The implementation framework for the National Centre for Open Distance Learning (NCODL) and for blended and catch-up learning

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1. Introduction and background

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) seeks to empower learners through strong foundations in literacy and numeracy—so that all children may catch-up on learning lost during school closures. MOPSE is promoting blended learning for all, to be supported by schools, caregivers, and communities. To deliver on this ambitious objective, MOPSE will establish a National Centre for Open and Distance Learning (NCODL).

Open learning is built upon a combination of:

- High-quality, accessible learning materials and
- Regular, ongoing, learner-support[1]

Open Learning uses the most appropriate media to reach learners - often with innovative approaches to teaching and learning.[2] Many school-aged learners may first need help to develop their learning skills, particularly their foundations in literacy and numeracy, before they are able to study more independently.

1.1 Rationale

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies, Zimbabwe adopted blended learning for both primary and secondary learners. This model of education combines Open Distance Learning (ODL) and face-to-face methods of teaching.

The protracted closure of schools exposed vulnerable learners to a wide range of risks. Schools need various forms of support to reopen safely. MOPSE has chosen to innovate by developing the *Government Correspondence School* into the *National Centre for Open and Distance Learning* (NCODL).

The opening of the National Centre for Open and Distance Learning provides opportunities for innovation and research into the design, development, and delivery of new approaches to teaching and learning that can be used in learners' homes, schools, and communities. These include innovative approaches to the provision of:

- high-quality, accessible learning materials, including print, mobile, and broadcast media, and
- regular, ongoing, local learner-support – in the school, the home, and the community.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and future environmental or health crises, children will continue to have periods of disrupted learning. Where-ever learning takes place - in the school, the home, or the community - it remains paramount to follow Ministry of Health and Childcare and MOPSE Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on issues of social distance and hygiene.

1.2 Purpose

The concept of open distance learning focuses on open access to education, free from the constraints of time and place, offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners. With support from peers and teachers or facilitators, it creates a nerve centre for the growth of knowledge and skills and the transmission of positive attitudes. The NCODL will regulate the operation of open learning programmes nationally, and will coordinate monitoring and evaluation processes in line with the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) requirements. NCODL will build the capacity of MOPSE personnel, at all levels, in open learning methodologies—designing, producing, distributing and evaluating open-learning programmes in consultation with The Curriculum Development and Technical Services Department (CDTS) and other departments.

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[1] Successful Open Learning is also underpinned by high-quality research and scholarship, and professional logistics

[2] There are many examples of how innovative open-learning practices are being develop through the regular 'Innovating Pedagogy' reports from the Open University http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/innovating/

1.3 Methods

There is no single definition or method for Open Distance Learning (ODL). There are many possible approaches to take, with shifts possible between different forms of learning media, guidance, and support. In Zimbabwe, the National Centre for Open and Distance Learning (NCODL) will create learning programmes which offer alternatives to previous conventional programs—making learning more effective at all times, and more resilient in times of crises, such as with COVID 19.

Open Learning allows people to learn **when and where they want** to, using **flexible study resources**, **with support** from peers and tutors or facilitators. Open learning can be mediated through all **different media and technologies**, including print, radio, TV, digital or mobile learning. **Open Learning** is considered to be the **most viable means** for **increasing equity of access** to education while **improving education quality and outcomes.** Open learning programmes give learners a greater sense of autonomy and responsibility for their learning, while also giving learners plenty of support and opportunities to help each other grow and learn together.

2. Implementation Framework

This implementation framework will fulfill MOPSE's strategic vision by ensuring that, in the home, school, and community, children have:
1. **Learning materials** that are accessible, relevant, and at the right level. This requires expanding access to learning materials to equitably reach all children.
2. **Strong foundations in literacy and numeracy**, so that learners are able to learn independantly and catch-up in other learning areas.
3. **Support for learning**. *It's not enough for children to have access to materials.* Children need the adults around them to help bring motivation, guidance, and structure to their learning.

2.1 Learning media and materials

In Zimbabwe, the Government and development partners have worked together through the Zimbabwe Education Cluster (ZEC) to provide alternative learning for as many children as possible. Several channels have been pursued simultaneously, including the use of broadcast, digital, and print media. It has been challenging to measure reach effectively during the pandemic. Approximate percentages for reach are given in the table below, based on figures from the ZEC in May 2021.[3]

Alternative Learning Channel	Approximate Reach (Number of learners)	Approximate Reach (% of 4+ million learners)
Radio[4]	~	~ 33% (estimated)
Print – Grade 7 study guides	700,000 G7 Study Guides (distribution pending)	~ 18% (~ 50% of G6-7 and F1-22)
Digital – Rezuvo (regular users)	400,000 regular active users	~ 10%
Digital – Learning Passport (registered users)	71,000 registered users (how many regularly active?)	~ 2%
TV	No data available at present[5]	~

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[3] Update with more accurate figures on reach and the number of learners in the target population. The percentage reach of any channel will be higher if it is only targeting certain grades – i.e., G7 study guides.

[4] 445 radio lessons have been broadcast, with production ongoing at 25 lessons per week. Household access figures for radio, TV, and mobile internet, could be shown on radar chart as 'limiting factors' if available.

[5] 10 TV lessons have been broadcast, as of May 2021. No reach data available at present.

The approximate reach for each channel is shown in the blue line on the radar chart below. Red arrows show estimates of what might be possible in extending reach via each learning channel, in the next 6-18 months.

Access to Remote or Blended Learning Media in Zimbabwe
By per centage of student pupuliation reached (June 2021)
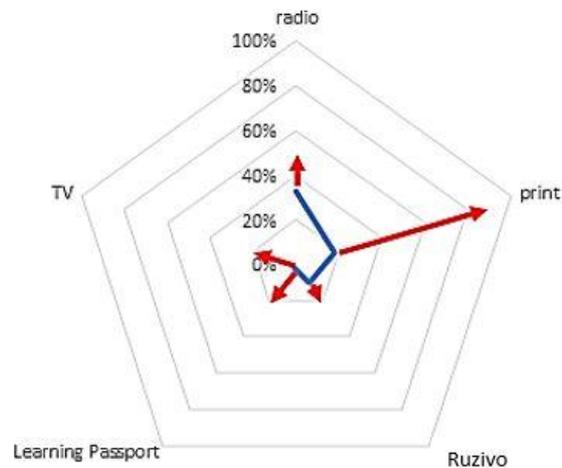
Worldwide, extensive efforts have been made to provide learning materials for children during the pandemic school closures, often initially through broadcast or digital platforms, as well as print. But across the world, one-in-three learners has had no access to learning during the pandemic.

Three quarters of all **learners excluded from alternative learning come from the lowest-income households** in their country.[i]

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, almost one-in-two learners have had no access to learning.[i]

There is a dramatic need to increase the scale and equity of reach for alternative learning—particularly for children from lower-income households.

MOPSE and development partners are working to urgently increase the scale and equity of reach through the National Centre for Open and Distance Learning and the Zimbabwe Education Cluster.

Print is the medium with the greatest potential reach, as children do not need household access to technology or coverage by broadcast or data networks, to access print.

Print learning resources **could be made available to all learners**. When the current batch of Grade 7 study guides have been distributed, print will have the highest level of reach for the target learners (approximately one-in-two learners in Grades 6 and 7, and Forms 1 and 2).

The UNICEF Remote Learning Decision Tree (see right) recommends using paper-based resources for home learning, even if it is possible to reach some learners with other technologies or media. This is because UNICEF recognises print as the most accessible and equitable learning media, enabling home learning through print has the best chance of ensuring learning for all.

Scan QR Code for UNICEF Decision Tree

With guidance and support, all learners can benefit from print resources – regardless of their household income or access to technology.

UNICEF also recommend supplementing print with broadcast media and/or digital resources such as the Learning Passport Platform, for learners who can access these.

> The **NCODL will prioritise print** materials for all learners **and** will explore how to **facilitate equitable access to other media,** particularly radio lessons, **in schools serving disadvantaged communities**.

Although **radio** currently reaches one-in-three learners, further expansion of access is **limited by household ownership and network coverage**. There has been some provision of radios that can play pre-recorded radio lessons as well as live broadcasts, but these have only reached a very small proportion of learners[6]. Where these devices have been provided, a government circular has also promoted strategies to maximise reach and impact from each device, such as group listening in schools and in community learning circles. **NCODL will expand the provision of pre-recorded radio lessons offline for schools serving disadvantaged communities** (i.e. P3 and S3 schools).

There is currently **no data for reach by TV**, as the service has just started. However, household access and media coverage mean **access to TV for learning is likely to remain significantly lower than radio**. In low-income communities, digital video is less well suited than digital audio for group listening strategies, due to the cost and power-requirements of large-screen devices. **NCODL will *not* prioritise TV as a learning medium,** until such time as the majority of learners would be able to access such materials.

Less than one-in-five learners have been able to regularly access mobile/digital learning to date. Access is limited by household ownership of smartphones, costs of data, and coverage of reliable high-speed mobile data networks. Reach could be extended by strategies such as promoting the use of offline digital learning materials through Zimbabwe Learning Passport, and by peer-to-peer file sharing using blue-tooth, memory cards, or WhatsApp groups. However, such approaches are unlikely to be capable of reaching the majority of learners without substantial and ongoing investment. **NCODL will *not* prioritise digital or mobile learning,** until such time as the majority of learners would be able to access such materials.

2.1.1 The compressed syllabus

The NCODL will adopt approved ZIMSEC Primary and Secondary School syllabuses which were compressed into Levels 1, 2 & 3. It is assumed that compression of Syllabi covers more content in a short time since learners may be behind or having independent learning to complete the intended course.

Levels at Primary school are:

- Level 1 for ECD to Grade 2
- Level 2 for Grades 3, 4, and 5
- Level 3 for Grades 6 and 7

At Secondary School, the levels are:

- Level 1 for Forms 1 and 2
- Level 2 for Forms 3 and 4
- Level 3 for Forms 5 and 6.

These syllabi, together with supportive teaching and learning materials, will be distributed to through the Ministry hierarchy to schools as both soft and hard copies to reach out to marginalized communities mostly in rural and peri-urban areas.

> **At the time of writing, large numbers of *Grade 7 Study Guides* are being printed and distributed to meet the needs of learners at Primary level 3 and Secondary level 1.**

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[6] Radios with offline digital audio materials have been provided to ~3,000 learners (~0.1%) to increase equity of access in areas not covered by broadcast transmission

2.2 Strong foundations in literacy and numeracy

Empowering all learners through strong foundations in literacy and numearcy is of the highest priority for MOPSE. If learners are to catch up and progress in any learning area, they need to be able to read with understanding and to use numbers appropriately.

Learners need strong foundations in literacy and numeracy, for learning and for life. Yet half of all children worldwide won't be able to read and understand a simple infant-level text by the time they are old enough to leave primary school[ii] – this is sometimes called **learning poverty[iii].** Learning poverty is linked to other forms of poverty – children from lower income countries, communities, and households are more likely to be in learning poverty.

In schools serving low-income rural communities, across Sub-Saharan Africa and in Zimbabwe, **most children experience learning poverty** and will not be able to catch-up without help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills**. That is why building strong foundations is the highest priority.**

2.3 Support for learning in schools, homes, and communities

It's not enough for children to have access to materials, they need support to be able to use them and learn.

When the Ebola crisis forced children out of school in Sierra Leone, the government and development partners turned to print and radio lessons as the most equitable ways to provide alternative learning. But **most learners did not find these resources useful unless they were supported by siblings or adults** who gave them encouragement and helped them to make learning a regular part of their day. **Being able to ask adults or peers for help** is crucially important and regular informal study groups can make a big difference.[7]

Learning is fundamentally a social process and learners often learn best from each other. Evidence from the pandemic shows that creating opportunities for learning together, at home or in the community, may help address many of the challenges of remote learning. Learners can help each other understand the materials, do the activities together, and check each other's work. Tasks which are beyond an individual on their own often become manageable when children learn together.[8]

Educators, caregivers, and community members can support learning by providing:
- **Psycho-social support**, so that children and young people feel safe and valued, and know that adults care about their learning
- **Regular time free from chores or income generation**, so they can study
- **Safe places for learning** – in school, at home, or in the community
- **Help to develop knowledge and skills**, from teachers, community educators, and peers

Every caregiver can support learning, regardless of their own level education or skills, **by taking an interest in their child's learning and ensuring their child has access to regular, safe, times and places to learn.**

3. Priorities

The MOPSE strategy sets out ambitious goals for learning, addressing the large-scale need for remediation in literacy and numeracy, and completing the accelerated curriculum. This implementation framework sets out immediate- and medium-term priorities to achieve this, through the National Centre for Open and Distance Learning.

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[7]PLAN (2015): https://www.plan.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/GLO-Ebola-Final-IO-Eng-Feb15.pdf
[8] UNICEF Resource Pack to Support Remote Learning (2021) (publication pending).

3.1 Immediate priorities

3.1.1 Print and Distribute Student Learning Materials (SLMs)

In the short term, print remains the only media accessible to the majority of learners in low-income households—most of whom have limited access to radio, TV, or mobile internet. **Expanding the reach of print** will be central to the success of the strategy.

The **Grade 7 Study Guide** is being printed in large numbers, to address the curriculum needs of children who are able to study at or near primary level 3 and secondary level 1 of the compressed syllabus. The printing and distribution of the Grade 7 study guides will be accelerated, so they are in the hands of all learners who are ready and able to use them.

Empowering learners through strong foundations in literacy and numeracy is MOPSE's main priority—therefore MOPSE, with UNICEF and UKaid, will **print and distribute student learning materials for literacy and numeracy** for learners in every school and community. Through *Girls Education Challenge* projects, these materials have been **tried and tested in hundreds of schools** across Zimbabwe and have **strengthened the foundation skills of tens of thousands of learners**. The materials are **effective for both primary and secondary aged learners** and have been used to support learning **in schools, homes, and community settings**.

Student learning materials for foundation skills include:
- **Reading cards** (graded for different levels of numeracy)
- **Reading cards for older learners** (graded for the same levels of numeracy, but with content and contexts more appropriate to adolescent learners).
- **Numeracy cards** (helping learners understand 'how to…' use foundation numeracy skills)
- **Financial literacy cards** (applying foundation numeracy skills for financial literacy)

3.1.2 Print and distribute guidance for teachers, school heads, and community learning champions

In addition to providing learns with student learning materials, it is crucial that learners are supported to learn—in the home, school, and community. MOPSE has developed guidance materials for teachers, school heads, and community learning champions, to guide their work with learners and caregivers. These guides build upon the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) for learners in Grade 3-7, [iv] helping to empower *all learners* who need stronger foundations in literacy and numeracy, whether in primary school, secondary school, or learning in the home or community.

MOPSE, with UNICEF and UKaid, will **print and distribute guides for teachers, school heads, and community learning champions** in every school and community. **Teacher's guides and community learning champion's guides provide structured activities for 1-2 terms of learning.**

Guides will be printed and distributed to all schools, for:

- **Primary Teachers**
- **Secondary English Teachers**
- **Secondary Mathematics Teachers**
- **School Heads**
- **Community Learning Champions.**

School heads will be guided to:
- introduce teachers to the *Teacher's Guides* and *Student Learning Materials*.
- Raise caregivers awareness of, and support for, catch up learning—working with the School Development Committee and School Parents Association.
- Recruit *Community Learning Champions* and introduce them to the *Community Learning Champion's Guide* and *Student Learning Materials*

School teachers will be guided to:
- Assess which learners, grades, or forms, need help with foundation skills
- Lead classroom activities which strengthen learners' foundation skills
- Use *Student Learning Materials* to support learning

Community Learning Champions[9] will be guided to:
- Facilitate Community Learning Circles—regular informal groups for learners to come together and use the *Student Learning Materials* in the community
- Share *Student Learning Materials* or activities with learners or caregivers, to support learning at home.

3.1.3 Deliver orientation and training for teachers and school heads

In addition to providing student learning materials and guides, MOPSE will implement **orientation and training** to help school heads and teachers use these effectively. This will be different to some training approaches and will combine **self-contained resources** with **a school based approach**.

To start this process, **school Inspectors will introduce school heads to the guides and learning materials at cluster workshops**—helping school heads get ready to use the resources with their teachers, learners, and communities. **Back in school, school heads will introduce their schools and communities to the programme and resources**.

Through the *Teacher's Guides*, *School Head's Guide* and *Champion's Guides* and *student learning materials,* MoPSE is putting **self-contained resources directly into the hands of everyone who needs them—**so that everyone gets the same messages and resources.

Training and support will happen mostly in schools. Teachers will come together for regular teacher professional development (TPD) sessions in their school—using the guides and materials. Teachers will gradually work through the new activities together and introduce them week-by-week into their lessons with learners. **School heads and teachers will address the challenges together**, **working in partnership with caregivers and the community** to strengthen the teaching and learning of foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

3.1.4 Supporting and monitoring implementation

School inspectors will support and monitor implementation in schools and communities, ensuring that every school has received the relevant resources, school heads have had their initial orientation at district level, and school teachers have had their initial orientation at school level. Inspectors will support and encourage school heads, teachers, and community champions in their work to empower learners with foundation skills. They will draw upon **cluster resource persons** and **teachers skilled in literacy or numeracy teaching** (e.g. through ECD, PLAP, IGATE, SAGE) where possible.

School heads will submit regular returns to school inspectors on their progress with regular teacher professional development sessions in schools, the diagnostic assessment of learners literacy and numeracy skills, and teaching catch-up lessons. School heads will also report on their engagement with caregivers and the community, and upon the number of community learning champions and the activities in community learning circles.

3.2 Medium-term priorities

The short-term priorities are to get a minimum set of student learning materials to every learner, and to equip teachers and community learning champions with enough structured ideas for learning activities in literacy and numeracy, to cover one or two terms of catch-up learning. Beyond this, the

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[9] The Community Learning Champions approach, developed in Zimbabwe, strengthened learners literacy and numeracy skills during lockdown and helped them return to school succesfully (http://oro.open.ac.uk/75468/).

medium-term priorities pave the way for longer term improvements by providing a broader range of student learning materials, building greater support for learning in homes and communities, and providing more in-depth professional development to improve teachers knowledge and practice.

3.2.1 Empowering learners through strong foundations in literacy and numeracy, with support from caregivers and communities

1) Providing an additional library of durable student learning materials in literacy and numeracy, prioritising P3 and S3 schools. Learning Materials and Production Officers (MPOs) from NCODL or CDTS will develeop or adapt an additional library of durable student learning materials for literacy and numeracy. The materials produced will be of a similar size and shape to the current set of student learning materials, but may be changed in light of lessons learned from the short-term response (for example, there may need to be more reading materials for older learners, or a greater emphasis on numeracy skills).

MPOs may develop new materials, adapt existing resources such as reading materials from African Storybook (https://africanstorybook.org/), or reprint the current student learning materials. **Any new Student Learning Materials will be approved by CDTS**.

The additional Student Learning Materials will be **produced and distributed within 18 months**, by which time the initial SLMs will be coming to the end of their useable lifetime, and targetted to schools serving the most disadvantaged communities (Primary P3 and Secondary S3 schools).

NCODL will develop and distribute **guidance for teachers** through the **Learning Area Platforms**, to help teachers **develop their own Student Learning Materials** for foundation literacy and numeracy. The guidance will go to all schools. MOPSE will delegate **additional funding for local production of student learning materials** to P3 and S3 schools and for the most marginalised learners. The funding will be used to purchase manilla paper, markers, and other materials to produce learning materials. Teacher training (activity 3.2.2) will include guidance on making and using effective resources to improve learning in literacy and numeracy. Cluster Resource Persons and teachers already trained in foundation skills will support colleagues, within and across clusters, in making and using effective learning materials.

An academic partnership of Technical Advice and Zimbabwe HEIs will generate evidence on the quality and effectiveness of student learning materials made through delegated funding for local materials production (activity 1.1d), in collaboration with the Centre of Education, Research, Innovation and Development (CERID). MOPSE will use this evidence to generate and share key messages on effective local production of learning resources for literacy and numeracy, at district, provincial, and national levels.

2) MOPSE and NCODL will promote greater support for learning from caregivers and communities by developing **radio broadcasts** and **community roadshows** aimed at caregivers, community leaders, and people who might consider becoming community learning champions. Roadshows will raise awareness of services and products available to support learning and learners, including samples of the library of student learning materials.
Field-level investigations will generate evidence of good practice and share key messages for effective support for learning from caregivers and communities. Investigations will be carried out at school and cluster levels, with a bottom-up approach. An academic partnership of Technical Advice and Zimbabwe HEIs will support the framing and interpretation evidence gathered, buttressing capacity in the Centre of Education, Research, Innovation and Development (CERID). MOPSE will facilitate sharing of good practices at district, provincial, and national levels.

3) Caregivers and community members will give learners encouragement and feedback on their use of student learning materials. School heads and teachers will engage with School Development Committees and School Parents Associations, guiding caregivers and community learning champions

about how to give appropriate encouragement and feedback to learners on the use of student learning materials, whether at home or in the community.

3.2.2 Training teachers to empower learners with strong foundations in literacy and numeracy

1) Professional development on teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy will use a similar approach to the short-term training—combining **self-contained professional development resources** with **a school based approach.**

In-depth professional development modules in literacy and numeracy, developed and field-tested through IGATE and approved by CDTS, will be distributed to all primary teachers, and to all English and Mathematics teachers in secondary schools. These include six modules on teaching foundation skills in literacy, and six modules on teaching foundation skills in numeracy.

Training and support will happen mostly in schools. Teachers will come together for regular teacher professional development (TPD) sessions in their school—using the professional development modules. Teachers will gradually work through the modules, trying out new classroom activities with their learners. The professional development modules—aligned with national frameworks for continuing professional development and assessment—include guidance on making and using local resources for teaching and learning in literacy and numearcy. The professional development modules and learning resources have been shown to be effective in improving teaching practice and learning outcomes, particularly in schools serving disadvantaged communities (P3 and S3 schools).

3.2.3 Expanding access to radio lessons through pre-recorded lessons offline

MOPSE will provide **one radio to each primary and secondary school serving disadvantaged communities** (P3 and S3 schools), to expand access to radio lessons. The radios will be capable of playing back digital audio recordings and will be pre-loaded with pre-recorded radio lessons (as per those already distributed to 3,000 schools in 2021).

The radios will be distributed with a copy of the current government circular providing guidance on using the radios for active group listening in schools and in community settings.

3.2.4 Supporting, monitoring and evaluating impact.

MOPSE's ambitous strategy for blended and catch-up learning sets out to improve the equity, inclusivity, and quality of teaching and learning for all children in Zimbabwe. Effective and timely monitoring of implementation will be crucial to the success of the strategy.

1) Ongoing support to and monitoring of implementation, takeup and quality will be done 'from the ground up', through schools, clusters, districts, and provinces, within regular monitoring processes.

School heads will submit regular returns to school inspectors on their progress with regular teacher professional development sessions in school and progress against school action plans for teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy.

School inspectors will support and monitor implementation in schools and communities, ensuring that every school has received the relevant resources, school heads have had their initial orientation at cluster level, and school teachers have had their initial orientation at school level. They will draw upon cluster resource persons and teachers skilled in literacy or numeracy teaching (e.g. through ECD, PLAP, IGATE, SAGE) where possible.

2) Field-level investigations will generate evidence of good practice and share key messages for effective teacher development in schools. Investigations will be carried out at school and cluster levels, with a bottom-up approach. An academic partnership of Technical Advice and Zimbabwe HEIs will support the framing and interpretation evidence gathered, buttressing capacity in the Centre of

Education, Research, Innovation and Development (CERID). MOPSE will facilitate sharing good practices at district, provincial, and national levels.

3) & 4) Impact evaluations will generate evidencee of what worked, for who, and under which circumstances—to inform future policy and practice in Zimbabwe and potentially contribute to the regional and global evidence base.

MOPSE will commission impact evaluations of both the short-term and medium-term implementation activities. Evaluation studies will be designed by the Centre of Education, Research, Innovation and Development (CERID) in collaboration with an academic partnership of Technical Advice and Zimbabwe HEIs.

3.2.5 Strengthening recognition and support for informal community-based learning

The implementation framework calls for Community Learning Champions to facilitate informal learning of literacy and numeracy, using the student learning materials in Community Learning Circles. MOPSE will strengthen recognition and support from community-based learning, in line with the principles of the National Non-Formal Education Policy.

4. Summary of Costed Action Plan
4.1 Immediate actions

High-level summaries of the key activities, timeframe, and total cost are given in the table below. Full details are in the separate *Costed Action Plan* document (spreadsheeet).

| Activity ID	Key Activity	Priority	Planned Start	Planned End	Total Cost(4)
1	Print and Distribute Student Leaning Materials (SLMs)	High	Aug-21	Jan-22	$337,000
2	Print and distribute guides (for teachers, heads, and community champions)	High	Aug-21	Jan-22	$339,500
3	Training for Teachers and School Heads	High	Dec-21	Jul-22	$45,978
	a) district officers train heads in clusters		*Dec-21*	*Jan-22*	
	b) heads lead initial teacher orientation in schools		*Jan-22*	*Feb-22*	
	c) heads lead ongoing CPD in schools		*Feb-22*	*July-22*	
4	Supporting and monitoring implementation	High	Jan-22	Jul-22	$0

4.2 Medium term actions

High-level summaries of the key activities, timeframe, and total cost are given in the table below.
Full details are in the separate *Costed Action Plan* document (spreadsheeet).

Activity ID	Key Activity	Priority	Planned Start	Planned End	Total Cost
1	Empowering learners through strong foundations in literacy and numeracy, with support from caregivers and communities				
1.1	Providing an additional library of durable student learning materials in literacy and numeracy (in P3 and S3 schools)	High	Jan-22	Dec-22	$2,004,593
1.2	Supporting learners to use student learning materials, at home and in the community	High	Jan-22	Dec-22	$0
1.3	Strengthening feedback to learners on use of activities and materials, through caregivers and communities	High	Jan-23	Dec-23	$0
2	Training teachers to empower learners with strong foundations in literacy and numeracy				
2.1	Training teachers to empower learners with strong foundations in literacy and numeracy	High	Jan-22	Dec-23	$515,322
3	Expanding access to radio lessons through pre-recorded lessons offline				
3.1	Providing devices and pre-recorded radio lessons to P3 and S3 schools	Medium	Jan-22	Mar-22	$213,255
3.2	Producing and distributing guidance on offline use of pre-recorded radio lessons	Done	~	~	$0
3.3	Production and broadcast of additional radio lessons (UNICEF budget)	High	Jan-22	Mar-22	$0
4	Supporting, Monitoring, and Evaluating Impact				
4.1	Ongoing support and monitoring of implementation	High	Aug-22	Dec-23	$0
4.2	Field level investigations to generate evidence of good practice and share key messages	High	Jan-22	Dec-22	$59,500
4.3	Impact evaluation, short-term strategy	Medium	Jan-22	Dec-22	$220,000
4.4	Impact evaluation, medium-term strategy	Medium	Aug-22	Dec-23	$220,000
5	Policy environment for community-based learning				
5.1	Strengthen recognition and support for Community education roles	Medium	Jan-22	Mar-22	$0

5. Structure of the National Centre for Open Distance Learning

The structure of the National Centre for Open Learning will be comprised of three Deputy Directors one for Primary, One for ODL Centre Management and one for Secondary levels support to the Director responsible for the centre. The Director will report to the Chief Director, who will report to the Permanent Secretary, MOPSE.

Six Education Research Officers (ERO) operate under Deputy Directors, Primary and Secondary. Below the D/Director National Centre are the 10 Primary Subject Specialists, 12 Secondary Subject Specialists. A loop will lead to Provincial Director then a Deputy PED responsible for ODeL and District Coordinators link with School Structure and Facilitators (who could be DLLCs). Subject specialists will focus mostly on content development from compressed modules and review on measurement and Evaluation.
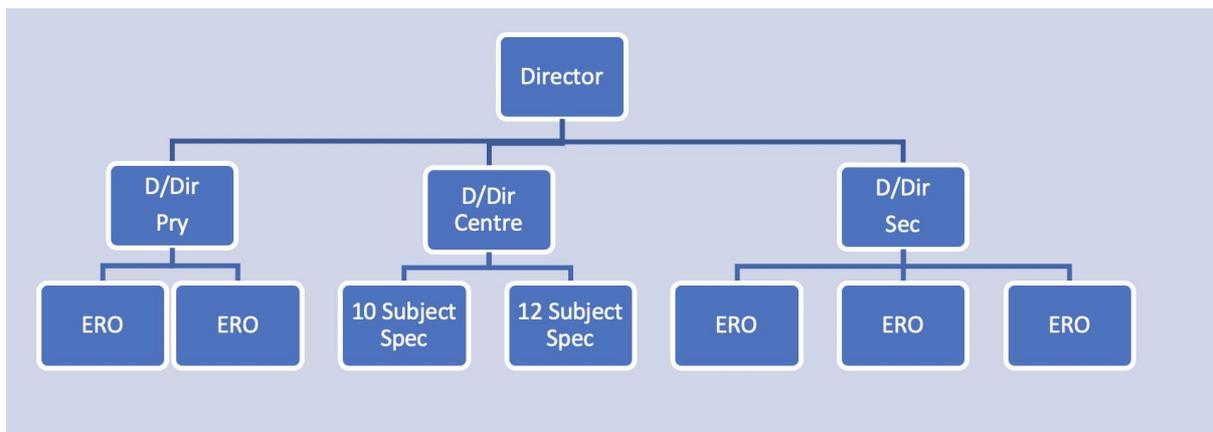
5.1 Advisory Board

An 11-member Advisory Board shall be established. Members of the Advisory Board shall consist of inter-alia:
1. Chief Director for Human Resources Development (HRD)
2. Chief Director PSNE
3. One Provincial Education Director representing the Southern Region of the country
4. One Provincial Education Director representing the Northern Region of the country
5. Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU)
6. Department of Teacher Education – University of Zimbabwe
7. Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation Science and Technology representative
8. Teachers' College Representative
9. Industry – Chamber of Commerce
10. Legal Representatives
11. Financial Expert
12. Health Expert

5.1.1 Role of the Advisory Board
- Help the organization gain new insights and advice to solve business problems
- Explore new opportunities by stimulating robust, high-quality conversations.
- Make decisions and provide current knowledge, critical thinking and analysis to increase the confidence of the decision makers who represent the institution
- Develop an understanding of the education, market and international trends.
- Provide "wise counsel" on issues raised by National education management.
- Provide the directors and management with insights and ideas which can only come with distance from the day-to-day operations.

- Monitor and evaluate performance quality of the National ODL Centre
- Meeting Termly or as tasks demand to consider issues brought by National ODL Centre management

5.2 Functions of the National Centre for Open & Distance Learning

Regardless of the size of the programme, unit, or institution undertaking development and implementation of an open and distance learning system, the following functions must occur at some level. Functions include:

5.2.1 Obtaining and managing financial and other resources
- Grant-sustained, cost recovery (self-financing);
- Higher development and start-up costs
- Human support relatively expensive component

5.2.2 Developing or acquiring programmes and courses
- Considerable development time required for full-scale development and production;
- Buying or leasing courses from other open and distance learning providers may be more
- Effective use of resources
- Continuum of approaches, from single author to large teams of specialists.

5.2.3 Recruiting and promoting of personnel
- Analyse and assess the needs of prospective learner populations;
- Make information available at right place and time;
- Provide sufficient accurate information about time, cost, effort required;
- Provide sufficient accurate information about when, where, and how to get involved;
- Reassure potential learners about legitimacy and credibility

5.2.4 Using and Integration of Media in Open and Distance Learning
- Physically producing, reproducing, storing, and disseminating materials
- Distribution of school syllabuses to schools through provinces and districts
- Course materials requirements may demand print, audio, video, or computer software;
- Dissemination may require post, courier, transport companies, telecommunications, broadcasts, satellites
- Physical production and reproduction time consuming
- Specialised equipment and personnel required for storage, handling, packaging, dispatch, inventory
- Assignment handling from school level with records management
- Learner counselling and mentoring programmes
- Creating an academic environment
- Providing Library/electronic services

5.2.5 Enrolling and registering all learners inclusive of those with disabilities
- Process varies from simple manual lists to complex electronic systems;
- Fixed or rolling entrance dates; and
- Range of delivery options available

5.2.6 Delivering programmes and courses
- Two-way communication required and project oriented
- Evaluation and feedback of functional , digital and financial literacy
- Collaboration with other agencies for entrepreneurial activities

- Library services and record systems (Learning Management Systems- LMS)

5.2.7 Providing learner support systems
- Personal support such as advice or counselling;
- Academic support such as tutoring, grading, and examining; and
- Face-to-face or mediated support

5.2.8 Examining, crediting and granting credentials
- Outsourcing assessment framework and criteria
- Determination of skills, attitude and knowledge assessment
- Range of credit options available like short course certificates
- Exam taking and credit evaluation requirements; and
- Involvement of professional associations and external agencies

5.2.9 Evaluating and revising processes, procedures, programmes and courses
- Learner performance and learner satisfaction
- Meeting goals and objectives
- Resistance to change

5.2.10 Use and Integration of Media in ODL Training and developing staff
- Orientation and adjustment to new technologies and approaches
- Providing awareness of advantages and limitations of ODL operations.
- CDTS, PSNE, Learner Welfare and HRD Departments, coordinates the training of school heads, teachers and other education personnel on how to run their schools using ICT tools

5.2.11 Implementation of ODL methodologies
- All Ministry structures at every level shall implement ODL

5.3 Description of roles at all levels for delivery

5.3.1 Head Office shall
- Provide policy direction and guidelines
- Monitor provinces, districts and schools to ensure compliance with policies and guidelines
- Give feedback to both higher office and provinces
- Identify capacity development gaps and address them

5.3.2 Provincial Office shall
- Distribute all teaching and learning materials received from the National ODL Centre
- Monitor and Supervise ODL methodology in schools
- Make needs identification for knowledge, skills and training gaps in all support personnel and organize systematic training programmes
- Generate termly reports on operations of ODL in province to the PS

5.3.3 District Office shall
- Distribute all study materials to schools
- Monitor/Supervise ODL in schools
- Identify knowledge/capacity development gaps that should be addressed
- Address knowledge/capacity development gaps identified
- Appraise the Provincial Education Director of the status of ODL in the district
- Make reports to Provincial Education Director

5.3.4   School Office shall
- Distribute all ODL study materials to teachers
- Ensure that teachers are capacitated to scheme and use ODL methodology
- Monitor leaners ODL assignments/homework
- Appraise the district office of the status of ODL at the school
- Make reports to the district office on blended education at the school

5.3.5   Parent/Guardian shall
- Assist the learners in the interpretation of assigned work and facilitation of radio and TV lessons and any other support
- Supervise the learning process and payment of all the relevant fees for the learner
- Share information on child's progress with the teacher

5.3.6   Education Partners shall
- Provide technical, material and financial advice on request

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