministry's internal discussions (regional department, Embassy) on Nepal's LDC graduation and transition from traditional development cooperation to other forms of education cooperation in the future.

3. Expected outputs

The expected outputs consist of two deliverables:

1. The first deliverable (max 60 pages) will be a publicly available report which disseminates results and best practices on the Nordic cooperation in the Nepali education sector.
2. The second deliverable will be a short policy brief (max 10 pages) for internal use (Finnish and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassies, and government development cooperation agencies). This policy brief will look at the same topics as above but from a perspective that assesses strengths and weaknesses, which will in turn help inform future policy directions. The brief will provide some forward-looking recommendations about future needs in the sector and how the modality and support to education sector could adapt to meet these demands, considering the graduation process of Nepal.
3. A PowerPoint presentation with the main findings should be produced.

Specifically for Finland: As part of the study process, a jointly prepared stakeholder meeting/workshop should be organized, in connection with the preparations of the next Finland's country programme in Nepal and planning of future priorities in the education sector. This workshop can include future scenarios for further discussion. After the final report has been completed, another event could be organized for presenting the main findings and recommendations. This event will be limited to strategic stakeholders.

4. Approach to the study

The study is meant to be carried out as a joint collaboration where both Norway and Finland will bring own resources /research teams /institutions to work on the same objectives. The Finnish and Norwegian research teams including a local consultant shall come up with inputs to the scope and an updated methodology after the teams are selected. The updated methodology shall be presented with the Reference Group and endorsed.

In addition, Embassies will hire a local consultant to provide overall support on tasks like data collection/validation, providing contextual information and facilitating or administrating necessary field visits.

The study should include a short literature review and analysis of interviews, as well as an executive summary, recommendations and a policy brief. Literature review can include e.g. annual reports and sector plans, federal and local strategies and interview of different stakeholders in Nepal, Norway and Finland. Since the study is meant to be carried out jointly with Norway, discussions with the Embassy of Norway on the synergies with their research team is a requirement.

The study should include key milestones and overview of the education sector in the past twenty years, information about how the sector is built up and how collaboration works in the sector-wide approach. The main portion of the study will focus on the results within the four topics mentioned earlier.

5. Reporting specifics and publication

The final public study report should be prepared in English of which 40/50% should be pictures and graphs. The format should be similar to a magazine and that of "60 years of energy cooperation, Norway and Nepal". Link will be provided later.

6. Deadline of the study

Preferred due date: Preliminary results by February 2024. Final report by April/May 2024.

7. Preferred research profiles or candidates for conducting the study

A team with strong understanding of developing country contexts, development policies and development cooperation in practice. Previous experience in Nepal as well as education sector cooperation would be an asset.

8. Expected volume or work in terms of working days

60 days of expert work. Researchers are asked to estimate and propose the working time needed in their tender.

9. Reference group for the study

The reference group will be established, which will consist of the Embassies, senior advisers from both MFAs, an official from the MFA's KEO-02 unit (Finland), UniPID (Finland), a representative from Norad (Norway), and a lead researcher or coordinator of the two research teams.

10. Background information for Finland

- Finland's Country Strategy for Development Cooperation in Nepal 2012–16
- Finland's Country Strategy for Development Cooperation in Nepal 2016–2020
- Finland's Country Strategy and Country Programme for Development Cooperation in Nepal 2021–2024
- Previous commissioned study (2021): "Transition from development cooperation to other forms of cooperation - comparisons, lessons learned and recommendations for policy and action: A case of Nepal"
- All relevant material will be provided to team (Education Sector Analysis 2021, School Sector Development Plan Final Evaluation 2022 are some key latest relevant documents)

11. Background information for Norway

- Evaluation of Norway's inclusion of persons with disabilities in development cooperation, Case study from Nepal

12. Tender instructions for researchers

- Tender notice for researchers – general guidelines
- Instructions for researchers: Commissioned studies on development policy for the MFA
- For Finland: The tender shall be sent by email with its required attachments in one single PDF document to:
 - unipid-info@helsinki.fi by **4 September 2023**
 - Finland: Inquiries: **Kaisa Kurki**, e-mail: **kaisa.e.kurki@helsinki.fi**, phone: **+358 50 4621 485**