

**Development of an Action Plan for the Creation of a Capacity Building
Cell within the National Institute of Open Schooling, India**

Contract No. C10A-159

Report by

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Though I have been working in the field of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) since 1993, conducting training programmes, teaching distance education courses, and researching and writing in the different areas of distance education, this is my serious engagements with India's national Open School -- the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). I am indebted to Ms. Frances Ferreira, Education Specialist, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver for giving me this opportunity to understand and learn about the activities of NIOS and propose action plan to establish a Capacity Building Cell there. This short journey had been exploratory in nature, giving me opportunity to meet people with different ideas to improve the quality of education through Open Schooling. My sincere thanks to all my fellow travellers in this journey without whose support this work would not have been completed. During the period of the Consultancy, I had the privilege to interact with many present and former employees of NIOS.

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I hope this report will be the starting point for further action at NIOS.

Sanjaya Mishra

STRIDE, IGNOU

New Delhi

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Contract No. C10A-159 was executed by the Consultant through extensive discussions with various stakeholders over two months duration in February and March 2010. The report is the outcome of these discussions and reading of the available literature on capacity building/training at NIOS. The COL has invested in improving the capacity building of NIOS in the past, and this report has integrated all previous works for institutionalization and sustainable development of training functions at NIOS.

The transformation of National Open School (NOS) to National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in 2002 demands for new functions to be performed by NIOS in the area of training and research, apart from its academic functions of certification at secondary and senior secondary level. Also, the demands in the Open School system in India shall increase manifold in the coming years due to various schemes of the Government of India, and at such a juncture, this project is highly significant to the NIOS to rethink its operation and re-organize its administrative mechanisms to meet the challenges ahead.

The Report critically assesses the current scenario of training and academic practices in the NIOS and three State Open Schools (in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh) to make reflections in the light of contemporary distance education practices and new media practices in education.

The following 30 recommendations have been made in the report:

Recommendation 1: *The NIOS should undertake comprehensive review of its pedagogic practices and administrative provisions in the light of contemporary developments in Open and Distance Learning and good practices used all over the world in Open Schooling.*

Recommendation 2: *The NIOS should adopt a comprehensive policy on Capacity Building at the level of Executive Board to provide sustainability to capacity building interventions, and institutionalize the processes as a learning organization and remain a leader in Open Schooling in the world.*

Recommendation 3: *Keeping in view the current workload of the Academic Department of NIOS, and its important role in developing quality print and electronic resources for the learners, it is recommended that the training related functions may be taken off the list of the functions of the Academic Department.*

Recommendation 4: *A separate Department of Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) may be established in NIOS as the nodal agency to undertake all relevant activities.*

Recommendation 5: *While the creation of DCBOS shall be a long-term 3-year plan, to kick-start the Capacity Building activities, NIOS should immediately create a Capacity Building Cell (CBC) under independent charge of a Joint Director, reporting to Chairman, NIOS. The CBC should initiate the creation of DCBOS and undertake all roles expected in this report.*

Recommendation 6: *The DCBOS should have adequate staff with specialized qualifications and experience to undertake capacity building functions.*

Recommendation 7: *Until the creation of DCBOS, and appointment of suitable regular staff, specialists may be engaged temporarily in both full-time and part-time basis to undertake the capacity building activities and support the Joint Director.*

Recommendation 8: *A world-class training infrastructure may be created in the existing space at the Regional Centre building at Noida to conduct and facilitate training. It will reduce the operational cost of hiring the facilities regularly.*

Recommendation 9: *The DCBOS should address to all types of needs within NIOS and State Open Schools, and organize its activities in various areas of Open Schooling for different stakeholders.*

Recommendation 10: *Participation in induction programme should be made compulsory for every staff member joining NIOS. However, if induction programme can't be organized due to some reasons, the new staff members should be given induction through a suitably designed kit and attachment to different units/departments of NIOS.*

Recommendation 11: *The current practice of Coordinators meeting before the start of admission in an academic year should be re-designed as Orientation Programme for Coordinators/Assistant Coordinators of newly created AIs/AVIs, and the same may be organized for 2-days. Such orientation programme should be organized at least two times in a year either at the headquarters or at the Regional Centres depending on the number of AIs/AVIs. At least two people from each AI/AVI may be oriented and NIOS should cover all costs related to their travel, accommodation and daily subsistence allowance.*

Recommendation 12: *The NIOS should undertake the task of development of a national database of teachers/tutors engaged by the AIs/AVIs to provide counselling at the PCPs. Each of the tutor may be given Unique Identification Number, and their qualifications, address, telephone/mobile/email, and signature be kept in a web-enabled system to bring in transparency in the system.*

Recommendation 13: *Orientation programme for tutors/teachers should be a priority area and it may be organized at the AI/AVI with the support of external resource persons or NIOS staff at the Regional Centres. NIOS should reimburse the expenditure of such programmes at the AIs/AVIs.*

Recommendation 14: *Orientation programme for the tutors at the already existing AIs/AVIs may be conducted through teleconference by taking help of IGNOU or NCERT's EduSat network. In Andhra Pradesh the use of ManaTV network may also be explored.*

Recommendation 15: *Orientation programme for course writers should be organized at the headquarters by DCBOS in collaboration with Academic Department and the Department of Vocational Education.*

Recommendation 16: *Realizing the power to non-print media, and to move from print only mode of teaching learning, the NIOS should orient its academic staff to make use of electronic media. NIOS should develop a multi-media strategy to integrate media in the teaching learning practice at the institutional level. Development and adaptation of a multi-media strategy would help sustainable integration of new information and communication technology in the pedagogy of NIOS.*

Recommendation 17: *A training laboratory for audio-video, multimedia and e-learning may be set up at NIOS to provide opportunity for learning and experimentation.*

Recommendation 18: *Creating online version of courses and providing online support would increase the opportunity of direct interaction between the learner and the academic staff of NIOS. Orientation to the academic staff would facilitate this process.*

Recommendation 19: *NIOS may also consider using the Television for providing direct counselling to the learners by creating a studio and up linking facility at the headquarters. Such subject specific support may also be made available through DTH platforms to take the lessons directly to the home of the learners. Annual calendar of such sessions, if organized, should be circulated to all the students, preferably through the prospectus. The recorded version of these programmes may also be made available to the learners through the website or in CD version (on payment basis).*

Recommendation 20: *Recognizing the fact that senior staff members of NIOS and State Open Schools are normally drawn from the regular education, it is recommended that senior staff members (Chairman, Secretary and Directors) may be engaged in study tour of reputed institutions as part of their induction to the Open Schooling system.*

Recommendation 21: *The DCBOS may organize/coordinate such visits of 4-5 senior staff of NIOS/SOS every year to an institute of repute in India/abroad for 3-5 days.*

Recommendation 22: *In order to promote Open Schooling as an alternative mode of schooling that provides quality education, popular programmes be organized at different levels for opinion leaders and District Education Officers (DEOs) all over the country. At least one seminar on Open Schooling be organized in every state, every year for the next three years.*

Recommendation 23: *A national level campaign to promote Open Schooling be planned and implemented through Newspaper, Television, Radio, Billboard, Road shows, etc. to create awareness about Open Schooling.*

Recommendation 24: *Realizing the vast network of NIOS, its mandate and the staff strength (present and proposed), it is proposed to utilize the services of large number of teacher-educators available in the country as trainers in Open Schooling.*

Recommendation 25: *A national database of teacher-educators willing to support the Open Schooling be developed through an online system. These people may be prepared through rigorous training to provide support at local level. NIOS may provide suitable honorarium to the trainers to conduct training on behalf of NIOS.*

Recommendation 26: *A short training module each on Research in Open Schooling and Quality Assurance in Open Schools may be developed.*

Recommendation 27: *A model Study Centre may be created at the NIOS headquarters (with annual intake of 500 students) to showcase the benchmarks expected in the services to be rendered to the learners. This centre shall also be used as a test-bed for research on "Pedagogy of Open Schooling".*

Recommendation 28: *The DCBOS shall undertake activities to prepare training materials (Handouts, Presentations, Flip Chart, etc.) for use in training situations using the available materials in the field of distance education. It will also endeavour to identify areas where resources are not available and take appropriate steps for making such resources available to all the stakeholders.*

Recommendation 29: *The CBC/DCBOS should prepare annual training calendar in consultation with different stakeholders and in all the areas suggested.*

Recommendation 30: *The COL may consider supporting partially the cost of activities of the Capacity Building Cell for the next three year, and may enter into a contract with NIOS to demonstrate the outcomes and output of the assistance provided. The NIOS may also explore the possibility of support for DCBOS from other international agencies having their mandate to improve the quality of school education. UNESCO is one such agency that NIOS may like to approach for supporting the DCBOS.*

The Report presents a draft capacity building policy, objectives of the Capacity Building Cell, organizational structure, staff position, physical infrastructure, a series of training programmes and their delivery strategies, budgetary requirements, list of training materials available, and a set of action items that the NIOS should consider to create the Capacity Building Cell at NIOS.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Contract No. C10A-159 was signed on February 3, 2010 after taking due approval of the Vice Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi. Based on the discussions held with Ms. Frances Ferreira, Education Specialist, COL, the Consultant initiated reading of relevant literature on the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to understand the operations and current practices, including the organizational structure and present capacity building strategies. During this time, I came across two significant sources of information related to the project that the Commonwealth of Learning had supported in the past. These are:

1. A Project on Training Needs Assessment of Field Level Functionaries of the NIOS, completed in 2006 by Prof. B.N. Koul.
2. A Project on Development of the Training Package Learner Support Personnel, Training Strategies and Trainers' Training Package for the National Institute of Open Schooling, New Delhi in 2007 by Prof. B. N. Koul. This is a comprehensive work covering six modules, and I read these with interest as there are enough that can be integrated in the present work.

While undertaking the task, the Consultant realized that the project is actually huge in terms of its intentions and expected results. However, the time available was very short, as the project needed to be concluded by March 30, 2010. Given this constraint of the Project, every effort has been made to present the report in a shape that can be implemented in practice, and integrates all the earlier investments done by the Commonwealth of Learning at NIOS to build institutional capacity in training in Open Schooling system.

1.1 Term of Reference

The following Term of Reference (TOR) was set in the contract:

The Consultant shall be responsible to:

- develop the process, for establishing the Capacity Building Cell within NIOS;
- suggest a suitable staff structure of the Capacity Building Cell and its positioning within the organizational structure of NIOS;
- identify and prioritize, through consultations with various stakeholders, the capacity building areas for NIOS and three other State Open Schools in India (to be selected from Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) and use it as a reference to suggest a three-year action plan for the Capacity Building Cell;
- recommend a suitable capacity building design for priority areas;
- identify capacity building implementation partners, and resources for strengthening the Capacity Building Cell;
- provide periodic updates to COL on a regular basis over the term of the contract on the status of the activities undertaken, upcoming schedules and any issues or problems encountered; and

- submit to COL an Action Plan identifying and prioritizing the capacity building areas for NIOS and other State Open Schools in India.

1.2 Significance of the Project

I would like to emphasize the significance of the project in the light of current and future developments in Indian school education system. The Indian school education system is all set for a revolutionary change. Some of these plans are discussed here to highlight the importance of the Open Schooling System and the need to have a strong capacity building plan.

The Saakshar Bharat Scheme (SBS) of the Government of India envisages to impart functional literacy to 70 million adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond by the end of Eleventh Plan (i.e. 2012). It also intends to cover 1.5 million adults under basic education programme and equal number under vocational (skill development) programme. As the scheme also intends to enable the neo-literates to continue their learning beyond basic literacy and acquire equivalence to formal educational system, this will have heavy demand on the Open Basic Education (OBE) and the Open Schooling system in the coming years. Moreover, preparation of materials of the neo-literates require special skills, and the SBS plans to use the Open Schools to provide necessary training to a large number of facilitators.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan document of the Government of India states that among persons of age 15–29 years, only about 2% have received formal vocational training and another 8% have received non-formal vocational training indicating that very few young persons actually enter the world of work with any kind of formal vocational training. While the demographic dividend will be in favour of India with a huge and dynamic workforce in the age group of 15-29, improvement of their vocational competence is the main focus of the National Skill Development Mission. It envisages taking the annual Vocational Education and Training (VET) capacity from the current 3.1 million to 15 million. The Open School system in the country has to gear itself to support this mission through suitable training interventions, as the strategies also include capturing the school dropouts.

The Report of the Working Group on Secondary and Vocational Education for the Eleventh Five Year Plan states that the school dropout rate is 61.92. The population in the age group of 14-18 would be around 10 crores (100 millions) in 2011. The Open School system in India is expected to cater to at least 15% of the population in the target age group. This would require massive expansion of the Open School System and establishment of more Open Schools in the country, requiring special care and efforts to build their capacity to meet the demands of the educational system and the society.

The Central Advisory Board on Education's (CABE) Report on the Universalization of Secondary education states "the open school network has to be expanded to ensure that every State provides open schooling facility through regional languages. The existing open schools depend largely upon the print material and personal contact programs through the formal schools. A large majority of the open school students are unable to take advantage of personal contact programs and counselling services; they primarily depend upon the print material, which often varies in quality. It will be necessary to enhance quality of open schooling through a variety of measures, particularly the counselling and tutorial services". This calls for appropriate action to build internal capacity of the NIOS, so as to prepare to do the expected roles.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) of the Government of India (Vol.2, p.18) states:

“During the Eleventh Plan, the thrust of the Open Schooling system will be on (i) developing NIOS as a potential Resource Organization in Open Schooling at the national and international level, besides offering courses of study, (ii) up-scaling programmes of the existing 10 State Open Schools (SOSs), and (iii) setting up SOSs in the remaining 19 States. In order to ensure quality in Open Schooling, there will be a full-time coordinator with ancillary staff on contract basis in each Study Centre under the Open Schooling system. During the Eleventh Plan, 1000 Accredited Vocational Institutes (AVIs) will be set up as a part of the Skill Development Mission (SDM). All AVIs will be rated for their performance before continuation.”

The present Project of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is therefore, highly timely and appropriate. The National Open School (NOS) was renamed in 2002 as National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). The change from the only schooling function (with academic and vocational courses offering) to an institute calls for additional activities, especially related to training, research and development. Without strong components of training and research in Open Schooling, the NIOS can't achieve its objectives as a national institute. It is also in this context that the current project is highly relevant to take the NIOS to a higher pedestal of academic excellence. The recommendations of the report would facilitate institutionalization and establishment of a capacity building cell in NIOS that will not only cater to the needs of NIOS, but also provide the necessary support and impetus to promote the Open Schooling system in the country leading to strengthening of the educational infrastructure of India and the missions of the Government of India.

1.3 NIOS and State Open Schools

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), renamed in 2002, was established as a project on “Open Schooling” under the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in 1978, and became National Open School (NOS) in 1989. The Government of India authorized NOS to certify learners up to pre-degree level in 1991. In 2009, it had a cumulative student enrolment of 1.6 million in Secondary, Senior Secondary and Vocational streams. It has over 3700 study centres across India, UAE and Nepal. It also offers Open Basic Education at the level of class III, V and VIII. It has its Headquarters at Noida, Uttar Pradesh (in the National Capital Territory of India), and operates through a network of 11 Regional Centres and three sub-centres. The sanctioned staff strength of NIOS is 251 (of which most academic post are vacant at present). The NIOS serves as a national resource centre in open schooling in India, and provides support to start Open Schools through National Consortium of Open Schooling (NCOS). Recently, NIOS has been identified as the Secretariat of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA).

There are Open Schools at the state level in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. More Open Schools would be established in the states in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Most of these Open Schools use the printed learning materials prepared by NIOS, and follow similar practices as that of NIOS, with little variations. Most of these do not have adequate staff strength, and therefore, need support from NIOS for various activities. Some Open Schools are also part of the State Board of Secondary Education. The independent identity of Open Schools needs to be vigorously pursued in the spheres of decision-making to emphasize that it is an alternative form of schooling that provides flexibility and quality education. Education being a

state subject as per Indian Constitution, the Open Schools in the states does have more significance and importance in improving access, equity and quality.

1.4 Methodology Followed

In order to understand the Open Schooling system in India, the NIOS, and its operations, I scanned and read a large number of documents in a short span of time. These readings formed the basis of my discussions with a range of stakeholders with whom I conducted interviews/interaction to gather ideas and possible solutions. My belief from the beginning of this consultancy was to integrate the works already done at NIOS, and also to respect and consider the opinions of the senior staff currently working there. It is these people, who would be actually engaged in implementing the ideas presented in this report. My approach had been to present the objectives of the project to the interviewee, and ask suggestions and opinions in the context of capacity building in Open Schooling. I used unstructured interview to give the interview an informal twist. However, in the beginning of the consultancy, I had formal discussion with the Chairman, NIOS, who also introduced me to the senior staff of NIOS through a formal meeting. He also suggested me to visit, State Open Schools in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh and facilitated the meetings there. The report is the outcome of my interpretive analysis and consolidation of ideas gathered through these meetings/discussion, and reading of available literature. Conscious effort has been made not to identify individual viewpoint in the report.

1.5 Analysis of Current Situation

In this sub-section, I present an overview of the current situation in four sections. These provide inputs for many of the recommendations in this report.

National Institute of Open Schooling, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh

- The NIOS prepares learning materials at the Headquarters taking help of subject experts and teachers. Academic staff at NIOS coordinates the school subjects to prepare the materials, which are translated and printed.
- Students are provided counselling/tutoring support at the Study Centres (that are Accredited Institutions (AIs) and Accredited Vocational Institutions (AVIs) respectively for academic and vocational subjects). The students must attend 15 sessions out of 30 organized in the subject. This is the responsibility of the AI/AVI, and at present there is no database of tutors/teachers engaged in academic counselling at NIOS. The tutors/teachers are engaged by the AIs/AVIs from the AI/AVI or neighbourhood school or other institutions.
- The Coordinator and other support staff of the AIs/AVIs manage the study centres.
- Though the Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA) is compulsory (to be submitted at the study centre before appearing the examination), it does not carry any mark; and hardly gets returned to the learners.
- Training is currently not a regular activity, though NIOS conducts training in various aspects of Open Schooling from time to time. No specific record of past training programmes available, as there is no nodal agency, and the programmes are *ad hoc* in nature. There is an International Centre for Training in Open Schooling (ICTOS), which has developed some

materials to offer certificate/diploma level courses in Open Schooling. The ICTOS, which is part of the Academic Department of NIOS is now non-active due to inadequate staff.

- Over 76% of students at NIOS are young adults in the age group of 14-20 years, and the present andragogic approach to provide support may not be the most suitable approach. There is a need to move towards more guided learning paradigm using distance education methods.
- Training in Open Schooling at NIOS needs to move from *person specific* approach to a *systematic and institutionalized* approach.
- Training required for the internal academic staff, coordinators, and teachers in all areas of open schooling. Subject specific training also required for teachers to conduct counselling, especially in non-traditional subjects.
- The Regional Centre building at Noida has enough space to accommodate a training centre, including a hostel for the trainees.
- Meeting of Coordinators are organized at the Regional Centres to orient them about the standard operating procedures of admission every year.
- Meeting of Chief Secrecy Officers and Centre Superintendents are also conducted twice a year to make the examination systematic.
- NIOS has a scheme of Academic Facilitators, who are assigned some AIs and are expected to visit twice during admission, three times during the Personal Contact Programme, and twice during examination to monitor the functioning of AIs and provide greater coordination and communication between the AIs, Regional centre and the Headquarters of NIOS. This scheme needs to be further strengthened.
- Administrative staff members are also sent to attend training programmes organized by outside agencies.
- The Computer Unit conducted IT training in association with the Microsoft for all the staff of NIOS. These training programmes were organized to provide all the staff with basic computer skills to operate and use computers for word processing, presentation, and spreadsheets.
- Training is also required at the level of policy makers, and administrators of State Open Schools, and the opinion leaders in the society.
- Six training modules have been developed in 2007/8 with the support of the Commonwealth of Learning. After the modules have been developed, tested and printed, these are yet to be put in use.
- Inadequate staff strength, to undertake regular activities, has been a major hurdle in making training a sustainable activity.

Andhra Pradesh Open School Society (APOSS), Hyderabad

- APOSS is a relatively new Open School in India having started its operation in 2008.
- APOSS has over 850 centres in High Schools of Andhra Pradesh and offers only secondary level subjects.
- It uses the learning materials prepared by NIOS, and its operations are similar to that of the NIOS.
- The Director is the only academic, and administrative staff manages all other operations.

Thirty posts of subject teachers have been recently sanctioned to coordinate the school subjects.

- Nearly 50, 000 students are admitted every year to appear for the grade 10 examination.
- APOSS has recently developed study materials of Open Basic Education in Telugu at the level of class VIII.
- Personal Contact Programmes are organized for the students at the study centres. Learners have to attend at least 20 of the 40 sessions organized per subject.
- Students need to submit assignments in each subject like that of NIOS to be eligible for appearing in the examination.
- Examination is conducted by the APOSS, as it is a separate entity, and the Government of Andhra Pradesh has issued G.O. Rt. No. 723 Dated 27/09/2008 to permit public examination twice a year for Class X.
- Training mostly required by the subject teachers to provide counselling to the learners, especially in non-traditional courses that are not available in the state.
- APOSS also intends to develop its own study material for secondary and senior secondary level.
- A cascading model of training in open schooling may be followed, and master trainers should be available at national level, state level and district level.
- Some of the areas of training suggested are: basics of open schooling, preparation of study materials, conduct of personal contact programme (general/subject specific), assessment of tutor marked assignment, question bank, etc.
- Monitoring of study centres is done by the District Education Officers (DEOs), and they may also be trained. Training DEOs on Open Schooling would be an effective strategy to promote the system and also monitor the quality.

Madhya Pradesh State Open School (MPSOS), Bhopal

- Established in 1995, it conducted the first examination in 1996.
- There are over 260 study centres all over Madhya Pradesh. These centres are in Government Senior Secondary Schools.
- Both Secondary and Senior Secondary courses are available.
- It is using the study material prepared by NIOS, but it does the printing itself through state printing press.
- Thirty personal contact classes are held per subject in the study centres. These are optional for the learners to attend.
- There is no permanent staff in the MPSOS. The present staff comprising of Director, Deputy Director and Assistant Director are on deputation from state government.
- Examination is being conducted separately for the MPSOS, but there is move to make the syllabi and the examination same as that of the State Board of Secondary Education.
- Learners can take examination within six months of joining MPSOS.
- Schoolteachers and Principals require training to orient them about Open Schooling. Such training, if done in May/June would be most appropriate. Providing training to Principals would go a long way in improving the quality of Open Schooling in the State of Madhya Pradesh, as they are usually the Coordinator of the Study Centres.
- It is considering the use of Non Governmental Organizations at Block (an administrative unit covering a cluster of village) level to make Open Schooling facilities available to more people in the state. Making Open Schooling a mass movement require capacity building at the grass root level (covering people who are working at the village level through various non-governmental organizations). This could be an innovative approach to involve the community in Open Schooling activities, and make everyone engaged in the system accountable to provide quality education.

Haryana Open School (HOS), Bhiwani

- HOS is a branch of the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Haryana.
- Initially started in 1994, using materials produced by NIOS, it has now adopted the same practice as that of the State Board.
- No study material is supplied to the learners. They use the same syllabus; appear the same semester-based examination as that of the learners in the regular schools. Even the examinations are done on the same date. The students of Open School use the printed study materials available in the market. These textbooks are meant for the students who attend the regular classes and are suitable for use in a classroom, as these are not designed for self-learning.

This puts the learners of Open School branch at a disadvantage without any formal support available to them. They depend mostly on private tuition.

- There is no study centre, and no support provided to the learners.
- It acts as a private examination system with flexibility of credit transfer for the dropout learners of the regular stream. The learners are given 5 chances to complete in 3 years.
- It intends to develop its own study materials, and with the help of Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), it has conducted two material development workshops in the past.
- Over 100, 000 students appear in the examination every year.
- Training needed to convince senior decision makers that Open School can provide quality education.

The Open Schools, though catering to huge sections of the population, has a poor reputation even in the eyes of the educated people. There is a huge task to change the mind set, and promote Open Schooling as an alternative schooling method that can not only provide quality education, but also improve the quality of regular schooling as well. The Open Schooling system in the country needs to gear itself to the myriad of challenges. Setting up of a Capacity Building Cell within NIOS, is a starting point to improve the overall scenario. The top leadership of NIOS has a strong willingness to improve the present situation of NIOS by improving the human capacities at all level. However, having reviewed the Open Schooling system in the country and discussed with experienced people, it is understood that many of the problems faced are not “training problems”. Many of the current weaknesses in the system can’t be solved through capacity building interventions *alone*, as they are probably *not only* due to lack of knowledge and skills. In most of the cases either there is an attitudinal bias or the existing practice is not suitable in the given context. Therefore, it is important to improve the environment by revising outdated practices by introducing appropriate methods and information and communication technologies. To illustrate this point, let me take the case of tutors at the Study Centres. At present, there is no data about who are engaged as tutor by the AIs/AVIs. In such a situation, who should be given training, and for what? Also, the Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) are not used for grading, and therefore, either not assessed at all or if assessed does not reach the learners on time to help them learn from the mistakes committed. Thus, rethinking about some of the current practices is a must, and I am not going in details on this. However, awareness building can definitely improve attitudes, and capacity-building activities in long run can improve the situation. Capacity building is a *necessary* condition for improvement, but not *sufficient* condition for performance. No amount of capacity building exercise can change unsuitable practices. It can only facilitate the change process by empowering all the stakeholders. Understanding the significance of the Open Schooling system in the national development, and putting appropriate systems in practice would go a long way in improving the credibility of the system and its quality.

Recommendation 1: *The NIOS should undertake comprehensive review of its pedagogic practices and administrative provisions in the light of contemporary developments in Open and Distance Learning and good practices used all over the world in Open Schooling.*

2. CAPACITY BUILDING POLICY: A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Capacity Building (CB) has been broadly used in this report as the support provided to develop skills and competence of different stakeholders in the Open Schooling system. It includes but not limited to training (face-to-face). It also includes other strategies through which people and systems can be improved. A common institution-wide understanding of capacity building and a policy at the highest level provides the necessary link between theory and practice. It helps in the following:

- Reducing ambiguities over the main thrust areas;
- Enhance the importance of capacity building from peripheral task to a central activity;
- Creates atmosphere of learning and development;
- Practical decisions are taken in the light of broad policy guidelines; and
- Adequate funding and budgetary support are received.

The CB policy may include the objectives, approaches, designs, and evaluation parameters. It may also from time to time, prioritize the thrust areas of the institution. A suggestive CB Policy for adoption by the Executive Board of NIOS is given in Appendix-A. It is believed that putting a CB policy in place would facilitate the institutionalization of the training and staff development process within NIOS, and also give the necessary impetus and morale to the NIOS staff to provide the required support to other Open Schools in the country.

Recommendation 2: *The NIOS should adopt a comprehensive policy on Capacity Building at the level of Executive Board to provide sustainability to capacity building interventions, and institutionalize the processes as a learning organization and remain a leader in Open Schooling in the world.*

3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFF POSITION

Though training is officially the function of Academic Department, at present the training/capacity building activities at NIOS are distributed, need-based, and conducted irregularly. The role and functions of the constituents of NIOS (in page 7 of Annual Report, 2008-9), gives the following information as the role of Academic Department:

7.1 Setting up and operationalization of International Centre for Training in Open Schooling (ICTOS)

7.2 Development of Training Packages

7.3 Organization of short term and long-term training programmes for Open Schooling functionaries at national and international level.

Besides these, the Academic Department also coordinates the NCOS, international relations, and Journals, Magazines and Bulletins of NIOS. Since the Academic Department is heavily engaged in curriculum planning and material development at Secondary and Senior Secondary subjects in different languages, and Open Basic Education programmes, it is not able to devote the required time and efforts needed to undertake training functions on a regular basis. Moreover, I am told that there are only 2 full-time academic staffs available in the Department at present. The non-availability of adequate full-time staff is a problem, but it will not remain forever. Staff positions have been recently advertised, and the vacant positions would possibly be filled soon. Even if, there is full strength of staff in the Academic Department, its role and function should be limited only to development of learning materials in print, audio, video, multi-media and online. In such a situation, expecting the Academic Department to undertake the Capacity Building activities would be asking too much. Therefore, I strongly feel that alternative institutional mechanisms should be considered. One of the possible and very significant actions in this regard would be the creation of a separate Department for Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) within the overall organizational structure of NIOS. (See Figure 1 and 2). However, as this may take some time, establishment of DCBOS should be a three-year strategy to institutionalize the capacity building activities. Until the DCBOS is formally established, a Capacity Building Cell (CBC) may be created within the Office of Chairman, NIOS under the overall independent charge of a Joint Director. Chairman, NIOS, may consider these options, and identify the best suitable person from within the NIOS to head the CBC. However, if capacity building has to be a systemic and systematic process, there is a strong need to revamp and re-organize some of the current activities of NIOS to create a new Department, i.e. DCBOS.

Recommendation 3: *Keeping in view the current workload of the Academic Department of NIOS, and its important role in developing quality print and electronic resources for the learners, it is recommended that the training related functions may be taken off the list of the functions of the academic Department.*

Recommendation 4: *A separate Department of Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) may be established in NIOS as the nodal agency to undertake all relevant activities.*

Recommendation 5: While the creation of DCBOS shall be a long-term 3-year plan, to kick-start the Capacity Building activities, NIOS should immediately create a Capacity Building Cell (CBC) under independent charge of a Joint Director, reporting to Chairman, NIOS. The CBC should initiate the creation of DCBOS and undertake all roles expected in this report.

3.1 Objectives of DCBOS

The main objectives of DCBOS shall be to:

- Undertake capacity building in the areas of Open Schooling
- Develop training materials for Open Schooling
- Organize workshops, seminars, and conferences in the areas of Open Schooling
- Liaise with national and international agencies on behalf of NIOS
- Coordinate the activities of National Consortium for Open Schooling (NCOS)
- Serve as an international consulting body in Open Schooling
- Organize and disseminate information and statistics related to Open Schooling

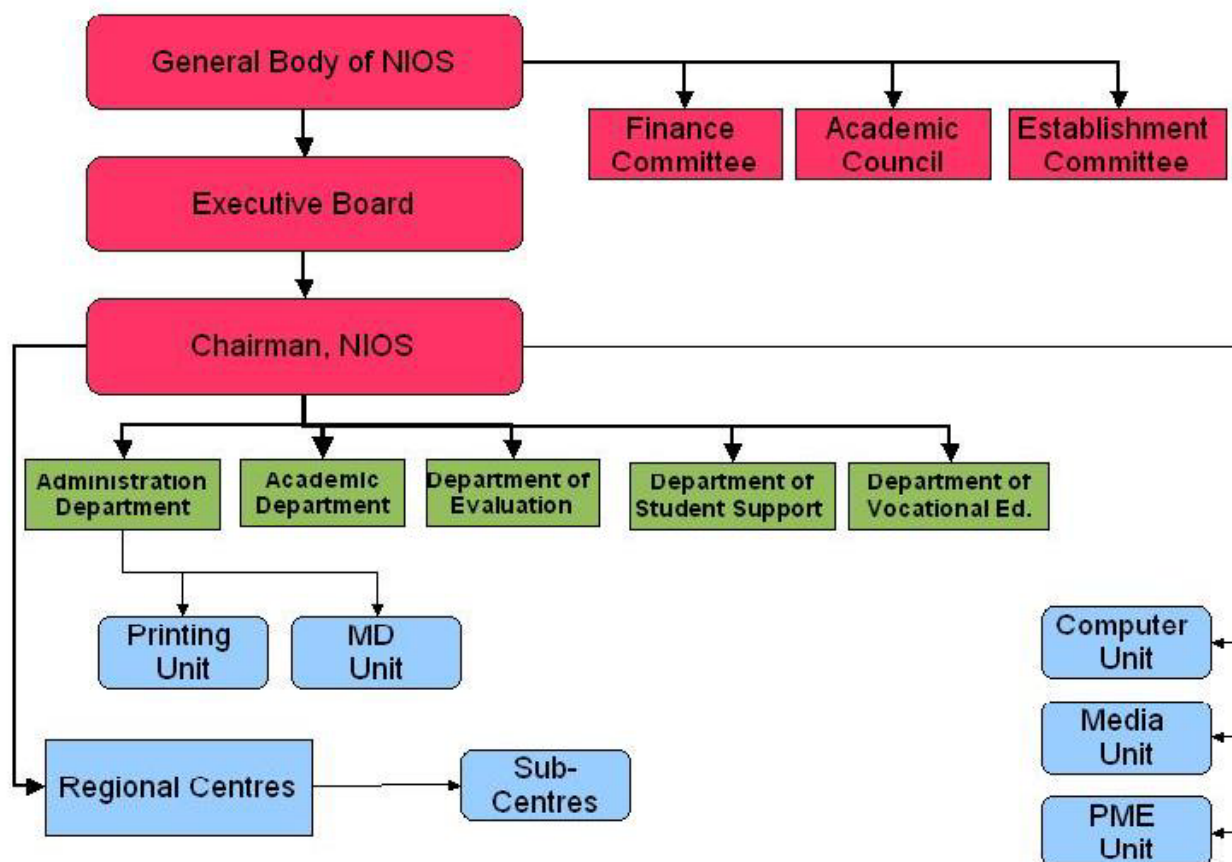


Figure 1: Organizational Structure of NIOS

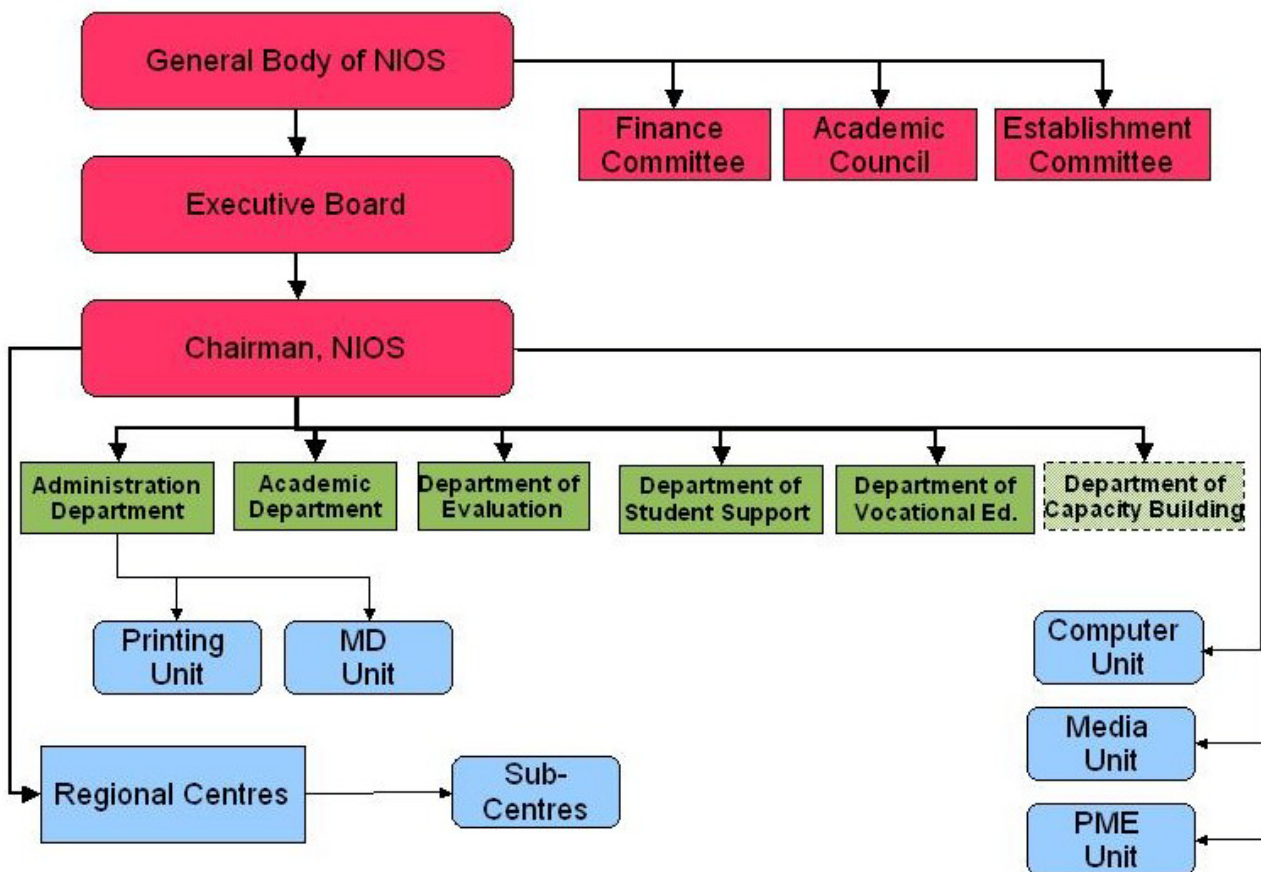


Figure 2: Suggested Organizational Structure of NIOS with DCBOS

3.2 Staff Positions

In order to carry out the objectives and expected functions, the DCBOS should have the following staff positions:

- Director
- Deputy Director
- Assistant Director
- Training Officer (Open Schooling)
- Training Officer (Learner Support)
- Training Officer (Material Development)
- Training Officer (Educational Technology)
- Section Officer
- Stenographer
- EDP Supervisor
- Junior Assistants (3)
- Peon

Recommendation 6: *The DCBOS should have adequate staff with specialized qualifications and experience to undertake capacity building functions.*

It is necessary to reorganize the staff structure at NIOS to effectively implement the capacity building plan. The current leadership of NIOS is very positive to the needs of creating such a cell for capacity building and therefore, it is possible to think in advance and plan for the future. However, as suggested earlier, with the aim to create the positions necessary, NIOS may initially start a small working unit (Capacity Building Cell) in the Office of the Chairman, with independent charge of a Joint Director level person from amongst the existing staff of NIOS. Besides the NIOS may engage Consultants/project staff on temporary basis to undertake the tasks on need basis.

Recommendation 7: *Until the creation of DCBOS, and appointment of suitable regular staff, specialists may be engaged temporarily in both full-time and part-time basis to undertake the capacity building activities and support the Joint Director.*

3.3 Physical Infrastructure

NIOS should take steps to create physical space for the DCBOS, which can be housed in the Regional Centre building, NOIDA (Near NIOS headquarter). The building can be suitably refurbished to accommodate a 30-bed hostel, a big training hall with movable table and chairs to re-arrange sitting for about 30 persons, 5 small breakaway rooms for group work and committee meetings, suitable audio visual equipments, electronic whiteboard, LCD projector, photocopiers, computers and printers, networking and Internet access, and a cafeteria.

Recommendation 8: *A world-class training infrastructure may be created in the existing space at the Regional Centre building at Noida to conduct and facilitate training. It will reduce the operational cost of hiring the facilities regularly.*

4. CAPACITY BUILDING APPROACHES AND DESIGNS

The capacity building approaches and designs followed should be broadly in tune with the approved policy of NIOS. These have to be individual focused, organizational focused and occupational focused. For example, teachers engaged in the Personal Contact Programmes need certain capabilities, and training programmes should focus on that. There can be individual needs, due to lack of awareness and poor understanding of the Open Schooling systems. Some academic staff may need individual support to develop audio and video scripts. Organization focus means there are certain practices that are specific to NIOS or a specific State Open School, and capacity-building interventions should also focus such provisions. Based on the discussion with the stakeholders, readings and experience of the Consultant, capacity building activities to be organized by the DCBOS of NIOS may include the following, but not limited to:

Open Schooling (General)

- Induction Programme for Newly recruited staff
- Study Visits for Senior Staff of NIOS and other State Open Schools
- Seminar for Familiarization to Open Schooling
- Training of Trainers (involving Teacher Educators at District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs))

Learner Support Services (including Management of Open Schools)

- Programme for Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators/ Academic Facilitators
- Programme for Tutors/Teachers

Learning Material Development (including Instructional Design)

- Programme for Course Writers (also for NIOS academic staff)

Information and Communication Technology (including ICT for administration)

- Programme on Media
- Short-Term Training on Emerging Areas (need-based)

Research, Quality Assurance and Monitoring

- Research in Open Schooling
- Quality, Evaluation and Monitoring in Open Schooling

Recommendation 9: *The DCBOS should address to all types of needs within NIOS and State Open Schools, and organize its activities in various areas of Open Schooling for different stakeholders.*

4.1 Induction for Newly Recruited Staff

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide an overview of the functioning of the NIOS/SOS, including its objectives, methods and media adopted and the achievements. The newly recruited staff members need to be oriented towards open schooling and the ethos and philosophy of open schooling.

Duration of the Programme: 1 day

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Foundations of Open Learning and Distance Education; Open Schooling, NIOS; and various sub-system of Distance Education	Ideally induction programme should be delivered through face-to-face interaction for a day, including presentations, tours, etc.	Induction kit to be provided that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Historical and Philosophical bases of NIOS (COL-NIOS project) + audio • Memorandum of association and Rule and regulations of NIOS • Recent annual report

Recommendation 10: *Participation in induction programme should be made compulsory for every staff member joining NIOS. However, if induction programme can't be organized due to some reasons, the new staff members should be given induction through a suitably designed kit and attachment to different units/departments of NIOS.*

4.2 Programme for Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators/ Academic Facilitators

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide an overview of the functioning of the NIOS/SOS, including its objectives, methods and media adopted and the achievements. The focus should also be to help the Study Centres organize PCP and promote Open Schooling actively in the region. The programme should also cover issues related to management of Open Schools.

Strategies: Every six-months, the newly established Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators of the Study Centres (AIs/AVIs) be either invited to the NIOS Headquarters or to the Regional Centre for training. Currently before admission starts, meetings are organized at Regional Centres, and such meetings can be converted in to possible capacity building intervention.

Duration of the Programme: 2 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Foundations of Open Learning and Distance Education; Open Schooling, NIOS; and various sub-system of	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face interaction including presentations, tours, etc. Alternatively, teleconference	Training kit to be provided that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Historical and Philosophical bases of NIOS + Audio

Distance Education Standard Operating Procedures	may also be tried out, as the number is large. It would also be highly desirable to give manuals and audio and video cassettes as additional resources to the participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 2: Accredited Institutions and SSS + Audio • Module 4: Operational Strategies for Coordinators and Academic Facilitators + Audio • Module 5: Life Skills for Open School Learners • Handbook for Academic Facilitators • Norms and Procedures for AIs • Standard Operating Procedures
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Recommendation 11: *The current practice of Coordinators meeting before the start of admission in an academic year should be re-designed as Orientation Programme for Coordinators/Assistant Coordinators of newly created AIs/AVIs, and the same may be organized for 2-days. Such orientation programme should be organized at least two times in a year either at the headquarters or at the Regional Centres depending on the number of AIs/AVIs. At least two people from each AI/AVI may be oriented and NIOS should cover all costs related to their travel, accommodation and daily subsistence allowance.*

4.3 Programme for Tutors/Teachers

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide an overview of the functioning of the NIOS/SOS, including its objectives, methods and media adopted and the achievements. The focus should also be to help teachers to conduct Personal Contact Programmes, evaluate Tutor Marked Assignments and answer scripts.

Strategies: It is extremely important to develop a database of teachers engaged in PCP at the AIs/AVIs. Immediately, the NIOS should undertake this activity to know the number of teachers who would be provided with training/orientation. While the backlog of the un-trained tutors/teachers may be trained in a phased manner, it would be useful to start AI/AVI wise training, after a new Study Centre is established. It is also told that there is high turnover of the part-time tutors at the Study Centres. So, regular training of this group is very important. In order to orient the huge number of the tutors, teleconference may be used for one day to provide basic skills of handling PCPs.

Duration of the Programme: 2 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Foundations of Open Learning and Distance Education; Open Schooling, NIOS; and various sub-system of Distance Education; Print and Electronic materials, Personal Contact Programmes, Tutoring, evaluation of	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face interaction including presentations, tours, etc. Participants may be engaged in mock tutoring sessions, and exercises may be done in grading and providing tutor	Training kit to be provided that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Historical and Philosophical bases of NIOS + Audio • Module 2: Accredited Institutions and SSS + Audio • Module 3: Instructional

assignments and term-end examination answer scripts	<p>comments</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Subject specific issues may be covered in the second half of the second day through group work to review the study materials and understand about the planning PCPs for specific subjects.</p>	<p>Strategies for Open Schooling + Audio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 5: Life Skills for Open School Learners
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Recommendation 12: *The NIOS should undertake the task of development of a national database of teachers/tutors engaged by the AIs/AVIs to provide counselling at the PCPs. Each of the tutor may be given Unique Identification Number, and their qualifications, address, telephone/mobile/email, and signature be kept in a web-enabled system to bring in transparency in the system.*

Recommendation 13: *Orientation programme for tutors/teachers should be a priority area and it may be organized at the AI/AVI with the support of external resource persons or NIOS staff at the Regional Centres. NIOS should reimburse the expenditure of such programmes at the AIs/AVIs.*

Recommendation 14: *Orientation programme for the tutors at the already existing AIs/AVIs may be conducted through teleconference by taking help of IGNOU or NCERT's EduSat network. In Andhra Pradesh the use of ManaTV network may also be explored.*

4.4 Programme for Course Writers

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide an overview of the functioning of the NIOS/SOS, including its objectives, methods and media adopted and the achievements. The focus should also be to help subject teams/teachers to write the print-based learning materials.

Strategies: NIOS uses the services of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to prepare the learning materials. Course Writers meeting may be organized for specific school subjects at the Headquarters regularly as part of the learning material development. The Academic and Vocational Department of NIOS shall work in collaboration with DCBOS to conduct the training programme. Before any learning material preparation is planned, there should be a training on Course Material preparation at least for 3 days, and then a follow-up of the same be conducted at least for 2 days after say 3-4 months to review the course development work and the quality of the work. By this way, not only the training will have sustainable impact, it will also lead to production of quality learning materials.

Duration of the Programme: 3 days + 2 days follow-up. The duration of the workshop should depend on the course development model to be followed. The workshop duration suggested here is fine, if the course writers are experienced teachers, and have substantial experience in material development for face-to-face situation. For totally inexperienced and new teachers, the duration of the workshop should be for more days, and if a 'workshop model' of course development is used, then the duration should be for 10-15 days.

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Foundations of Open Learning and Distance Education; Open Schooling, NIOS; and various sub-system of Distance Education; Preparing Self-Learning Materials	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face interaction including presentations. Participants may be engaged in preparing concept map, lesson outline and preparing interactive learning materials.	Training kit to be provided that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Historical and Philosophical bases of NIOS + Audio • Module 5: Life Skills for Open School Learners • Curriculum and Course Development (Module 2 of ICTOS material)

Recommendation 15: *Orientation programme for course writers should be organized at the Headquarters by DCBOS in collaboration with Academic Department and the Department of Vocational Education.*

4.5 Programme on Media

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide an overview of the importance of media in Open Schooling. The focus of the programme shall be to help NIOS academic staff to prepare academic notes for audio, video programmes, write scripts, and engage in multimedia and online material preparation..

Strategies: This is a specialized programme and should involve practical activities in media (audio, video, Multimedia, and web). Training programme should be organized in a laboratory situation. Due to the need to integrate Information and Communication Technology in the teaching and learning process of NIOS, a 5-day training for the staff has been proposed. It is believed that NIOS should initiate steps for the future, and training of internal staff on media and ICT would be highly useful. Such training can be organized in collaboration with the Media Unit and Computer Unit.

Duration of the Programme: 5 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Media in open Schooling; production of radio/audio programmes; Scriptwriting for TV; Production of TV programmes; Introduction to multimedia and online learning	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face interaction including presentations and hands on practical activity. Participants may be engaged in preparing short audio/video scriptwriting and production, and also use of the computers. Day 1: Media: Overview	Training kit to be provided that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media in Open Schooling (Module 4 of ICTOS material) • Educational Multimedia (CEMCA Publication) • E-Learning (CEMCA Publication)

	Day 2 & 3: Audio and video production	
	Day 3 & 5: Multimedia and Online learning	

Recommendation 16: *Realizing the power of non-print media, and to move from print only mode of teaching learning, the NIOS should orient its academic staff to make use of electronic media. NIOS should develop a multi-media strategy to integrate media in the teaching learning practice at the institutional level. Development and adaptation of a multi-media strategy would help sustainable integration of new information and communication technology in the pedagogy of NIOS.*

Recommendation 17: *A training laboratory for audio-video, multimedia and e-learning may be set up at NIOS to provide opportunity for learning and experimentation.*

Recommendation 18: *Creating online version of courses and providing online support would increase the opportunity of direct interaction between the learner and the academic staff of NIOS. Orientation to the academic staff would facilitate this process.*

Recommendation 19: *NIOS may also consider using Television for providing direct counselling to the learners by creating a studio and up linking facility at the headquarters. Such subject specific support may also be made available through DTH platforms to take the lessons directly to the home of the learners. Annual calendar of such sessions, if organized, should be circulated to all the students, preferably through the prospectus. The recorded version of these programmes may also be made available to the learners through the website or in CD version (on payment basis).*

4.6 Study Visits for Senior Staff of NIOS and other State Open Schools

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to provide learning opportunity to the senior staff of NIOS and other State Open Schools to understand and critically analyze the Open Schooling system. The primary focus of this training to develop managerial competences and therefore, should include training on management of Open Schools, issues and challenges.

Strategies: Since putting the senior staff members in workshop and training situation would be difficult, alternative strategies of attachments and or study visits to a national/international level distance education institution would be useful. The NIOS may organize boot camps/ summer institutes, for 4-5 senior leaders every year in India/abroad. The exposure gained would be highly useful for planning and decision-making. The participants of the programmes shall be required to submit a report on the activities performed during the study visit, lessons learned, and action plan for implementation.

Duration of the Programme: 3-5 days

Recommendation 20: *Recognizing the fact that senior staff members of NIOS and State Open Schools are normally drawn from the regular education departments, it is recommended that senior staff members (Chairman, Secretary and Directors) may be engaged in study tour of reputed institutions as part of their induction to the Open Schooling system.*

Recommendation 21: *The DCBOS may organize/coordinate such visits of 4-5 senior staff of NIOS/SOS every year to an institute of repute in India/abroad for 3-5 days.*

4.7 Seminar for Familiarization to Open Schooling

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to familiarize the opinion leaders and District Education Officers to the world of Open and Distance Learning, and particularly Open Schooling.

Strategies: Such programmes may be organized at the Regional Centre level and also at the State Open Schools. Apart from lectures by eminent experts, the event may be coupled with book exhibitions and other cultural programmes. AIs/AVIs may also be supported to conduct road shows to promote the concept of Open Schooling amongst school dropouts. While this can be viewed as a marketing strategy of NIOS, and a strategy function of the Chairman's office, it would be useful to delegate this task to the Capacity Building Cell to organize this activity regularly under the overall direction of Chairman, NIOS.

Duration of the Programme: 1 day

Recommendation 22: *In order to promote Open Schooling as an alternative mode of schooling that provides quality education, popular programmes be organized at different levels for opinion leaders and District Education Officers (DEOs) all over the country. At least one seminar on Open Schooling be organized in every state, every year for the next three years.*

Recommendation 23: *A national level campaign to promote Open Schooling be planned and implemented through Newspaper, Television, Radio, Billboard, Road shows, etc. to create awareness about Open Schooling.*

4.8 Training of Trainers in Open Schooling

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to prepare trainers who can undertake training activity on behalf of NIOS in various parts of the country.

Strategies: This training programme requires basic understanding about Open and Distance Learning, and Educational Technology. So, the Training of Trainers (TOT) programme in Open Schooling should select participants carefully from amongst the NIOS staff and outside. There are 529 functional DIETs at the district level, 104 College of Teacher Education and 31 Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) in India (as on April 2008). Besides this, there are B.Ed. Training colleges, which should be tapped for identifying participants for TOT in Open Schooling.

NIOS may train these teacher educators and take their services for conduct of training at the Study Centre level and Regional Centre level, especially for the training of tutors and Coordinators.

Duration of the Programme: 5 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Foundations of Open Learning and Distance Education; Open Schooling, NIOS; and various sub-system of Distance Education; Print and Electronic materials, Personal Contact Programmes, Tutoring, evaluation of assignments and term-end examination answer scripts; Media in open Schooling; production of radio/audio programmes; Scriptwriting for TV; Production of TV programmes; Introduction to multimedia and online learning	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face at the Headquarters, Regional Centres and at State Open Schools. Apart from orienting the participants on the content areas, they will also be trained on training techniques. The NIOS Academic Staff may also participate in this programme to develop themselves as master trainers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 6: Training of Trainers (COL-NIOS) • All other COL-NIOS modules • STRIDE Handbook 15

Recommendation 24: *Realizing the vast network of NIOS, its mandate and the staff strength (present and proposed), it is proposed to utilize the services of large number of teacher-educators available in the country as trainers in Open Schooling.*

Recommendation 25: *A national database of teacher-educators willing to support the Open Schooling be developed through an online system. These people may be prepared through rigorous training to provide support at local level. NIOS may provide suitable honorarium to the trainers to conduct training on behalf of NIOS.*

4.9 Research in Open Schooling

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to assist academic staff in the Open Schooling system to undertake research at fundamental as well as applied level. It will also encourage action research.

Strategies: While many of the academics in the Open Schooling system do have research degree, they may not be from the educational research. Therefore, the academic staff needs to be trained to critically look at educational problems in the Open Schooling system. They may be trained to prepare research proposals and undertake research activities in the area of Open Schooling. It may be suggested here that the NIOS at the Headquarters/Regional Centre at NOIDA, may house a Model Study Centre of 500 students annual in take. This centre would be the test-bed for innovations and ideas for conducting research in Open Schooling. Besides, the model study centre would also be used for training purpose, and as a benchmark to be followed by other AIs/AVIs.

Duration of the Programme: 3 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Research areas in Open Schooling; Preparing research proposal; Research methods, techniques and tools; Data collection and analysis, Use of statistical software; Ethics in research; report writing and dissemination; qualities of a good research report	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face at the Headquarters, Regional Centres and at State Open Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training module on Research in Open Schooling to be developed.

4.10 Quality, Evaluation and Monitoring in Open Schooling

Objectives of the Programme: The objective of the programme would be to assist academic staff in the Open Schooling system to assess the quality of open school provisions, and enable them to develop appropriate benchmarks, tools and strategies to monitor the quality and evaluate the outcomes.

Strategies: Recognizing the importance of quality in all aspects of life, it is important for the Open Schools as well to showcase their good practices to the society. It is promotion of these good practices that would improve the status and reputation of Open Schools. For this, there is a need to provide training to build capacity in understanding quality in the context of education in general and open schools in particular. Quality indicators and benchmarks may be developed, including quality policy and assessment tools to review the system from time to time. Regular workshops/training programmes may be conducted to develop a group of quality assessors in Open Schools in India, who can be trusted to evaluate the performance of the AIs/AVIs, Regional Centres and Open Schools. The internal staff too needs training to develop mechanisms to regularly obtain feedback and translate these in suitable manner as inputs to the system. First, the NIOS may undertake tasks to develop the indicators, and quality assessment tools, and then organize training on this area for its internal staff and external stakeholders.

Duration of the Programme: 3 days

Content Areas	Methods	Training Materials (Available/ To be Developed)
Concept of Open Schooling; Quality and its various meaning and dimensions; Quality; Quality control, quality assurance, total quality management; standards, specifications, norms, guidelines; quality policy, techniques and tools of measuring quality; quality benchmarks; Monitoring and Evaluation	This programme may be delivered through face-to-face at the Headquarters, Regional Centres and at State Open Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The COL is in the process of developing a Quality assurance Toolkit for Open Schools, and the same can be used for initial training and development of institution and country specific guidelines/benchmarks.

Recommendation 26: *A short training module each on Research in Open Schooling and Quality Assurance benchmarks for Open Schooling in India may be developed.*

Recommendation 27: *A model Study centre may be created at the NIOS headquarters (with annual intake of 500 students) to showcase the benchmarks expected in the services to be rendered to the learners. This centre shall also be used as a test-bed for research on “Pedagogy of Open Schooling”.*

4.11 List of Training Materials in Open and Distance Education

Available at NIOS

- *NIOS-COL Module 1: Historical and Philosophical bases of NIOS*
- *NIOS-COL Module 2: Accredited Institutions and SSS*
- *NIOS-COL Module 3: Instructional Strategies for Open Schooling*
- *NIOS-COL Module 4: Operational Strategies for Coordinators and Academic Facilitators*
- *NIOS-COL Module 5: Life Skills for Open School Learners*
- *NIOS-COL Module 6: Training of Trainers*
- *ICTOS Module 1: Concept and Philosophy of Open Schooling*
- *ICTOS Module 2: Curriculum and Course Development*
- *ICTOS Module 3: Student Support Services*
- *ICTOS Module 4: Media in Open Schooling*
- *ICTOS Module 5: Evaluation Techniques in Open Schooling*
- *Handbook for Academic Facilitators*
- *Norms and Procedures for AIs*
- *Standard Operating Procedures*

Available from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

- *STRIDE Handbook-1: Open and Distance Education.*

- *STRIDE Handbook-2: Effective Learning: A Practical Guide for Open and Distance Learners.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-3: Academic Counselling in Open and Distance Learning.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-4: Assessment and Evaluation in Distance Learning.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-5: Development and Revision of Self-Learning Materials.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-6: Editing in Distance Education*
- *STRIDE Handbook-7: Media and Technology in Distance Education.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-8: E-Learning*
- *STRIDE Handbook 9: Support Services in Distance Education*
- *STRIDE Handbook-10: Planning and Management of Distance Education.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-11: Cost Analysis in Open and Distance Learning.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-12: Programme Evaluation in Open and Distance Education.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-14: Psychological Skills for Open and Distance Learning.*
- *STRIDE Handbook-15: Staff Training and Development in ODE*
- *STRIDE Handbook-16: Distance Education: Opportunities for the Northeast Learner*
- *STRIDE Handbook-17: Serving Students with Disabilities in Distance Education*
- *Manual for Course Writers*
- *Open and Distance Learning: Theory and Practice (Training Manual for Academic Counsellors)*
- *Open and Distance Learning: Module for Distance Learners*
- *Glossary of Terms Used in Distance Education.*
- *Manual for Programme and Course Coordinators (2006).*
- *Selected Bibliography on Self-Learning Materials Development*
- *Training Manual for Non-Academic Staff in Distance Education (1993)*
- *Self-Learning Material Development: Developer's Handbook (2000)*
- *Learning Activities in IGNOU Study Materials.*

Available from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

- *Handbook on In-house Style for Course Development*
- *Manual for the Tutors of Learning Centres in Open Schools*
- *Cost and Financing in Open Schools*
- *The Open Schools Handbook: A Resource Guide for Managers*
- *Mobile Technologies in Open Schools*
- *Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools (to be published)*
- *Introducing Copyright by Julien Hoffman*
- *Copyright & Distance Education: A trainer's toolkit.*
- *An Overview of Open and Distance Learning (Kit 01: 278 pages)*
- *Designing Materials for Open and Distance Learning (Kit 02: 360 pages)*
- *Planning & Management of Open and Distance Learning (Kit 03: 408 pages)*
- *Use and Integration of Media in Open and Distance Learning (Kit 04: 396 pages)*
- *Quality Assurance in Open and Distance Learning (Kit 05: 290 pages)*
- *Learner Support in Open and Distance Learning (Kit 06: 294 pages)*
- *Creating learning materials for open and distance learning: a handbook for authors & instructional designers.*
- *Costing Open and Distance Learning (CD-ROM).*
- *Planning and implementing open and distance learning systems: a handbook for decision makers.*

- *Tutoring in open and distance learning: a handbook for tutors.*
- *Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) series.*
- *The Knowledge Series* is a topical, start-up guide to distance education practice and delivery. New titles are published each year.

Availability of training materials in open schooling and distance education is no more a problem, as large number of resources in print, audio, video, multimedia and online are now available. Most of these materials are prepared for self-learning and development, but are not designed for use in training situations. So, the DCBOS would use the existing materials to re-purpose for use in specific situations and contexts.

Recommendation 28: *The DCBOS shall undertake activities to prepare training materials (Handouts, Presentations, Flip Chart, etc.) for use in training situations using the available materials in the field of distance education. It will also endeavour to identify areas where resources are not available and take appropriate steps for making such resources available to all the stakeholders.*

Recommendation 29: *The CBC/DCBOS should prepare annual training calendar in consultation with different stakeholders and in all the areas suggested.*

4.12 List of Possible Partner Institutions in Capacity Building Activities

Though the NIOS needs to have a strong Capacity Building Cell to undertake the massive task of training and development in Open Schooling, it would not be able to cater to all the demands in future even if the proposed staff structure of DCBOS is made available. Therefore, it is imperative to build a trainer-base in the country through proactive efforts by identifying willing teacher educators from DIETs, CTEs, and IASEs across the country. Besides these, the IGNOU with its large number of Regional Centres, and the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) may also be approached to cooperate in the capacity building. The NIOS may develop a database of teacher educators who are willing to participate in the Open Schooling movement. This is possible through creation of an online registration page in NIOS website and also by circulating the information to all the teacher education colleges and DIETs. NIOS should initially use the services of those who are willing to cooperate, and compensate for their efforts by suitable honorarium, certification, and annual awards.

4.13 Budgetary Requirements

In order to undertake the proposed activity, the NIOS would require operating costs. Besides the operational costs, the staff salary and overhead expenditure also needs to be calculated and adequate funding may be in place to organize the capacity building events. *At the proposed level of staff structure the NIOS may have to incur about 6 million INR per year for staff salary and overhead. Besides this, one time investment for the physical training infrastructure would also be required. The annual operating cost for capacity building activities may be over 8.5 million INR.* Though it is not within the scope of the contract to suggest/ recommend the financial implications of this project, the cost calculated are based on the experience of the consultant in organizing training programmes, and it is placed here to indicate to the NIOS management the level of financial commitment required to make the idea of creating a capacity building cell sustainable. The COL may consider supporting some of the activities of the DCBOS, initially for a period of 3

years, and may consider to partially supporting the activity costs for the next three year. The suggestive objectives of such a contract and the strategic plan are given in Appendix-B.

Recommendation 30: *The COL may consider supporting partially the cost of activities of the Capacity Building Cell for three year, and may enter into a contract with NIOS to demonstrate the outcomes and output of the assistance provided. The NIOS may also explore the possibility of support for DCBOS from other international agencies having their mandate to improve the quality of school education. UNESCO is one such agency that NIOS may like to approach for supporting the DCBOS.*

5. ACTION PLAN (2010-2013)

This section presents a plan of action to institutionalize the Capacity Building activity at NIOS in a sustainable manner. So, the action plan suggested here is in step-by-step approach for NIOS to implement.

- *Discuss* this report internally amongst its senior staff members, and consider the recommendations vis-à-vis institutional requirements to implement these.
- *Adopt* the draft policy on Capacity Building by the Executive Board of NIOS to provide necessary acceptability of the capacity building activities by the stakeholders.
- *Establish* the Capacity Building Cell/DCBOS by appointing/engaging the suggested staff so that activities can be coordinated and organized systematically. Without qualified and motivated staff in place, capacity-building activities will not make impact. Energy, dynamism and motivation of the staff in the capacity building cell would transmit very fast. In the absence of staff or staff with low morale, training and development activities would be meaningless and routine.
- *Create* the physical infrastructure for the training activities at the Regional Centre building at Noida. This should also include the facility for training on media in Open Schooling.
- *Enter* in to discussions with COL towards an agreement to support the Capacity Building Cell for the next three years. (Proposed agreement at Appendix-B)
- *Prepare* a capacity building plan for the year 2010-2011 (as suggested in Table-1) in consultation with the State Open Schools, Regional Centres, and other Departments of NIOS. Table 1 shows a tentative estimate of number of capacity building/training programmes, the DCBOS should do in a year. The training calendar should be widely circulated through newspaper, web and postal mail.
- *Develop* a multi-media strategy to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in pedagogy of open schooling.
- *Establish* a Model Study Centre at NIOS headquarters to showcase best practices in Open Schooling and also to experiment innovations.
- *Rethink* outdated and unsuitable educational and administrative practices, and *revise* these as per contemporary thinking in Open Schooling and new media practices.
- *Continue* the capacity building activities year after year, in a sustainable manner by institutionalizing best practices, and develop expertise and quality human resources in the field of Open Schooling to support Open Schools in India and abroad.

Table 1: Capacity Building Interventions

Programmes	Frequency	No of Days	No of Persons in each programme	Total person days of training	Budget Estimate (in INR)
Induction for Newly Recruited Staff	Yearly	1 day	30	30	50000.00
Programme for Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators/ Academic Facilitators	Half-yearly	2 days	30	120	5, 00000.00
Programme for Tutors/Teachers	For New AIs/AVIs	2 days at 20 centres	30	1200	10, 00000.00
Programme for Tutors/Teachers	For existing AIs/AVIs through teleconference half-yearly	2 days	20 persons each at 30 reception centres	1200*	6, 00000.00
Programme for Course Writers	As many required; but 10 in a year	2 days	20	400	10, 00000.00
Programme on Media	Yearly	5 days	30	150	2, 50000.00
Training of Trainers in Open Schooling	Quarterly	5 days each	30	600	10, 00000.00
Research in Open Schooling and Quality Assurance	Half-yearly	3 days	30	180	3, 00000.00
Seminar for Familiarization to Open Schooling	Yearly	1 day at 30 places (Regional Centre city/ State Open School city/others)	100	3000	30, 00000.00
Study Visits for Senior Staff of NIOS and other State Open Schools	Yearly	5 days	10	50	10, 00000.00
Total	43 programmes	132 days	4710	6930	87, 00000.00

* This estimate can be more depending on the number of reception centres available and accessible by NIOS.

Capacity Building Policy for the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)

Preamble: The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) was established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India in 1989 as an autonomous organization and registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. Amongst many of its objectives, the role of promotion of distance and open education in the school sector is prominent. Through the use of open and distance education methodologies, it serves as an agency to fulfil the mission of universalization of education, enhancement of social equity and justice, and creation of a learning society. In order to promote Open Schooling system in the country, it has also started the National Consortium of Open Schooling (NCOS) since 1997. The NIOS has been undertaking consultancy, coordination and collaboration activities to establish State Open Schools, and also provide training to various functionaries of open and distance learning system from time to time. Till 2002, the NIOS functioned as only an Open School that provided academic and vocational courses at Secondary and Senior Secondary level. But the change from the only schooling function (with academic and vocational courses offering) to an institute in 2002 calls for additional activities, especially related to training, research and development. Without strong components of training and research in Open Schooling, the NIOS can't achieve its objectives as a national institute. Now, in order to institutionalize the capacity building activities of the NIOS, and sustain the efforts by providing continuous support to internal and external stakeholders, the present policy has been developed. *It is approved by the Executive Board of NIOS in its _____th meeting held on _____; and shall be effective from the date of notification by the Secretary, NIOS.*

Objectives: The objectives of the Capacity Building policy are to:

- Provide a framework for facilitating capacity building programmes at NIOS;
- Create and institutionalize a capacity building department within NIOS; and
- Guide the activities of the Department of Capacity Building;

Approaches to Capacity Building: Capacity building at NIOS, may take different forms, including encouragement to the internal staff to participate in external training programmes relevant to the working of the NIOS. The different types of capacity building initiatives, include, but not limited to the following:

- Workshops/Training Programmes of various duration in and outside NIOS
- Participation in conferences/ seminars etc. in and outside India
- Contribute articles and research papers in professional and research journals
- Conduct research in open schooling, and other areas of open and distance learning
- Study visits and tours to reputed national and international institutions in Open and Distance Learning;
- Attachment to various divisions within NIOS or other organizations of repute in India and abroad for short duration
- Roundtable conference of State Open Schools

- Printed Handbooks/CDs/Online/Teleconference
- Monthly Faculty Seminar/ Lecture by Experts

As part of the policy, the NIOS will encourage its staff member to participate in capacity building activities, and the Department of Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) shall be the nodal agency to coordinate and organize all such activities. As the training requirements are specific to job positions, everyone at the time of joining will attend an induction programme of 1-2 days. An Induction Toolkit may be developed to support this programme, which may also be used in a stand-alone self-learning basis when the numbers of newly recruited persons are less.

Target Groups: The target groups for the capacity building activities of NIOS shall be as follows:

- Chairman, Secretary, Directors
- Academic Staff (at different levels)
- Administrative staff (at different levels)
- Tutors/Teachers conducting Personal Contact Programmes at Study Centres (AIs/AVIs)
- Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators of study Centres (AIs/AVIs)
- Academic Facilitators, Teachers at District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)
- Opinion Leaders in Panhayat level, District Education Officers, NGO functionaries
- Officials at State Education Departments

Continuous Needs Assessment: The DCBOS will undertake continuous need assessment activity for the different stakeholders of NIOS. However, the work already done by COL (2006) can be the starting point for some of the activities.

Training Designs: The training designs for various capacity building interventions should be prepared by the DCBOS in consultations with the functional divisions of NIOS and the State Open Schools. Appropriate design is an important input for quality training programme. The recommendations and designs in the COL report (2010) shall be used to carryout the activities initially.

Organization: There should be a nodal agency to coordinate the capacity building activities, and for this purpose the Department of Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) may be created. Appropriate staff may be in place for undertaking the activities related to capacity building. Capacity building programmes may be organized independently by NIOS or in partnership/collaboration with national and international agencies. Till sufficient internal capacity is available to conduct training programmes independently by using internal Resource Persons/Experts in Open and Distance Learning/Open Schooling, the NIOS may use the services of external Resource Persons. For this purpose, a roaster of experts may be developed at NIOS. The experts in Open and Distance Learning and Open Schooling should have suitable qualification and experiences to serve as trainers. Suitable criteria for identifying resource persons may be developed, such as considering teacher educators as trainers. The external Resource Persons may be compensated adequately both by recognition and honorarium for their efforts and support to NIOS. Participation in the capacity building programmes should be treated as a 'public good', and NIOS should organize and facilitate these programmes from its own budget to enhance the quality of Open Schooling system in the country.

Incentives: Every staff of NIOS at the level of Academic Officer and above be encouraged to enhance their qualification in Open and Distance Learning by doing Post Graduate Diploma in

Distance Education (PGDDE) of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). Incentive for acquiring of the PGDDE qualification may be given by awarding additional one increment in the salary. Those who join Open Schooling with PGDDE may be automatically given an additional increment. Besides encouraging staff members to study more about Open and Distance Learning, the academic staff may also be encouraged to participate in national and international conferences/seminars to present papers. Staff at the level of Academic Officer and above be encouraged to participate in National level conference in Open and Distance Education every year and international conferences once in every three year. NIOS may provide assistance to the concerned staff for presenting papers by reimbursing the registration fee, TA and DA for attendance in the national/international conference/seminar.

Funding: As a principle, annual budget of NIOS should allocate appropriate funding to undertake the planned activity of the SCBOS. Capacity building activity should be considered a public good and investment. No profit or cost-recovery measures may be adopted. However, results level evaluation should be conducted to assess the return on investment.

Evaluation of Capacity Building Interventions: The capacity building programmes should be evaluated regularly to assess the fulfilment of the objectives and continuously improve the quality of the programmes. Every programme conducted should at least undertake evaluation at the 'Reaction Level', and it may also conduct evaluation at 'Learning Level' by using per-test and post-test methods. Reports of all the evaluation study may be collated every year to undertake longitudinal analysis and re-design the strategies. External evaluation may be conducted at "Impact/Results Level" in every three year to revise the policy and the capacity building strategies.

Suggested Points for Contract Between COL and NIOS

1. The *overall objectives* of the COL support to NIOS are to:
 - Create a Capacity Building Cell/ Department of Capacity Building in Open Schooling (DCBOS) within NIOS to undertake and promote training and development on Open Schooling at NIOS and other State Open Schools in India. It will serve as a centre of excellence in Open Schooling in the Indian sub-continent.

2. The *specific objectives* of the COL and NIOS are to:
 - Identify the training needs of different stakeholders in the Open Schooling system in India on a regular basis.
 - Build and maintain a resource base of up-to-date information regarding training materials, programmes/ courses and related materials, research documents for use within NIOS and State Open Schools.
 - Develop training strategies and provide training for different target groups in NIOS and State Open Schools.
 - Actively seek opportunities for working in Open and Distance Learning projects and consultancies.

3. *Responsibilities*: The responsibilities under the contract shall be as follows:
 - NIOS shall create the Cell/Department within its organizational structure and engage appropriate staff by _____(to be decided)
 - NIOS shall organize all capacity building activities as per the schedule of activities (annual calendar) prepared in consultation with different stakeholders.
 - NIOS shall maintain the record of all capacity building activity and report to COL at the end of each capacity building activity.
 - NIOS shall invoice COL the expenditure for each activity performed on activity basis within the approved budget.
 - NIOS shall undertake regular evaluation of its capacity building programme and cooperate with the external evaluator engaged by COL to evaluate the scheme at the end of three-year period.
 - COL shall advise and approve the capacity building activities and the proposed budget for each activity.
 - COL shall support NIOS to identify Resource Persons in specialized areas of Open Schooling and facilitate their availability to NIOS.

- COL shall reimburse the expenditure related to approved activities for a period of three year from 2010, with a maximum limit of CAD\$_____ per year.
- COL shall facilitate an external evaluation of the support provided to NIOS at the end of the three-year period.

4. Capacity Building *Targets:*

Specific Objectives	Programme Implementation tasks	Responsibility	Three year Success Indicator
To orient newly recruited staff at NIOS	Induction programme of 1 day	CBC/DCBOS	All newly recruited staff oriented to functioning of NIOS
To orient the field level functionaries of NIOS to Open Schooling with particular reference to activities of NIOS	2 days Programme for Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators/ Academic Facilitators	CBC/DCBOS in association with Department of Student Support	At least 180 functionaries in 90 AIs/AVIs of NIOS trained
To orient the tutors at newly created AIs/AVIs of NIOS	2 days Programme for Tutors/Teachers For New AIs/AVIs at 20 centres	CBC/DCBOS in association with Department of Student Support at respective AIs/AVIs	At least 1800 teachers trained on open schooling and tutoring
To orient the tutors at newly created AIs/AVIs of NIOS	2 days teleconference based training for existing AIs/AVIs	CBC/DCBOS in association with Department of Student Support	At least 1800 teachers trained on open schooling and tutoring
To train academic staff course writers to develop quality self-learning materials	2 days Programme for Course Writers	CBC/DCBOS in association with Academic Department	At least 1200 teachers trained in writing distance learning materials
To provide in-depth training on media and ICT to academic staff of NIOS	5 days Programme on Media	CBC/DCBOS in association with Media Unit and Computer Unit	At least 90 academic staff trained
To prepare trainers in open schooling by orienting teacher educators in the country	5 days Training of Trainers in Open Schooling	CBC/DCBOS	At least 360 teacher educators prepared as trainers in Open Schooling
To develop research competencies of Open School functionaries and help them to assure	3 days Research in Open Schooling and Quality Assurance	CBC/DCBOS	At least 180 staff members of NIOS and other State Open Schools trained on research and quality issues

the quality of educational programmes			
To familiarize District Education Officers, opinion leaders, Local self government functionaries, NGO workers about the significance and importance of Open Schooling	1 day Seminar for on Open Schooling	CBC/DCBOS and Regional Centre of NIOS/ State Open Schools	At least 900 persons participate in the familiarization seminar/meeting
To develop the managerial competences of Senior staff of NIOS and State Open Schools	5 days Study Visits for Senior Staff of NIOS and other State Open Schools	CBC/DCBOS	At least 30 persons given opportunity to participate in summer institute/ study visits/ attachments