

# **Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Policy**

(Approved by Ministry of Education on 2063.09.20 BS)

## **Existing Policy of Distance and Open education**

### **The Policy Vision:**

Creating supplementary/alternative ODL System to benefit with all the possible opportunities for the citizens belonging to diverse need contexts to give access to education and opportunities to acquire formal education and overall personality development especially to the deprived community, women and working people through distance mode

### **The Policy Objectives**

- Expanding full access to school and higher education to learners having diverse and special needs especially of out-of-school children, deprived groups, working people, housewives and so on through open and distance learning system as supplementary to the existing system of education.
- Improving the quality of conventional education through different kinds of support mechanisms and materials by the application of ICT.
- Promoting the life long learning, continuing education and professional development through open and distance learning system by applying mix mode delivery mechanism
- Establish a provision to provide skill-based education through customized courses to cater the needs of labor force seeking employment in the national and international job market
- Creating an avenue for skill certification and accreditation to preserve the traditional skills and customary learning of the tribal and indigenous community.

### **Policy 1: Expanding access to education to learners of diverse needs.**

#### **Strategy:**

- An Open and Distance Learning (ODL) System for both school and higher education will be created to act as alternative to existing conventional education system in order to ensure fuller access of all interested learners belonging to various groups especially poor, women, deprived, marginalized citizens to education.
- Under the ODL system, there will be two separate streams of open education: viz., general and vocational with the provision of separate curriculum to be developed under the National Curriculum Framework for the country. Flexible learning practice will be introduced as a strategy to overcome various barriers to education, such as time, physical and pedagogical etc.
- The ODL system will be institutionalized by the creation of a Semi Autonomous High Level Council with mandates to policy formulation and overall execution at the national level.
- The government will take major role to finance for establishment of the system and collaboration with private, NGOs and other agencies will highly be encouraged to run the system for sustainability.

### **Policy 2: Improving quality of conventional education.**

#### **Strategy:**

- A special arrangement will be made to integrate the learning facilities under the ODL system into the conventional system of education in order to create varieties of opportunities for quality education.
- Various programmatic schemes such as application of appropriate media and learner support materials to benefit students of the conventional system; credit transfer system between open and conventional schooling, teacher development programs will be developed and implemented through the distance mode.
- The council will initiate and develop the programs and establish official collaboration with relevant agencies in the public and private sector for implementation and monitoring.
- Initial investment for such supplementary programs will be born by the government. At the same time private sector will be encouraged for large-scale implementation. Possibilities of public private collaboration will be explored and implemented in the execution of the programs.

**Policy 3: Promoting continuing education and professional development.**

**Strategy:**

- Under the ODL system, a separate mechanism will be established to create various provisions for life long/continuing education and occupational skill upgrading by targeting to different actors working in various sectors and the community members.
- Different programs in areas like teacher development, social awareness, civic education, health education, human rights education, child rights education, environment education will be developed and implemented through distance mode.
- The DEOL Council will coordinate the efforts of various agencies involved in the implementation of programs through distance mode for designing and planning of activities. At the sub-national level all relevant agencies and networks including the Community Learning Centers (CLCs) and the Tele-Centers will be utilized for the purpose of implementing such programs.
- In addition to the government investments in the targeted areas sponsors will be attracted to fund the programs. Further, fees will fund part of the costs in case of the registration based courses. The Council will mobilize all other possible sources of generating resources including the involvement of private sector.

**Policy 4: Establishing a system of knowledge and skill certification.**

**Strategy:**

- Special mechanism will be established under the ODL system for accreditation and certification of the skills in the vocational field and customary learning/knowledge in the general field of education acquired by citizens of diverse communities such as tribal and indigenous communities.
- Appropriate testing, customized remedial/bridging courses and counseling programs will be developed and organized to certify the skills and knowledge at the primary and secondary levels of education.
- A separate board will be created at the national level under the ODL system and the board will be made responsible for developing and organizing the testing, remedial and counseling programs in close coordination with relevant agencies like CTEVT and so on.

- Operational cost will be managed on the basis of cost recovery principle. Institutional linkages and networking will consolidated to utilize resources from various sources.