Call for Proposals

Development of media guideline for reporting on mental health

Background
In the Maldives, the responsibility of media regulation is undertaken by the Maldives Media Council and the Maldives Broadcasting Commission. And as per global standards, local media professionals are expected to adhere to a code of practice and ethics, including specific practices and conduct as well as fundamental ethical values, principles, and ideals when reporting. The Maldives Broadcasting Commission currently has guidelines for reporting on children and women, as well as reporting on good governance and human rights. However, the absence of a guideline for reporting on mental health makes it difficult for media professionals to make informed decisions on the news they cover and the language, images, and messages they use to convey such reporting. The development of a mental health reporting guideline that can be utilized in combination with current media standards of practice and editorial rules is therefore crucial.

In addition, a combination of targeted mental health awareness programs for media professionals can help cover news reporting that educates the community and can be a powerful tool for addressing mental health-related misconceptions and stigma. By engaging with the community to address mental health concerns, the media can achieve positive outcomes. Information / familiarization sessions for media professionals can help minimize harmful consequences caused by inaccurate reporting on mental health as well as address taboo, misinformation and stigma, thereby reducing discrimination in the community connected with mental health and illness. The guideline can support people working in the media to report on mental illness and mental health issues safely, accurately, and respectfully.

In this regard, World Health Organization in collaboration with Health Protection Agency is seeking a contractual partner to provide technical support to develop a media guideline for reporting on mental health, as well as to conduct familiarization and awareness sessions for the media, and to incorporate reporting on mental health into journalism studies in Maldives. The implementation of the media guideline can result in more responsive, technically guided and compassionate reporting on mental health within the media.

Work to be performed
- Prepare a comprehensive plan and timeline for the project, in consultation with HPA and WHO
- Assess and review the current acts, regulations, codes, and guidelines as well as best practices by the Maldives Broadcasting Commission and Maldives Media Counsel by reviewing the existing documents and any other relevant documents (both local as well as international literature), identify the gaps and priority areas
- Provide a plan of consultations and conduct a consultative process with national authorities, international partners, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders
- Develop and draft the media guideline for reporting on mental health based on the situation, desk review, and stakeholder consultations
- Present the drafted media guideline to all relevant stakeholders for feedback and comments
• Facilitate a validation meeting with national authorities, international partners, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to finalize the guideline
• Develop the materials and content for the familiarization and awareness workshops with a focus on the guideline
• Develop training material to incorporate reporting of mental health into journalism studies in Maldives through consultation with relevant academic authorities
• Conduct a 2-day familiarization and awareness workshop on the developed media guideline for reporting mental health for media professionals

**Expected Deliverables**
Comprehensive plan and timeline
The finalized media guideline for reporting on mental health
All materials (facilitator notes, PPTs, activities) used in the familiarization and awareness workshops
Training material to be incorporated into journalism studies course

**Qualifications, experience, skills, and languages**

**Educational Qualifications:**
A post-graduate or equivalent qualification/degree in Communications, Journalism, Social Sciences, Psychology, or any other relevant discipline

**Experience:**
At least 5 years of professional work experience in communication, journalism, print and broadcast media, mental health/social sciences, or other relevant fields

**Skills/Knowledge:**
• Excellent analytical, report writing and communication skills in Dhivehi and English
• Proven combined national and international experience in developing guidelines at the national level
• Familiarity with local media, and established network with local journalists
• Proficiency in computer skills and use of software and other applications, including Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
• Demonstrated skills in strategic planning and effective time and project management
• Demonstrated experience and skills in facilitating stakeholder/working group consultations
• Experience in working with projects and programs addressing media ethics and reporting and would be an added advantage
• ability to work in teams and past work in similar capacity will be an asset

**Languages and level required (Basic/Intermediate/Advanced):**
Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English and Dhivehi

**Application:**
• Interested parties are requested to send their curriculum vitae along with technical and financial proposal to sewhomav@who.int with subject ‘Development of guidelines for media on reporting mental health by 15 June 2023.'