



SCALING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MALDIVES

Dr Aminath Shafiya Adam, The Maldives National University

Dr Ahmed Mohamed, The Maldives National University

Khaulath Saeed, Islamic University of Maldives

Visama Hassan, Islamic University of Maldives

Aishath Shibana, National Institute of Education, Ministry of Education

Aishath Zuhurubaan, National Institute of Education, Ministry of Education

ABOUT NORRAG

NORRAG is a global membership-based network of international policies and cooperation in education and training. In 1977 the Research Review and Advisory Group (RRAG) was established, which then founded several regional RRs, one of which became NORRAG in 1986. NORRAG's core mandate and strength are to produce, disseminate and broker critical knowledge and to build capacity for and with academia, governments, NGOs, international organizations, foundations and the private sector who inform and shape education policies and practice, at national and international levels. By doing so, NORRAG contributes to creating the conditions for more participatory, evidence-informed decisions that improve equal access to and quality of education and training.






NORRAG Global Education Centre is a centre of the Geneva Graduate Institute and is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). More information about NORRAG, including its scope of work and thematic areas, is available at www.norrag.org

 @norrag  norrag.network  vimeo.com/norrag

ABOUT THE KIX EMAP HUB


The [Global Partnership for Education \(GPE\) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange \(KIX\)](#) is a joint endeavour with the [International Development Research Centre \(IDRC\)](#) to connect expertise, innovation, and knowledge to help GPE partner countries build stronger education systems and accelerate progress toward SDG 4. There are globally four KIX Hubs or Regional Learning Partners, overseen by IDRC. The Hub functions as a regional forum within KIX. NORRAG is the Regional Learning Partner for the KIX Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific (EMAP) Hub (previously known as the KIX EAP Hub).

The KIX EMAP Hub facilitates cross-country knowledge and innovation exchange and mobilisation, learning, synthesis, and collaboration among national education stakeholders in 30+ GPE partner countries, including 9 Pacific Island States, in the EMAP region. The Hub also offers opportunities for peer learning and exchange by means of professional development and inter-country visits.

 @KIXEMAP  gpekix.org/regional-hub/kix-emap  norrag.org/kix-emap
 KIXEMAP  @KIXEMAP

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INC. (FIT-ED)

Driven by innovation, the Foundation for Innovation Technology Education Inc., a non-profit organization established in the Philippines, promotes quality and equity in learning through the three pillars of its programming: Education Transformation, Education for All, and Research and Policy Advocacy. FIT-ED is committed to helping people and communities in the Philippines and developing countries across the world to learn and innovate as it envisions an equitable and inclusive world.

 fit-ed.org

ABOUT TPD@SCALE COALITION

A collaborative effort of government agencies; international development agencies; non-governmental organizations; universities; research and policy centers; and other education and technology stakeholders engaged in teacher professional development (TPD), the TPD@Scale Coalition aims to contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4—ensure inclusive and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all—by promoting quality, equitable, and sustainable large-scale, ICT-mediated TPD through collaboration, research, and implementation support.

 tpdatscalecoalition.org

ABOUT THE KIX EMAP LEARNING CYCLES

The KIX EMAP Learning Cycles are professional development courses offered to national education experts from 30+ GPE partner countries in the Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific (EMAP) region. Teams of national experts analyse, contextualise, and produce new knowledge on policy analysis and innovations. These professional development courses allow participants to share experiences, exchange knowledge, and contribute to the strengthening of their national education systems. The Learning Cycles are also an opportunity for national experts to publish their studies and findings internationally, and disseminate them on diverse online platforms, with support from the KIX EMAP Hub.

ABOUT THE LEARNING CYCLE ON TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT SCALE (TPD@SCALE)

This case study is a result of the KIX EMAP Learning Cycle "Teacher Professional Development at Scale (TPD@Scale)". Facilitated by the TPD@Scale Coalition for the Global South, through the Foundation for Information Technology Education and Development, Inc. (FIT-ED), this course ran from 23 September until 16 December 2022. Across 11 weeks, this Learning Cycle enabled participants to examine how Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)-mediated Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programmes can be scaled through adaptation/localization for a large number of teachers to improve students' learning outcomes. 13 national teams took part in this Learning Cycle: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Maldives, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Sudan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen.



KIX EMAP Learning Cycle Case Study, January 2024

The KIX EMAP Hub is supported by



Canada



Photo by
350.org/Flickr

Published under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons licence: Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0)



All queries on rights and licenses should be addressed to

KIX EMAP Hub / NORRAG

20, Rue Rothschild
P.O. Box 1672 1211 Geneva 1
Switzerland
norrag.kix@graduateinstitute.ch

This case study is a product of the [KIX EMAP Learning Cycle: Teacher Professional Development at Scale \(TPD@Scale\)](#) with external contributions. This work was supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX), a joint endeavour with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this work do not necessarily reflect the views of the KIX EMAP Hub, NORRAG, GPE, IDRC, its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. The KIX EMAP Hub / NORRAG does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work.

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON THE AUTHORS

Aminath Shafiya Adam completed her doctorate at the University of Waikato, New Zealand in 2015. She currently works as an assistant professor at the Maldives National University. Her role involves teaching, supervising postgraduate students and managing research projects. Aminath advocates for the use of digital technology in teaching. She runs a variety of professional development sessions for in-service teachers to promote a student-centred pedagogical approach using digital technologies. Aminath is also an experienced researcher. Her current research projects include student online learning engagement, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in teaching, social media influencers, principalship and professional learning, and leadership and culture. Aminath is also actively involved in writing publications for both international and local peer-reviewed journals.

Dr Ahmed Mohamed is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, Policy and Professional Learning at the Faculty of Education at The Maldives National University (MNU). He teaches courses, leads research projects, supervises postgraduate students and serves on several committees at the university. Prior to joining the higher education sector, he worked as a school principal, an acting superintendent and a teacher. He is also a former president of the Principals' Association of Maldives. His doctoral degree research was based on leadership for teacher professional learning. His current research projects include principal professional learning communities and their cultural influence on leadership. He has published papers in high-impact journals and has reviewed papers for a number of journals. He provides consultation and professional development workshops for in-service teachers.

Khaulath Saeed is currently a lecturer and coordinator of the Faculty of Education at the Islamic University of Maldives. She has been an educator for over 20 years in various positions at the school level, including as a general science teacher and in school management as a supervisor, leading teacher and principal. She pursued her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Psychology at the University of Mysore and her Master of Education at Open University Malaysia. She is also engaged in research activities, has published several papers in local and international journals and has presented papers at various conferences. Her research areas include employability skills, education and mental health. She is currently pursuing her doctorate degree at the Management and Science University in Malaysia.

Aishath Shibana has been working in the education sector for over 29 years. She is currently working as a Senior Curriculum Analyst at the National Institute of Education. Her main responsibilities include coordinating professional development programmes for teachers in Addu City, which is the southern zone of the Maldives. She also analyses the teaching and learning of the city's schools and organises workshops and training programmes for teachers.

Aishath Zuhurubaan is a Senior Curriculum Development Analyst who works at the National Institute of Education's Teacher Resource Centre in Laamu Atoll. She has worked in the education sector for over 15 years as a teacher, leading teacher, deputy principal and school head. She provides professional support to in-service teachers in public schools and is helping implement the new curriculum. She completed her master's degree in education at Open University Malaysia in 2013 and her bachelor's degree in secondary teaching at the Maldives College of Higher Education / Malé in 2009. She also works as a part-time lecturer at the Islamic University of Maldives (IUM) and MI College and teaches teaching related to various modules.

CONTENTS

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	5
Acknowledgements	6
Executive Summary	7
Part 1. Policy Brief	9
Context and Background	9
Issues and Challenges Associated with TPD	10
Proposed Solutions and Policies	10
Areas to Prioritise in Scaling TPD	11
Part 2. Proposal for a Project to Scale Teacher Professional Development	12
Proposed Project Overview	12
Proposed Project Description	12
Deliverables	13
TPD Challenges in the Maldives	13
Approach to TPD	14
The Proposed TPD Framework	14
The Fahi Ashi Model	15
Strategies to Implement the Fahi Ashi Model	16
Some Anticipated Challenges and Risks	17
Proposed Partner Agencies and Organisations and Their Roles in Achieving the Intended Results	17
Evaluation Plan and Methods	17
Project Timeline	18
Proposed Budget	19
Conclusion	20
References	21

Figures

Figure 1. Structure of the School Education System in the Maldives	9
Figure 2. Four Layers of TPD Challenges in the Maldives	10
Figure 3. TPD-Related Challenges in the Maldives	13
Figure 4. The Fahi Ashi Model	15

Tables

Table 1. Description of 4Ts TPD Platforms	14
Table 2. Implementation Strategies and Deliverables of the Fahi Ashi Model	16
Table 3. Strategies to Manage Anticipated Challenges and Risks	17
Table 4. Proposed Partner Agencies and Organisations	17
Table 5. Evaluation Plan and Methods	17
Table 6. Project Timeline	18
Table 7. Proposed Project Budget	19

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ESP	Education Sector Plan
4Ts TPD	4Teacher platforms (Teacher MOOCs, Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy, and Teacher Professional Learning Community) Teacher Professional Development
FIT-ED	Foundation for Information Technology Education and Development, Inc.
FS	Foundation Stage
ICT	Information and communications technology
IUM	Islamic University of Maldives
KIX EAP	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Europe, Asia and Pacific (EAP)
KS	Key Stage
LKG	Lower Kindergarten
MNU	The Maldives National University
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NIE	National Institute of Education
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
SBPD	School-Based Professional Development
SDG 4	Sustainable Development Goal 4
TOT	Trainer of Trainer
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TPD@Scale	Teacher Professional Development at Scale
QAD	Quality Assurance Department
UKG	Upper Kindergarten
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We, the Maldives team members, greatly appreciate the opportunity provided by the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange Europe, Asia and Pacific (KIX EAP) team to engage in interactive and rich conversations during the Learning Cycle (LC). The LC on “Teacher Professional Development at Scale” took place between 23 September until 11 November 2022. The sessions were facilitated by Lim, Cher Ping, Kimberly Safford, Liang Min (Alex), Dr Bunlay Nith and Dr Wesley Teter. They shared their invaluable time and in-depth knowledge, allowing us to think broadly ‘outside the box’ and reflect on what type of teacher professional development would work in our own country. The continuous conversations over every session and the tasks extensively helped us reflect on and make connections with the shared knowledge by other partnering countries. The team resourcefully facilitated us in conceptualising our own teacher professional development framework for the context of the Maldives.

We would also like to acknowledge our own teamwork and collaboration, as the time invested in meetings and discussions with each other was commendable. It would not have been as productive as it was without the full commitment of each team member towards the final product. We are delighted with our knowledge product.

Finally, we would like to thank Dr Bunlay and the team for the substantial support they provided and so carefully designing the process that enabled us to collaboratively learn from each other and with other partnering country teams.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The team joined the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange Europe, Asia and Pacific (KIX EAP) Learning Cycle (LC) on teacher professional development at scale (TPD@Scale), which was offered from October through November 2023 in partnership with the TPD@Scale Coalition for the Global South, through the Foundation for Information Technology Education and Development, Inc. (FIT-ED), to examine how information and communications technology (ICT)-mediated teacher professional development (TPD) programmes can be scaled through adaptation and localisation for a large number of teachers to improve students' learning outcomes. The team from the Maldives managed to develop a knowledge product that includes a) a policy brief for a TPD@Scale model that addresses the tensions between equity, quality and efficiency within their education systems and b) a TPD scaling proposal for the Maldives.

Part 1. Policy Brief

An overview of the formal education system in the Maldives described the size of the system and the number of teachers; there were 9,835 teachers in 2022, of which 10% were untrained teachers. One challenge is that they work on geographically scattered islands that have at least one government school. The professional development (PD) policy states that every teacher has to complete 15 hours of PD training every academic year. In the Maldives, PD programmes are generally designed at the central level by the National Institute of Education (NIE), sent to the regional level through the Teacher Resource Center (TRC) and Trainer of Trainer (TOT) selected from the regional level. A school-based professional development (SBPD) coordinator at each school also plays a crucial role. However, most SBPD activities have been implemented as one-off standalone events without follow-up activities.

Challenges associated with TPD in the Maldives were identified and categorised as follows: geographical, infrastructural, organisational and pedagogical challenges. Accordingly, several policies are recommended here to improve the TPD programmes in the Maldives. One solution to the geographical problems would be to conduct TPD programmes at different times for different atolls or schools. In addition, TPD programmes could be conducted together for schools in the same region or atoll. Infrastructure, such as internet and Wi-Fi

connections, is one of the most essential requirements for any school or organisation in the twenty-first century. Providing these basic facilities should be a top priority. Similarly, schools should be provided with ICT devices and a TPD online platform, as this would enhance the equity, equality and efficiency of TPD. As for organisational challenges, TPD can be carried out separately for different subjects and fields, and programmes can be tailored to specific needs. To monitor and ensure long-term sustainability, it is critical to appoint mentors to small groups, as this can maximise efficiency and provide close monitoring. Buddy systems can allow teachers who teach the same courses to consult each other on the most successful strategies, monitor one another and provide feedback based on what they learn in TPD. Teachers should be able to set their own learning and PD goals and work towards them. Regarding pedagogical and facilitation problems, a needs assessment could be used as the basis for making plans for the programme. TPD programmes for different fields should be held at different times to solve the problem of limited space. To meet teachers' needs, it is possible to design and study programmes with rigour. The 15 hours of TPD that teachers should attend each year can be increased. Hence, TPD@Scale can be provided via a personalised technology-mediated TPD platform. The use of a personalised technology-mediated TPD platform can eliminate inequalities and enhance teachers' agency.

Part 2. Proposal for a Project on Scaling Teacher Professional Development

Based on the policy brief, the team then developed a national three-year project that targets K-12 teachers working in both private and public schools called "4Ts Online Platform for Scaling Teacher Professional Development" to be implemented in collaboration with a team of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education (MoE), Maldives, the NIE, the Quality Assurance Department (QAD), the Maldives National University (MNU), the Islamic University of Maldives (IUM) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Maldives. It is designed to offer a technology-mediated platform, using a model (4Ts TPD) composed of four sub-areas – Teacher Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Teacher Portfolio, Teacher Buddy, and Teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC) – aiming to strengthen the TPD system in the Maldives and deliver TPD@Scale by addressing

issues of equity, inclusivity, quality and efficiency, in alignment with the Education Sector Plan (2019–2023) of the Maldives and with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). It consists of seven deliverables to be delivered by 2025 and is based on the MOOC model. In contrast to current TPD programme practices in the Maldives, the new programme will be accessible to all teachers in the Maldives. The project will offer short-term courses that will allow teachers to select the most appropriate and relevant PD courses for their learning and practices. Completion of the short courses designed for TPD@Scale will contribute to the Teacher Portfolio, which is also associated with the Teacher Licensing System and is expected to be introduced in 2023 by the MoE.

PART 1

POLICY BRIEF

Context and Background

The formal education system of the Maldives is divided into six stages. The Foundation Stage (FS) includes Lower Kindergarten (LKG) and Upper Kindergarten (UKG), and the other five Key Stages range from Grade 1 to Grade 12 (K–12). Students remain in the school system from ages 4 to 18 (see Figure 1). Schooling is offered at four levels: pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and higher secondary.

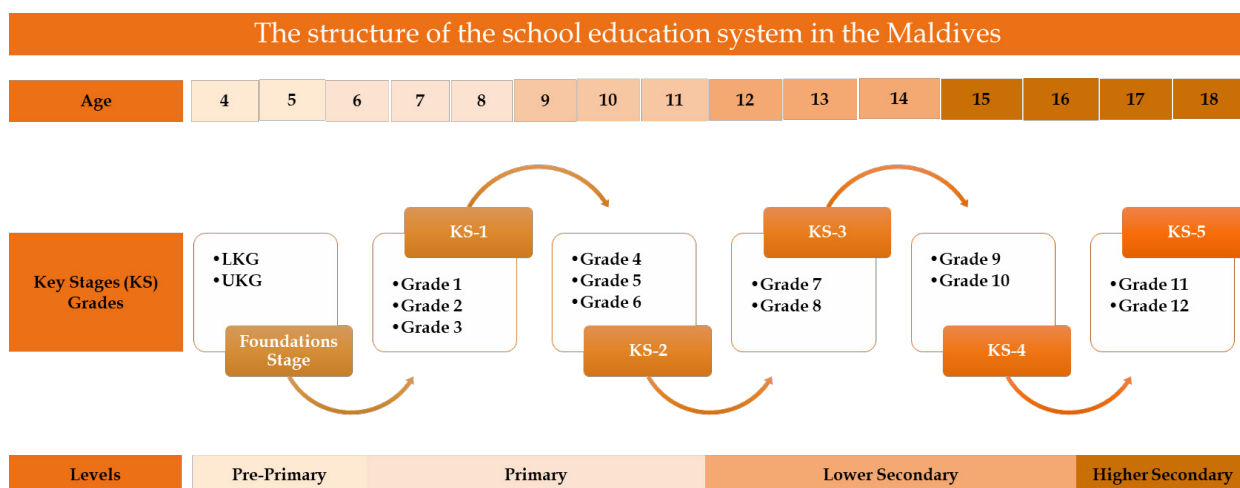
In 2022, 9,835 teachers were working in schools across the Maldives: 8,917 were trained teachers and 918 were untrained teachers (MoE, 2019). These teachers worked on geographically scattered islands with at least one government school. In the Maldives, a new national curriculum, namely the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), was rolled out in 2015 emphasising outcomes-based education (OBE).

The education sector's most recent PD policy was introduced in 2009. It implemented SBPD programmes to improve teaching and learning in schools. The PD policy states that every teacher must complete 15 hours of PD training every academic year (MoE, 2009). To facilitate this, three days each academic

calendar are allocated to this training and are counted as non-teaching days.

In the Maldives, PD programmes are generally designed at the central level by the NIE, sent to the regional level through the Teacher Resource Center (TRC) and Trainer of Trainer (TOT) selected from the regional level. The SBPD coordinator at each school also plays a significant role. Their responsibility is to conduct school-level PD based on the school's needs. The key role of the PD coordinator is to work under the guidance of the school principal to ensure the effective implementation of the SBPD policy to raise standards and improve students' learning outcomes. They also play a leading role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of PD activities conducted at the school. At the beginning of each academic year, SBPD coordinators are required to conduct a needs analysis to identify the areas in which teachers are most in need of PD training and to develop a school-based PD plan. These plans are shared with the TRC coordinator, whose role is to ensure that PD activities are conducted according to the PD policy. However, most SBPD activities have been implemented as one-off standalone events without follow-up activities.

Figure 1. Structure of the School Education System in the Maldives



Source: MoE (2013)

Issues and Challenges Associated with TPD

The team conducted a SWOT analysis and identified the following challenges and issues associated with TPD:

- Application of PD knowledge
- Personalisation
- Sustainability
- Limited space
- Limited resources
- Limited facilitators
- Predominance of traditional education
- Ineffective organisational culture related to PD
- Lack of robust teacher professional policy and strategic plans
- Difficulties in TPD timetabling
- Insufficient budget for TPD
- Lack of harmonised schemes for TPD
- Poor participation of teachers in TPD activities
- Poor planning of TPD sessions
- Limited monitoring and evaluation of TPD outcomes for schools/teachers
- Lack of connection with teachers' needs

The aforementioned challenges can be categorised into four layers (see Figure 2). The layers mentioned in the figure below will be unpacked with more discussions pertaining to specific contexts. It should also be noted that regions may differ significantly in the types of TPD challenges they face.

Figure 2. Four Layers of TPD Challenges in the Maldives



Proposed Solutions and Policies

To improve the TPD programmes in the Maldives, the problems mentioned in the previous section must be carefully examined, and the right solutions must be found. As such, the team formulated solutions and recommendations for each of the challenges identified and presents them below.

- 1. Geographic:** As the Maldives is a nation composed of over 200 inhabited islands with approximately 217 public schools, sending expertise to these islands at the same time is a challenge. A solution to this problem could be to conduct TPD programmes at different times for different atolls or schools. In addition, TPD programmes could be conducted together for schools in the same region or atoll.
- 2. Infrastructure:** The internet and Wi-Fi connections are among the most essential requirements for any school or organisation in the twenty-first century. Providing these basic services should be a priority. Similarly, ICT devices and TPD online platforms should be provided to schools in order to enhance the equity, equality and efficiency of TPD. This could also minimise challenges related to the geographical dispersion of the islands. Online TPD programmes could be effectively conducted with provision of these resources.
- 3. Organisational challenges:** TPD can be carried out based on what needs to be done. Most of the time, TPD is not conducted in schools based on a needs analysis. Therefore, TPD does not really help teachers learn much. In addition, TPD can be done separately for different subjects and fields, and programmes can be tailored to specific needs.
- 4. Monitoring for sustainability:** It is critical to appoint mentors to small groups to ensure long-term sustainability, maximise efficiency and provide close monitoring. Moreover, developing buddy systems, in which teachers in the same courses can share their successful strategies, monitor one another and provide feedback based on what they learn in TPD, will be a very effective strategy to help teachers improve. Furthermore, TPD programmes should place a stronger emphasis on outcomes rather than simply spending the time allotted. Teachers should be able to set their own learning and PD goals and work towards them.
- 5. Pedagogical challenges and facilitation:** A needs assessment could be used as the basis for planning a TPD programme. If possible, TPD programmes for different fields should be held at different times to solve the problem of insufficient space. To meet the needs of teachers, it is possible to design and study programmes with rigour. If needed, the 15 hours of TPD programmes in which teachers can participate each year can be increased.

Areas to Prioritise in Scaling TPD

Based on the solutions to the bottlenecks and challenges in the Maldives, the existing PD model needs to be transformed. Delivery of TPD@Scale by addressing issues of equity, inclusivity, quality and efficiency must be prioritised areas for scaling teacher learning and PD. The education system requires a sustainable, equitable and inclusive model that can provide teachers with high-quality and efficient PD activities via a personalised technology-mediated TPD platform. The use of a personalised technology-mediated TPD platform can narrow inequalities and enhance agency among teachers.

Developing a localised and personalised technology-mediated TPD platform in the Maldives can be an effective approach for several reasons. This platform would provide a digital learning environment with resources for many teachers working on geographically dispersed islands in the country. Additionally, this platform must be designed to cater to individual needs but with collaborative features and a collective capacity to enhance teacher interaction among them. This platform is not intended to totally replace face-to-face SBPD activities but to scale TPD to the national level with equal opportunities for every individual teacher in a range of forms: in-person, synchronous or asynchronous online. Teachers working in small schools might need more online learning opportunities than teachers working in large schools on large islands. Short courses offered on the platform should cover the depth of change necessary to support and sustain teachers' professional learning. Furthermore, open and distance learning via MOOCs, a variety of peer learning networks and collaborative communities can be integrated into the platform. Thus, it will maintain the interpersonal dimension of teacher learning. Finally, TPD programmes must be need-based, context-specific and cost-effective because different subgroups of teachers (e.g. primary school teachers and subject teachers) have different professional learning needs and transportation between different islands is expensive.

PART 2

PROPOSAL FOR A PROJECT TO SCALE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Project Overview

1. Project Details

a) Project title:

Fahi Ashi 4Ts Online Platform for Scaling Teacher Professional Development

b) Context:

Nationwide

c) Target participants:

K–12 teachers working in both private and public schools, including early childhood teachers, primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, special educational needs teachers and technical and vocational education teachers

d) Project duration:

3 years

e) Estimated project cost:

102,496 USD

2. Project Group Members and Partners

This project proposal was developed by a team of six professionals across three institutions:

- Maldives National University:** Dr Aminath Shafiya Adam and Dr Ahmed Mohamed (Assistant Professors)
- Islamic University of Maldives:** Ms Visama Hassan and Ms Khaulath Saeed (Lecturers)
- Ministry of Education:** Ms Aishath Shibana and Ms Aishath Zuhurban (Senior Curriculum Analysts)

The project will be implemented in collaboration with a team of stakeholders, including the MoE (Maldives), the NIE, the QAD, MNU, IUM and UNICEF (Maldives).

3. Project Summary

This project is designed to offer a technology-mediated platform using a model composed of four sub-areas – Teacher MOOCs, Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy, and Teacher PLC (4Ts TPD) – that aims to strengthen the TPD system in the Maldives and deliver TPD@Scale by addressing issues of equity, inclusivity, quality and efficiency. The current project is aligned with the Maldives' Education Sector Plan (2019–2023) and SDG 4, which envisions providing holistic and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all. It consists of seven deliverables to be delivered by 2025 and is based on the MOOC model, which will address existing challenges associated with TPD@Scale for this geographically dispersed country. In contrast to the current practices in TPD programmes in the Maldives, the new programme will be accessible to all teachers in the Maldives. The project offers short-term courses that will allow teachers to select the most appropriate and relevant PD courses for their learning and practices. Completion of the short courses designed for TPD@Scale will contribute to the Teacher Portfolio, which is also associated with the Teacher Licensing System and is expected to be introduced in 2023 by the MoE.

Proposed Project Description

The Education Sector Plan (ESP), in line with SDG 4, envisions 'holistic and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all' (MoE & MoHE, 2019). Policy 1.4 of the ESP makes several references to enhancing teaching and leadership quality to improve teaching and learning. The policy also highlights certain priority areas for TPD, such as strengthening pedagogical practices, knowledge of the curriculum content and formative evaluation practices. It also recommends training teachers through SBPD and ad hoc training on specific themes.

The proposed project, the 4Ts TPD, is designed with a technology-mediated TPD platform that can be used to narrow inequalities and enhance teacher agency. Professional learning mediated through technology use can potentially contribute to improving teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

Aim and Objectives: The aim of the 4Ts TPD is to strengthen the TPD system in the Maldives by delivering TPD@Scale and addressing issues of equity, inclusivity, quality and efficiency. The project objectives are as follows:

1. To develop a sustainable, equitable and comprehensive TPD model that can provide teachers with high-quality and efficient PD activities.
2. To develop a digital TPD platform embedded with Teacher MOOCs, Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy, and Teacher PLC to enhance teacher capacity, interaction and collaboration and to become reflective practitioners.
3. To establish a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teacher interaction between and across schools in different regions of the Maldives.

Deliverables

This project has the following seven deliverables to be delivered by 2025:

1. A well-structured online TPD system that focuses on equity, efficiency, quality and inclusivity.
2. A national portal that provides teachers with a TPD platform based on their needs and interests in both local and English mediums.
3. Teacher MOOCs embedded in the portal that offers high-quality TPD, devised by a range of short courses relevant to school classroom practices.

4. Design templates, guides, standards and materials for the Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy and Teacher PLC platforms.
5. A pilot training project involving 40 teachers to lay a foundation prior to full implementation of the project.
6. Improving the knowledge and skills of 3,000 teachers as a result of the project's implementation.
7. A self-monitoring and evaluation system embedded within the portal.
8. Regular stakeholder consultation and annual validation meetings.

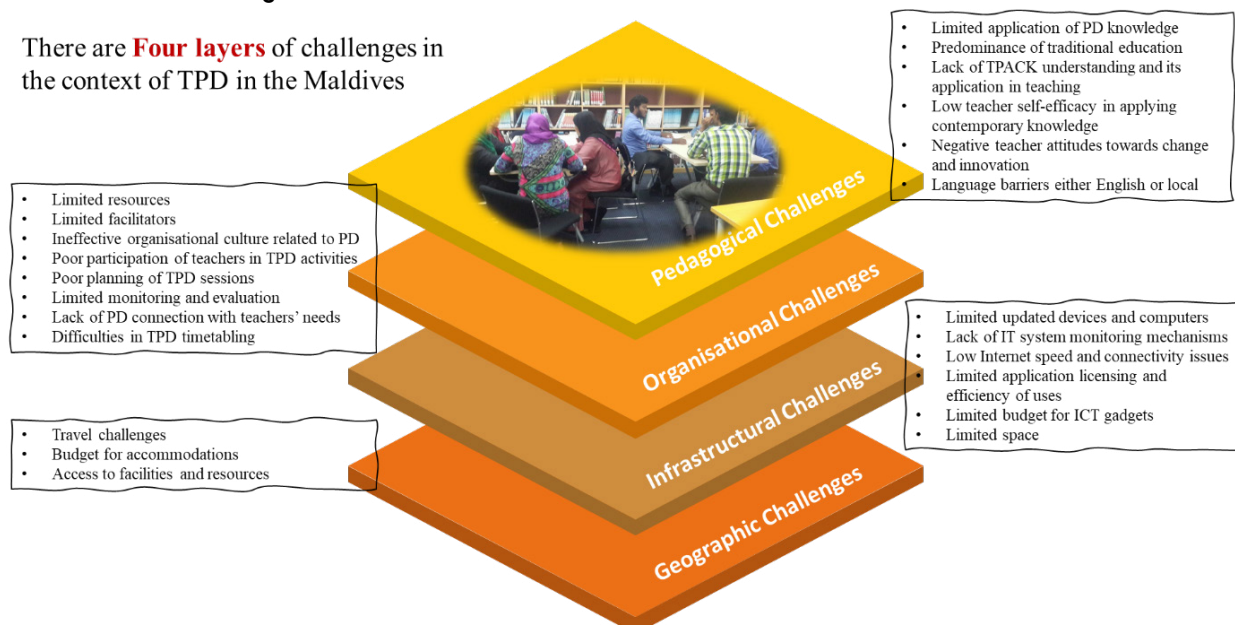
TPD Challenges in the Maldives

According to education statistics, in 2018, the total number of teachers in the Maldives was 9,540, of which 94% were trained and 6% were untrained (Education Sector Plan, 2019–2023). Most teachers are females from middle class socio-economic backgrounds. The MoE has put a lot of emphasis on upgrading knowledge and building teacher capacity. The reviews of QAD indicate that many teachers need to upgrade their content and pedagogical knowledge to deliver a competency-based curriculum. Most teachers are familiar with the use of ICT tools and are Google Certified (level 1). Since no studies have investigated teachers' attitudes towards PD, it is crucial to provide a clear picture of it. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers do not usually attend PD activities because they are passionate about learning but rather because participation is mandatory.

Over the years, PD in the education system in the Maldives has focused on improving teaching and learning in the school system. However, this has resulted in little change to teachers' pedagogical practices. The literature clearly identifies the main reason for this lack of change in the context of the Maldives: PD

Figure 3. TPD-Related Challenges in the Maldives

There are **Four layers** of challenges in the context of TPD in the Maldives



programmes are not well planned, as most of them are ad hoc and one-off sessions that do not have a clear focus based on a needs analysis of the school or teachers. The international literature widely discusses effective approaches to organising PD for teachers (Avalos, 2000; Guskey, 1999; Hawley & Valli, 2000; Kramer & Benson, 2013). These researchers have negated the idea of one-off TPD sessions that are occasionally designed for teachers without careful planning. In the school context, there is a lack of systematic planning before organising PD for teachers. Schools also fail to conduct a baseline or needs analysis to identify what type or area should be prioritised. Some researchers have discussed why a pedagogical shift or TPD can be ineffective. For example, Avalos (2000) discussed the importance of self-review or analysis of teachers' own competencies and school needs before organising PD for teachers. In the Maldives, even after two decades, the education system is still running PD programmes for teachers, with no data on the actual needs of schools or teachers. It is also worth noting that changes in teachers' pedagogical practices may not be seen due to how PD programmes are organised – i.e. without careful planning or focus. This paper proposes a framework to overcome some of the challenges that have been identified in the context of the Maldives (see Figure 3).

As seen in Figure 3, there are several multi-layered issues identified through the policy review work in the Maldives. These layers are categorised into four types of challenges. The challenges include pedagogical, organizational, infrastructural and geographic aspects, which would be closely addressed in the approach to TPD in schools.

Approach to TPD

In the proposed framework, the main approach to TPD is to offer a digital platform where teachers are provided with accessible, flexible and affordable opportunities to engage in continuous professional learning. Professional learning opportunities are offered in the form of MOOCs relevant to their

needs and the areas of specific interest required to improve their pedagogical practices. Allowing them to choose what is relevant would allow them to deliberately participate in the provided courses to improve their pedagogical practices. The main emphasis of the MOOCs will be to help teachers build their capacity to understand and enrich the subject matter and improve their pedagogical understanding. The courses will also offer teachers opportunities to use a variety of forms of learning, including in-class support and scaffolding for teacher participation in practice-related efforts. Therefore, MOOCs will not be mere online activities but rather opportunities to help teachers practice and experiment with different strategies and interventions in their own classroom practices. Furthermore, teachers will have a space in which they can compile and collate any evidence of their teaching work, and then assemble and critically reflect on their own learning. The TPD platform will also enable teachers to buddy up with another teacher who could become a critical friend and support colleagues with whom they could discuss their concerns about everyday teaching work. The platform will also open an avenue to be part of a teacher community where they can discuss their success stories, troublesome concerns, shining moments and unanticipated challenges while also sharing some possible strategies for managing and overcoming challenges. Overall, the platform would constitute a pathway to becoming a reflective practitioner by being part of a PLC where they can discuss subject-related matters or other pedagogical issues involving their everyday work.

The Proposed TPD Framework

The proposed framework consists of four sub-platforms in one digital space that will enable teachers to become active agents in enhancing their practices with a focus on providing equitable, inclusive, quality and efficient education in their classrooms. Each of the sub-platforms has a specific focus to enable teachers to have ongoing learning experiences focusing on improving and reflecting on their pedagogical practices through different forms and means. A helicopter view of the

Table 1. Description of 4Ts TPD Platforms

Sub-platform	Description
Teacher MOOCs	This platform is designed to include a range of flexible massive online courses that are accessible to and affordable for all teachers. It also offers different types of activities, including synchronous, asynchronous, practical and classroom-based learning opportunities through a variety of learning resources.
Teacher Portfolios	This is a cohesive collection of documented evidence from a variety of sources that showcase teachers' teaching practices. Teaching Portfolios include categories such as teaching philosophy, roles/responsibilities, subjects taught, resources/materials, instructional practices, student evaluations, honours/recognition, teaching improvement efforts and letters of support. Any evidence of teacher work can be included in the portfolio.
Teacher Buddy	This platform involves teachers becoming reflective about and reactive to their own teaching and well-being. This often involves self-evaluation of one's practices. It is also about seeing one's practices through a different lens. Using a critical buddy approach can have a significant impact on improving pedagogical practices and enhancing teachers' emotional well-being. This approach will offer two teachers the opportunity to work together to improve their practices. They can share what they have observed about each other's practices, focusing on their strengths and telling and retelling what has changed over time.
Teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC)	Teacher PLCs are spaces where teachers can work in groups to improve their context of practice. Some characteristics of such a platform are collegiality, a practical task with a focus on improving student learning, a research-oriented approach to improving teaching, observing each other's practices, sharing personal experiences, working together to overcome challenges, seeking best practices, and becoming active, reflective and collaborative as a group. This platform would enable teachers to engage in a form of ongoing professional learning and reflect on their practices.

framework demonstrates a comprehensive platform with four important concepts related to successful TPD objectives. These objectives are associated with equity (equitable, accessible, affordable, convenient learning opportunities for all teachers), efficiency (teacher efficiency and ongoing learning), quality (ongoing process of improving pedagogical practice) and inclusivity (learning to address all students and accommodate what matters to students). The four sub-platforms are tightly connected to each other, indicating that ongoing professional learning could be achieved through teachers' active engagement and participation across the four sub-platforms. Though the four different sub-platforms are conceptualised separately, they are considered as means of possibilities and opportunities for teachers' ongoing professional learning. Each of these platforms are described in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 4.

The Fahi Ashi Model

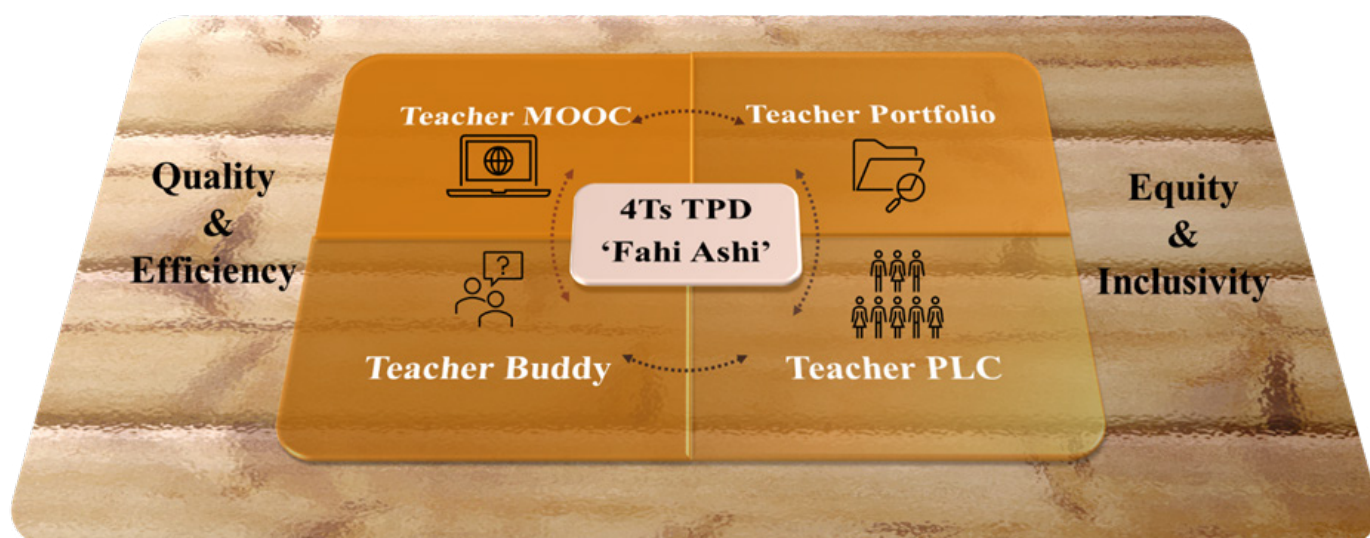
Through the 4Ts TPD framework illustrated in Table 1, the teacher professional learning model, Fahi Ashi, was designed with a focus on providing equitable, inclusive, quality and efficient education. The word '*Fahi*' in the Maldivian local language means 'future-oriented', while the word '*Ashi*' means a space where productive discussions and conversations take place. The two words closely align with ongoing and reflective teacher professional learning concepts. '*Fahi Ashi*' is a concept composed of two important phrases indicating reflective conversations and continuous learning for the future. It can be

described as a platform where teachers can come together in one space and discuss their teaching practices, with a focus on student learning.

The conversations that take place can focus on seeking more productive discussions around enhancing classroom practices in schools across several dimensions, such as individuals, schools, collegial groups with specific subject areas and special interest groups across the model includes several specific objectives:

- 1) provide opportunities for teachers to engage in ongoing, flexible, professional learning MOOCs designed to be accessible to and affordable for all teachers across different regions of the Maldives
- 2) provide opportunities for teachers to showcase and reflect on their practices and seek new evidence-based knowledge through Teacher Portfolios
- 3) allow teachers to think more critically about their practices and become reflective practitioners through the Teacher Buddy platform
- 4) enable teachers to participate in a space where they can engage in productive and future-oriented discussions around enhancing classroom practices via the Teacher PLC platform, which would also allow them to think more openly about how to enhance the education system and practices as a whole

Figure 4. The Fahi Ashi Model



Strategies to Implement the Fahi Ashi Model

Table 2 outlines important implementation strategies and deliverables that will ensure that the objectives stated above are achieved.

Table 2. Implementation Strategies and Deliverables of the Fahi Ashi Model

Objectives	Implementation strategies	Implementation process	Responsible organisation	Available resources	Deliverables
Provide opportunities for teachers to engage in ongoing, flexible, professional learning MOOCs designed to be accessible to, flexible and affordable for all teachers across different regions of the Maldives	Design and offer a range of MOOCs for teachers to engage in ongoing learning in a way that is accessible, flexible and affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policies and standards for teachers to enrol and complete a number of MOOCs as an annual requirement for professional learning Align the enrolment and completion of the MOOCs with teacher licensing and appraisal Develop mechanisms and systems to monitor the quality of MOOCs based on teachers' or schools' needs and relevance Conduct periodic evaluations of the MOOCs to ensure their quality 	NIE, MoE, IUM, MNU	Videos that were created during the COVID-19 pandemic	<p>Analytics to be collected based on the number of MOOCs completed by teachers across all regions, specific subject areas and schools</p> <p>Annual MOOC evaluation reports</p>
Provide opportunities for teachers to showcase and reflect on their practices and seek new evidence-based knowledge through Teacher Portfolios	Design the Teacher Portfolios space so that teachers can compile and collate their teaching evidence in a way that they can seek new learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Teacher Portfolios as a requirement for all teachers that also aligns with teaching licences and teacher appraisal Run ongoing training for teachers to help them create Teacher Portfolios Develop policies and standards to help schools use Teacher Portfolios Establish a mechanism to monitor and evaluate Teacher Portfolios to ensure their quality 	NIE, MoE, CAD	NIL	<p>A report on number of Teachers Portfolios uploaded</p> <p>Annual review of the quality of Teacher Portfolios</p>
Encourage teachers to think more critically about their practices and become reflective practitioners through the Teacher Buddy platform	Design the Teacher Buddy space, standards, protocols and mechanism to implement the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write guides, develop templates to help teachers use Teacher Buddy Introduce Teacher Buddy in schools and pair teachers Advocate best practices of Teacher Buddy and assist teachers in adhering to standards and protocols to ensure good practices Develop a monitoring mechanism for Teacher Buddy to ensure its outcomes are achieved 	NIE, MoE, CAD	Some schools organise mandatory peer reviews of colleagues as part of a mentorship programme, but no deliberate, intentional or PD-oriented form exists in the school system	Annual review of Teacher Buddy practices
Enable teachers to participate in a space where they can engage in productive and future-oriented conversations and discussions around enhancing classroom practices via the Teacher PLC platform, which would also allow them to think more openly about how to enhance the education system and practices as a whole	Design the Teacher PLC space, develop mechanisms, policies and standards to work on it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Teacher PLC as a requirement for schools Develop protocols, policies and standards to establish Teacher PLC across regions, schools and subject areas Link school supervision with the Teacher PLC Establish a mechanism to ensure the aim and objectives of the teacher PLC are achieved Generate annual teacher PLC outcome reports 	NIE, MoE, CAD	Some informal teacher groups exist, but they do not foster much collaborative work or activities intended for learning	<p>Annual reports on Teacher PLC outcomes</p> <p>Analytics of the Teacher PLC community groups</p>

Some Anticipated Challenges and Risks

Some challenges and risks can be anticipated, as significant expertise and monitoring will be required to implement the ideas proposed in the Fahi Ashi model (see Table 3).

Table 3. Strategies to Manage Anticipated Challenges and Risks

Challenges and risks	Strategies to manage them
Designing Teacher MOOCs can be a challenging, time-consuming and expensive undertaking for the MoE.	The MOOCs are expected to be advertised to experts who are keen to do some consultancy work on such projects. However, the MOOCs will need to be carefully evaluated by instructional design experts after the development phase.
Monitoring and evaluation of the 4Ts TPD is complex.	The Fahi Ashi model should be designed such that it can generate self-reports, analytics and other forms of data to keep track of teachers' work on the activities.
Advocacy of the model to teachers in all regions.	This TPD model can only be successful if its implementation process enables teachers to engage in deliberate learning. Therefore, it is essential to train Trainers of Trainers, and the TRCs in each atoll need to be actively involved in advocating for this model. As for the project timeline, the model will be piloted and implemented with a large number of teachers so that teachers in different regions can become familiar with and promote it.

Proposed Partner Agencies and Organisations and Their Roles in Achieving the Intended Results

Evaluation Plan and Methods

Table 4. Proposed Partner Agencies and Organisations

Partner agencies and organisations	Roles
Ministry of Education (MoE)	The MoE will be responsible for TPD-related national policy, strategy and implementation. They can facilitate teachers' active participation in the project.
National Institute of Education (NIE)	The NIE will partner with the MoE and QAD to implement the strategy, including assisting schools and cultivating fresh teaching talent. This will help ensure that new teachers receive appropriate training so that they can immediately start making a difference in their classrooms. They will also be responsible for co-developing short courses based on the needs of teachers and the country.
Quality Assurance Department (QAD)	As the QAD focuses on monitoring, reviewing and analysing classroom practices, they can inform teachers about important areas in which they can improve their teaching practices. During the TPD model implementation, QAD can support teachers in identifying their own strengths and weaknesses so they can choose the most relevant, suitable course to improve their practice. QAD can also evaluate each programme to ensure it meets the programme's requirements.
UNICEF	UNICEF has a lot of experience managing international development projects and can provide funds for programmes that will benefit the country.
MNU	The universities will assist with the creation of applications, websites and the TPD programme itself, develop courses and provide teachers with pedagogical and PD support.
IUM	

Table 5 shows how the 4Ts TPD Fahi Ashi model will be evaluated and monitored in each of the sub-platforms.

Table 5. Evaluation Plan and Methods

Sub-platforms	Evaluation method	Period of evaluation and responsible organisation
Teacher MOOCs	Teacher MOOCs will be evaluated using a web-based analytic system that will provide statistical analyses of enrolled teachers and track their progress in each course. Once the teacher reaches 100%, it will automatically generate a certificate that will be considered part of the teacher's licence and appraisal.	Phase 1: During the pilot period, Teacher MOOCs will be monitored and evaluated by the KIX Learning Team (Maldives) and other responsible authorities. Phase 2: After three years, the effectiveness of Teacher MOOCs will be evaluated by the KIX Learning Team (Maldives) and other responsible authorities. They will then share the data with the MoE and hand over the platform to the NIE.
Teacher Portfolios	Teacher Portfolios can be evaluated monthly by selecting the highest rated portfolios. This will be monitored by the NIE by offering badges on teachers' self-reviews of their own portfolios and peer evaluations of other teachers' portfolios.	Same as previous sub-platform
Teacher Buddy	This platform can be evaluated and monitored by collecting data from a number of buddies according to subject, grade and atoll or region. Once teachers have worked with a buddy for one month, an auto-feedback form will be shared. It will collect data on the effectiveness of the Teacher Buddy.	Same as previous sub-platform
Teacher PLC	An auto-monitoring mechanism will collect data from those who share and comment in the community and award them with auto-generated badges to encourage them to write.	Same as previous sub-platform

The proposed model will be evaluated and monitored in two phases. Phase one will take place during the pilot period, and phase two will take place after the project has run for three years.

- 1) Phase one:** Identify areas for improvement based on feedback from the teachers and other professionals who engage with the platform and implement relevant changes.
- 2) Phase two:** Determine the effectiveness of the platform and discuss with the MoE and NIE how to use the platform

to conduct nationwide and individual training for teachers. There will be four components available on the platform where teachers can receive professional support for their classroom practices.

One of the programmes is the Teacher MOOCs. In this programme, it will offer courses that are suitable and relevant for TPD. A teacher can register for one of these courses if their supervisor recommends one or if they feel the need to do the course themselves.

For the evaluation of the course, teachers must have pre-entry and exit tests to receive the certificate. As the certificates will be automatically generated, they need to be closely checked with participants' progress in their own self-reviews and other activities they are assigned. The course can be evaluated as a continuous process in which progress will always be visible to the screen for both the facilitators and teachers. At the beginning of each course, the teacher's knowledge level will be checked via pre-entry tests to determine what courses they need to complete. The courses will be designed using many forms of learning, including:

1. content slides
2. content-related videos
3. activity-based assessments after each subtopic
4. topic end assessments with MCQs
5. topic reviews and evaluation questionnaires
6. badges that are earned after activities are completed

Once the teachers are enrolled in the courses, they cannot skip any assessment components or any content that is part of the course requirements. Teachers must also reach 100% attendance for each topic to complete the course. This will be monitored through teachers' access to the platform and engagement in the activities.

Teachers will be able to discuss content slides and content-related videos at the end of each subtopic. Teachers will need to complete sub-assessment activities and answer questions after each subtopic. Teachers will have three to five attempts to complete the assignments or activities for these assessment components, and they will be graded immediately.

The other platforms are Teacher Portfolio, Teacher Buddy and Teacher PLC. These are different platforms where teachers can interact with other teachers and build positive professional collegiality and collaborative teams among their specific subject areas. These platforms will be hugely beneficial for teachers to receive innovative and creative ideas from other teachers and help them to become reflective and reactive to his/her own teaching practice and wellbeing.

Project Timeline

The project is expected to be carried out over three academic years according to the school calendar of the MoE (see Table 6).

Table 6. Project Timeline

Activities/Deliverables	Month Due (2023–2025)					
	Jan–Jun 2023	Jul–Dec 2023	Jan–Jun 2024	Jul–Dec 2024	Jan–Jun 2025	Jul–Dec 2025
Phase 1						
Design TPD online platform based on the proposal developed by the KIX learning team (Maldives)						
Develop an interface for the national online learning portal that incorporates the Fahi Ashi 4Ts TPD framework to provide TPD activities						
Develop 10 short MOOCs based on teachers' needs						
Develop guidelines and templates for Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy and Teacher PLC						
Phase 2						
Pilot online TPD platform with 50 teachers						
Conduct an evaluation of the pilot phase						
Develop a self-monitoring and evaluation system embedded within the portal						
Develop 10 short MOOCs based on teachers' needs						
Revise previously developed short MOOCs and sub-platforms						
Phase 3						
Implement online TPD platform at the national level to train 3,000 teachers						
Develop 10 short MOOCs based on teachers' needs						
Revise previously developed short MOOCs and sub-platforms						
Conduct a post-implementation review and prepare a report						

Proposed Budget

The total budget for this project is estimated to be 150,000 USD (see Table 7).

Table 7. Proposed Project Budget

Detailed budget		
Detailed budget for initial budget period (Direct costs only)	From	Through
	10 Jan 2023	31 Dec 2025
Main Costs		
Design TPD online platform based on the proposal developed by the KIX learning team (Maldives)		25,000
Develop an interface for the national online learning portal that incorporates the Fahi Ashi 4Ts TPD framework to provide TPD activities		895,000
Develop 30 short MOOCs based on teachers' needs		255,000
Develop guidelines and templates for Teacher Portfolios, Teacher Buddy, and Teacher PLC		30,000
Pilot online TPD platform with 50 teachers		25,000
Conduct an evaluation of the pilot project		15,000
Develop a self-monitoring and evaluation system embedded with the portal		95,000
Revise previously developed short MOOCs and sub-platforms		45,000
Facilitator fee during the implementation of online TPD platform at the national level to train 3,000 teachers		100,000
Conduct a post-implementation review and prepare a report		25,000
Meeting allowance for technical team members		60,0000
OTHER EXPENSES: Buying host domains, etc.		10,500
Total Direct Costs for Three Years (In Maldivian Rufiyaa)	MVR	1,580,500
Total Direct Costs for Three Years (In Us Dollars)	USD	102,496

CONCLUSION

The policy review on TPD in the Maldives identified several geographic, organisational, infrastructural and pedagogical challenges (Figure 1). This project proposes a three-year plan for scaling TPD at the national level via the 4Ts TPD Fahi Ashi model (Figure 4) to assist Maldivian teachers in becoming part of a digitally-mediated professional learning platform where they can engage in continuous professional learning and become more reflective practitioners. The proposed model for TPD scaling includes four components that complement teacher learning along four dimensions: 1) continuous learning through Teacher MOOCs based on their own needs and interests, 2) the collection of data on their

own teaching practices and students in the form of Teacher Portfolios, 3) critical analysis of their own teaching practices via Teacher Buddy, and 4) membership within a wider Teacher PLC. The platform is expected to help teachers ensure equity, inclusivity, quality and efficiency in their teaching. The project will have three phases over three years: designing, piloting and implementing. The proposed budget encompasses all the activities, including the monitoring and evaluation of the project over a three-year period. The project can significantly improve the quality of teaching in schools and will scale up TPD at the national level across different regions in the Maldives.

REFERENCES

- Avalos, B. (2000). Policies for teacher education in developing countries. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 33(5), 457–474. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355\(00\)00029-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355(00)00029-X)
- Guskey, T. R. (1999). *Evaluating professional development*. Corwin.
- Hawley, W. D., & Valli, L. (2000). Learner-centered professional development. *Phi Delta Kappa Center for Evaluation, Development, and Research*, 27, 7–10.
- Kramer, S. R., & Benson, S. A. (2013). Changing faculty use of technology: One cohort at a time. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 5(2), 202–221.
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2013, February 4). *National curriculum framework*. <https://www.moe.gov.mv/en/category/view/27>
- MoE. (2019). *Education sector analysis*. Policy Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education, Maldives.
- MoE. (2019, August 10). *Professional development policy*. https://www.moe.gov.mv/assets/upload/Circular_Professional_Development_Policy.pdf
- MoE & MOHE. (2019). Maldives education sector plan 2019–2023. <http://saruna.mnu.edu.mv/jspui/handle/123456789/5710>

KIX EMAP Learning Cycle Case Study, January 2024



20, Rue Rothschild | P.O. Box 1672
1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland
+41 (0) 22 908 45 47
norrag.kix@graduatenstitute.ch

