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BELIZE

SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM

(BL-L1044/BL-G1008)

LOAN PROPOSAL

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ABBREVIATIONS	
4iR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
BEMIS	Belize Education Management Information System
BESPlan	Belize Education Sector Plan
CA	Coordinating Agency
CBET	Competency-based Education and Training
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EQIP	Education Quality Improvement Program
GA	Grant Agent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOB	Government of Belize
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IPP	Inquiry and Problem-based Pedagogy
ITVET	Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
LEG	Local Education Group
MoECST	Ministry of Education Culture Science and Technology
NSCC	Nova Scotia Community College
NPV	Net Present Value
PEU	Program Execution Unit
POD	Proposal for Operation Development
POM	Program Operation Manual
PSE	Primary School Examination
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Harassment
SEN	Special Education Needs
SES	Socio-Economic Status
STEAM	Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
SwD	Students with Disabilities
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UB	University of Belize
UWI	University of West Indies
VL	Virtual Laboratory

PROJECT SUMMARY

BELIZE

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(BL-L1044/BL-G1008)

Financial Terms and Conditions				
Borrower			**Flexible Financing Facility**[a]	
Belize			**Amortization Period:**	25 Years
Executing Agency			**Disbursement Period:**	4 Years
Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology (MoECST)			**Grace Period:**	5.5 Years [b]
Source	**Amount (US$)**	**%**	**Interest rate:**	SOFR Based
IDB (Ordinary Capital):	15,000,000	74	**Credit Fee:**	[c]
Cofinancing: GPE[f]	5,000,000	25	**Inspection and supervision fee:** [c]	
Local in kind:	150,000	1	**Weighted Average Life (WAL):**	15.25 Years
Total:	20,150,000	100	**Currency of Approval:**	Dollars of the United States of America

Project at a Glance
Project Objective: The development objective is to contribute to the closing of the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR (Fourth Industrial Revolution). The specific objectives of the proposed operation are to: (i) increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills; (ii) increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills; and (iii) increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education.
Special Conditions Precedent to First Disbursement: The first disbursement of the Loan shall be subject to the fulfillment, to the satisfaction of the Bank, of the following requirements: (i) The approval by MoECST of the Program's Operations Manual (POM) in terms previously agreed to with the Bank; and (ii) The hiring of a Program Coordinator, Project Officer, Financial Officer within the Project Execution Unit (PEU), and a Procurement Specialist, either full or part time(¶3.4). **Special Execution Conditions:** As a condition to the commencement of works in Subcomponent 2.1, MoECST shall present evidence, to the satisfaction of the Bank, of the following: (i) Final engineering designs prior to the call for bids for the civil works; (ii) Evidence that the MoECST has begun the call for bids for the specialized supervision firm prior to the initiation of civil works; and (iii) Has obtained all authorizations, land titles, licenses or permits which are necessary for the execution of the civil works(¶3.5). **Special disbursement**: Notwithstanding the special contractual clauses, once the Loan Contract has entered into effect and the Borrower has fulfilled the conditions precedent to the first disbursement set forth in the General Conditions of the Loan Contract, the Bank may disburse to the Borrower up to the amount of US$50,000 from the resources of the loan to hire the key personnel of the PEU(¶3.6).
Exceptions to Bank Policies: None

Strategic Alignment				
Challenges[d]:	SI ☒		PI ☐	EI ☐
Cross-Cutting Issues[e]:	GE ☒ and DI ☒		CC ☒ and ES ☒	IC ☒

[a] Under the Flexible Financing Facility (document FN-655-1), the borrower has the option to request modifications to the amortization schedule, as well as currency, interest rate, commodity, and catastrophe protection conversions. In considering such requests, the Bank will take into account operational and risk management considerations.

[b] Under the flexible repayment options of the Flexible Financing Facility (FFF), changes in the grace period are possible as long the Original Weighted Average Life (WAL) and the last payment date, as documented in the loan agreement, are not exceeded.

[c] The credit fee and inspection and supervision fee will be established periodically by the Board of Executive Directors during its review of the Bank's lending charges, in accordance with the relevant policies.

[d] SI (Social Inclusion and Equality); PI (Productivity and Innovation); and EI (Economic Integration).

[e] GE (Gender Equality) and DI (Diversity); CC (Climate Change) and ES (Environmental Sustainability); and IC (Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law).

[f] Corresponding to investment grant BL-G1008 financed by the Global Partnership of Education (GPE). See document GN-3097. As per Resolution DE-31/22, the administrative fees received by the Bank from the GPE (5% for this project) will be distributed among the relevant departments for which additional workload is being generated by the GPE Fund.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS MONITORING

A. Background, problem addressed, and justification

1.1 Aware of the value of skill development, Belize has invested heavily in education, increasing access at the primary level and investing in teacher training[1]. Although education reforms take time to translate into achievement gains, some improvements were recorded prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the gap in foundational skills.[2] Between the 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years, the proportion of 8th-grade (standard 6) students who obtained a competent score in English language improved from 17.7% to 21.6%. In mathematics, over the same period, the proportion of 8th-grade students with a competent score increased from 23.2% to 25.1%[1].

1.2 Despite substantive efforts made by the Government of Belize (GOB) to provide distance learning, COVID-19 related school closures led to a decrease in the rate of learning. In line with international trends, large losses were recorded in foundational skills. The average mathematics score among 5th graders dropped by 36% between the 2018/19 and 2021/22 school years. In the 8th-grade (standard 6), the average mathematics score dropped by 41%. In English language, the average test score decreased by 26% among 5th graders and 15% among 8th graders[1]. Pre-pandemic anecdotal evidence already suggested gaps exist between students with learning disabilities and their peers. The link between foundational skill gaps and education attainment is well established. Belize already struggled with some of the region's lowest access rates pre-pandemic at the primary and secondary levels.[3] In line with international trends, during the COVID-19 pandemic student average repetition and dropout rates increased at the secondary level of education. Grade repetition increased from 6.2% to 10.4% between the 2018/19 and 2021/22 school years among 8th graders. In the same period, the dropout rate increased from 4.9% to 6.1% among 5th graders[1].

1.3 In addition to the gaps in foundational skill development and retention, Belize's youth is not equipped with the competencies demanded by the labor market. An Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)-financed employability gap analysis concludes that Belize's ability to innovate is predicated on the readiness of a large pool of talented individuals with expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. The study calls for training not only in STEM, but in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM). The abilities that are in highest demand by employers in Belize are those needed to face the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4iR)[4]: STEAM skills, teamwork, social skills,

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1 School attendance is mandatory from 5-14 years of age.

2 The foundational skills gap is defined as the percentage of students who score below competent in mathematics, reading and science.

3 Gross school enrollment in Belize is 85.1% in primary education and 61.6% in secondary, compared to the regional average of 106.7% and 94.3%, respectively[2]. Net school enrollment in Belize is 76.8% at the primary level and 49.6% at secondary, compared to the regional average of 94.5% and 74.5%, respectively[2].

4 The 4iR is characterized by a range of new technologies that are needed to fuse "the physical, digital and biological worlds, impacting all disciplines, economies and industries"[3].

communication, responsibility,[5] and digital abilities.[6] These are skills needed in the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) industry, one of the industries with the highest expected growth,[7] where firms lack digital competencies for middle-skill jobs in software, web development, and database networking[4]. They are also key to the transformation to a greener economy[5][6][7].

1.4 Green and blue skills[8] are fundamental to the 4iR to turn Belize into a low-carbon, sustainable and competitive economy. The country's dependence on agriculture, tourism and fishing, and the proximity of critical infrastructure to the coast, make it susceptible to natural disasters, and the growing impacts of climate change. Belize is an energy-intensive society and net electricity importer and has seen a steady increase in national greenhouse gas emissions over the past 20 years[8][9]. According to the 2021 Global Climate Risk Index, Belize ranks 8th out of 180 countries for average losses per unit of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 2000-2019[10]. While a *green* 4iR is critical for the long-term sustainability of the economy, the adoption and dissemination of green and blue technologies require the accompanying skills. The education system lacks programming to develop these skills. Belize has only recently introduced its first renewable energy certificate course through the Belize City Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ITVET) (ATN/TV-18294-BL).

1.5 While a spectrum of causes contributes to these skill gaps, and IDB study suggests that there are three main determinants of the gaps in foundational and XXI Century skills[11]. First, research indicates that teacher quality is the main determinant for student learning and skill development[12][13][14][15]. Encouragingly, the proportion of primary school teachers who have completed professional training in education for the primary level has increased dramatically in past decades from 39% of teachers in 2006 to 88% in 2021, aligning with the global average for middle-income countries (87%)[16]. At the secondary level of education, the increased proportion of teachers who have completed formal professional training in education has also dramatically increased from 29% in 2006 to 66% in 2021 but, despite being considered an upper middle-income country, Belize remains well below the global average for lower middle-income countries (82%)[16]. As more teachers are trained, the content knowledge of teachers has increased. The proportion of teachers who obtained at least a B[9] on average on the Primary School Examination (PSE) increased from 69% in 2012 to 71% in 2019. Close to a third of teachers scored on average C or lower[18]. In spite of this improvement, a B on average on the skill content that teachers are supposed to teach students shows that many lack necessary content knowledge. In terms of pedagogical skills, the closing of learning gaps requires extensive practice in the use of evidence-based practices to close learning gaps, such as accelerated instruction. Currently, no teacher in Belize has been trained in accelerated learning methodologies[11] (¶1.11). To support the integration of Students with Disabilities

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5 Employers were asked to choose from a list the three most relevant soft skills needed for employees to be successful in their jobs.

6 In the survey, digital competency was defined as confident and critical use of electronic media for work, leisure, and communication.

7 According to the World Development Indicators (WDI) data, ICT services account for 12% of Belize's services up from 4.3% in 2019[17].

8 Green skills are the technical skills, knowledge and capacities needed to enable environmental sustainability of economic activities and support the transition to a green economy. Blue skills are a subset of green skills applied to ocean and coastal economic activities and specifically supporting the transition to a blue economy.

9 In an A to D scale, being A the highest and D the lowest.

(SwD), teachers also need training in special education[19]. However, in Belize only 1% of primary education teachers are trained in special education. A survey of teacher training needs reveals that some 60% demand training in instruction of students with SEN[20].[10]

1.6 Second, there is a mismatch between the skills demanded by employers(¶1.3) and those provided by the education system. While Belize's employers are preparing for the 4iR, and demanding XXI Century skills, few secondary and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions report these skills among their learning objectives. Employers also demand STEAM professionals with education and training above a high school diploma but below a bachelor's degree–known as 'middle-skill-jobs.' Even at the tertiary level, the digital competency programs that are offered by only a few educational institutions are not adequate to prepare students for middle skill jobs.[11] Currently, the country does not have the capacity to respond to the increasing demand for skilled workers in STEAM-related industries, such as digital transformation, neither in terms of quantity, nor quality[4][11]. Across industries, fewer than 1 in 5 employers (16%) believe the Belizean workforce has the necessary skills related to technology and digitalization to meet market needs. A survey reveals that half of employers believe that the education system is failing to develop graduates with the 4iR skills needed for the workforce, mentioning the need for skills in technologies such as cloud computing, cyber security, and systems integration[11].

1.7 Third, the education system does not sufficiently address gender-specific needs of students to close gender education gaps. There is no systematic approach to foster gender-sensitive instruction[21], (resulting in gender biases and unmet needs of both female and male students). The principal gender education gaps that put female students at a disadvantage relate to STEM. A recent teacher survey shows that 44.5% of teachers believe that there are gender discrimination and/or stereotypes against female students in STEM education and training. Some 40% of female employers hold the same view of differential treatment of women in STEM education and training[11]. Belizean girls have lower levels of achievement and participation in STEM than their male peers. In Mathematics and Science learning, gender learning gaps appear to develop over time as gaps are small and significant only in some academic years on the PSE. By the time students reach the secondary level of education, the gap is pronounced with boys outscoring girls on the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination by 14.2% and 12.5% in mathematics and science, respectively. Belizean girls also experience higher rates of anxiety around mathematics than their male peers and have lower self-efficacy in mathematics[23]. An IDB survey shows that 4% of girls sense that they belong in the exact science fields, compared with 37% of boys[1]. By the time students reach the tertiary level, fewer women choose to pursue careers in exact sciences.[12] Consistent with the LAC average, Belizean women represent only 34% of students in exact science fields while they represent almost

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10 As a comparison, data from the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) show that one in five teachers reports SEN training needs, while one in three teachers in lower secondary education reports a shortage of teachers able to teach students with SEN[22].

11 Only the University of Belize (UB), the University of West Indies (UWI) and Galen University offer bachelor's degree programs in digital areas.

12 Exact sciences are those whose laws are capable of precise quantitative expression (e.g., physics, chemistry, or astronomy).

60% of students in other fields, making women an untapped resource for economic growth, especially given the demand for 4iR skills[4].

1.8 Although boys outperform girls in STEM, they are at a disadvantage in secondary school enrollment, repetition, dropout, and retention rates. Adolescent males are at a particular risk of leaving school due to household financial responsibility[21]. The repetition rate of male secondary education students for the 2021/22 academic year is 12.5% compared with 8.4% for their female peers. The dropout rate is 7.3% compared with 4.9% among female secondary students[24]. Male students also complete secondary education at lower rates than their female peers. While 83% of female students graduate from high school, only 78% of male students do.

1.9 **IDB's Support of the Education Sector.** In response to these challenges, the GOB and the IDB have worked together to design and implement the Education Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) I (3186/OC-BL) and EQIP II (4798/OC-BL). In 2014, the GOB and the IDB designed EQIP I which set out to change Belize's primary education in science, mathematics, and language arts classrooms, rolling out an Inquiry and Problem-based Pedagogical (IPP) learning approach. IPP creates active problem-solving opportunities in settings that derive meaning to the child. Students learn by collaboratively solving real-life authentic problems, developing explanations, and communicating ideas. Teachers who benefitted from EQIP improved their own content knowledge. The proportion of EQIP teachers who scored an overall grade of B or higher on the PSE is 7% higher than among other teachers. Students also benefitted from EQIP I in learning gains. The students' learning gains in mathematics is the equivalent of approximately nine additional weeks of instruction, and those of Science and Language Arts are the equivalent of about 16 and 14 additional weeks of instruction, respectively. The program also financed the development of the Belize Education Management Information System (BEMIS) which allowed Belize to move from a paper and pencil data collection system to a state-of-the-art cloud-based system with data on all students, teachers and education institutions in the country[18][25]. In 2019, the GOB and the IDB set out to foster innovation in STEAM education from the primary through the secondary level through the expansion of the IPP learning approach to the 50% of primary schools that had not yet benefitted from EQIP I and bring the focus on science and mathematics to the secondary level by creating a STEAM Laboratory School.[13] The vision of the STEAM Laboratory school is to graduate young people prepared with knowledge, skills, and integrated experiences in STEAM to build a sustainable future for themselves and their communities. To achieve this ambition, the GOB and the IDB have partnered with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the design of a new, forward-looking approach to high school education that prioritizes real-world experiences, community connections, and hands-on, creative learning. The school is located in Belize City and will open to students in 2023. In response to pandemic related school-closures, EQIP II was modified in 2020 to facilitate access to eLearning devices and train teachers in hybrid IPP education strategies. Through grant funding (5139/GR-BL), EQIP II also supports migrant students, including teacher training through immersion English and multiculturalism, and access to

[13] A laboratory school is a school that is operated in association with a learning institution – such as a university or teacher training institute – to provide high-quality education for students, while at the same time testing innovative pedagogical approaches and modeling teaching practices for teachers.

eLearning devices. To foster computer science among younger children, students from 23 primary schools have participated in a regional project that uses the evidence-based CODE.org curriculum (ATN/CF-17295-RG). To close the skills gap in renewable energy, in 2020, the GOB and the IDB partnered to create a 2-year renewable energy and energy efficiency program, developed and implemented by the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) (ATN/TV-18294-BL).

1.10 **Skills for the Future Strategy**.[14] Based on the positive results of EQIP I and II, and to respond to the demand of the labor market for 4iR skills, the GOB wishes to expand the pedagogical model of the Belize City STEAM Laboratory school to more education institutions and to respond to the gaps in learning that widened during the pandemic. Already pre-pandemic, there was increasing evidence that teaching grade-level content to all students while identifying students needing special support can help learning of low-achieving students[26]. In the face of vast foundational skill learning gaps in the pandemic era, the training of teachers in this type of individualized[15] and accelerated learning methodologies has become the principal recommended instructional approach. Accelerated learning is not teaching the same curriculum at a faster speed. Accelerated learning allows students to learn grade-level content with just-in-time support. Accelerated learning that is individualized to each student has shown to be effective for struggling students also outside of the classroom through extracurricular activities, such as acceleration academies and high-dosage tutoring[27][28][29]. One drawback of individualized and accelerated instruction is that it requires advanced content and pedagogical skills of teachers, teaching at different levels in the same classroom. High performing education systems often rely on adaptive instruction software to support teachers in meeting this challenge. Therefore, to close learning gaps, this program will support teachers in the use of individualized and accelerated instruction practices, supported by an adaptive instruction software in foundational skills.

1.11 To foster learning of foundational skills among students with SEN, the literature emphasizes well-designed learning progression goals in inclusive classrooms[30][31]. Most high-achieving education systems use some form of Individualized Education programs (IEP) that details the specialized instruction and related services for the SwD. To be effective, an IEP should be developed through a collaborative process that involves parents, teachers, school administrators and the students to come together and look closely at the child's needs and design a program that will help the students' progress[32]. While the MoECST has IEP templates that include such a collaborative process, Belize's educators and school administrators have yet to be trained in how to apply them. Beyond the implementation of IEPs, students must also be screened for SEN. In Belize, only 1.3% of primary students have been identified to have SEN (physical and learning disabilities), suggesting vast under-detection.[16] Substantive research shows stronger foundational skill gains for those SwD who receive early specialized interventions compared to those who benefit later[33]. To foster foundational skills learning among SwD, this program will train teachers and school

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14 An illustration of the vertical logic, describing the theory of change, is available in REL#2.

15 Individualized instruction allows each student to advance at his or her own pace.

16 As a comparison, in Chile 17.6% of students in basic schooling (mainstream and segregated schools) have a disability or learning difficulty in 2021[34].

administrators in screening of students and the development and implementation of IEPs through collaborative processes.

1.12 All high performing education systems use some type of Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS) to collect, process, organize, and make data available on students, teachers, and institutions. The IDB already assisted Belize in creating the BEMIS. To ensure sustainability, the MoESCT has created a BEMIS unit, funded with national resources and operated by permanent government staff. Although the system is sustainable and has extensive features for data analysis, its use for education monitoring and planning remains limited, particularly at the district and local levels. To ensure the use of the BEMIS for monitoring and improvement planning, this program will support user training. The program will also create additional BEMIS modules to capture data on home language and migratory status of students and help populate a new module on SwD.

1.13 To foster 4iR skills– including STEAM, skills for the blue and green economy, digital and XXI Century skills–the GOB wishes to expand the evidence-based IPP learning approach in STEAM lab-environments(¶1.10) to six additional secondary schools. In smaller schools where investments in physical science laboratories is less cost-effective, education systems increasingly use Virtual Laboratory (VL) technologies[35]. Virtual Labs have shown to be a cost-effective for science learning[36], and increase students' confidence, motivation and participation in higher level discussions[37]. To expand the IPP learning approach to more students, this program will support the use of VL technologies in 15 high school classrooms. For younger children, there is a growing literature on the importance of computer science skills[38][39]. Drawing on this knowledge base, this program will expand the use of the CODE.org curriculum(¶1.10).

1.14 To close Belize's skill gaps related to climate change, research and experience suggest that a successful transition to a green economy requires education and training responses[22][40]. Specific technical skills should be balanced with foundational and other skills such as communication, leadership, and environmental awareness[7][22][40]. Based on this literature, and the positive experience with ATN/TV-18294-BL(¶1.4), the MoECST wishes to expand the Green and Blue Economy course offerings.[17] As any training strategy rests on the availability of teachers with current knowledge, a critical mass of TVET instructors will receive two years of continuous professional development to develop the skills required to teach the new courses.

1.15 To help close gender education gaps, a review of school-based interventions to increase female participation in high-income careers such as STEM identifies three groups: (i) projects that counter stereotypes by introducing young women to role models (e.g. female scientists); (ii) providing information on expected earnings by field of study to young women who are in the process of deciding their field of specialization; and (iii) exposing young women to experiences and activities related to the field of study where they are under-represented[41]. In response to the lack of women in STEM careers(¶1.8), the program will combine all three approaches. Women in STEM beneficiaries of the Digital Innovation to Boost Economic Development program (5647/OC-BL) will be invited to serve as role models through component 3. The program will also build on lessons generated

[17] The MoECST is determining the focus of the two new TVET courses, considering ongoing skill development of labor market stock through Sustainable and Inclusive Belize (5583/OC-BL).

from the She's Digital operation (ATN/OC-12194-BL). In terms of the low male education retention rate(¶1.9), this does not stem simply from their achievement underperformance as they outperform their female peers in mathematics and science. Instead, researchers attribute the early school exit of boys to rigid male gender identities, that are not aligned with the value of having an education. The literature on effective school-based interventions to promote male education achievement include counter-stereotypical information, and role models, such as positive masculinity[18] programs[41]. This program will use group-mentoring and outreach to counter the low high school retention rates of male students.

1.16 **Lessons Learned**. The EQIP I final evaluation, findings from the EQIP II midterm evaluation, and progress reports from the implementation of the Skills for the Green Economy TVET pilot informed the design of this program. Key lessons include: (i) national construction companies lack the capacity to do detailed architectural design. Therefore, the architectural designs under Sub-components 2.1 and 2.3 will be contracted separately from the construction; (ii) the use of laptops rather than tablets helps students access learning content. Building on this experience, the purchase of eLearning devices in Sub-components 1.1 and 2.1 is budgeted to purchase of laptops; and (iii) although EQIP I and II have executed in a timely and effective manner, positions at the PEU were at times left vacant. Particularly, the procurement position was hard to fill locally. In response to this challenge, the MoECST used an international consultant on a retainer contract, which turned out to be a low-cost and efficient solution. In case of difficulties in filling the procurement officer position, this solution could be used. Beyond the effects from the use of IPP in EQIP I(¶1.9), the design builds on experimental evaluations of IPP in other Bank financed operations, all showing impact on student achievement (ATN/JF-11945-PR; ATN/SF-11948-PR; ATN/JO-17283-PN; ATN/OC-11253-AR; ATN/JO-12960-PE; ATN/JO-12829-PE,ATN). The lesson learned from these operations is that pedagogical change has the power to increase learning[25].

1.17 **Alignment**. The program is consistent with the Second Update to the Institutional Strategy (UIS) (AB-3190-2) and is aligned with the development challenges of Social Inclusion and Equality by expanding students' access to quality basic education. The program is aligned with the cross-cutting issues of: (i) gender equality by seeking to close gender STEM gaps; (ii) diversity by supporting the use of IEPs for students with SEN; (iii) institutional capacity and rule of law by improving the MoECST capabilities to foster skills for successful transition to the labor market; and (iii) climate change (¶1.18). The program will contribute to the Corporate Results Framework (GN-2727-12) by measuring the number of students benefited by education projects and Agencies with strengthened digital technology and managerial capacity.

1.18 The alignment with the Paris Agreement (PA) has been reviewed using the Joint MDB Assessment Framework, and is aligned to both its mitigation and adaptation objectives. Furthermore, it contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation (OEL#8) by financing education infrastructure that is environmentally sustainable, low-carbon and resilient to climate change (OEL#2), developing courses on the blue and green economy, and acquiring eLearning devices with the highest energy

[18] Positive masculinity is defined as the expression of attitudes and behaviors enacted by males for the common good, both individually and for the community[41].

efficiency certification. It is estimated that 65.70% of the operation's resources will be invested in climate change mitigation and adaptation activities, according to the Multilateral Development Banks' Joint Methodology.

1.19 The operation is consistent with the Sector Framework Document for Skills Development (GN-3012-3) by fostering high-quality learning opportunities, and the Sector Development Framework for Innovation, Science and Technology (GN-2791-13) by strengthening the systems for human capital in digital and STEM skills. This program is aligned with the IDB Group Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025 (GN-2848-9) and the Climate Change Sector Framework Document (GN-2835-8) by developing educational materials on the Blue and Green Economy and promoting the design and construction of sustainable, low-carbon and resilient schools–at minimum complying with the EDGE certification. It is also aligned with Gender and Diversity Sector Framework Document (GN-2800-13) and with the Employment Action Framework with a Gender Perspective (GN-3057) as it seeks to improve economic opportunities of women, and includes teacher training in the use of special education. It is aligned with the current IDB Group Country Strategy with Belize 2022-2025 (GN-3086), which prioritizes the building of skills for the post-COVID economy. The proposed operation is aligned with the national Belize Education Sector Plan (BESPlan), which seeks to close learning gaps that widened during the COVID-19 pandemic, and foster digital and STEAM skills.

1.20 The program is aligned with the priorities of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). In 2022, the IDB became a Grant Agent (GA) of the GPE (GN-3097), a fiduciary fund administered by the World Bank, which for nearly two decades has supported solutions to build strong and resilient education systems. Within the context of the operation, the GOB has requested the assistance of the IDB in applying for the GPE Multiplier Grant.[19] In response to the request, the IDB team has worked with the MoECST and GPE teams in the development of an Expression of Interest for the multiplier grant, which was approved by the GPE on November 30, 2022 with the IDB as the GA.

1.21 **Coordination with other development agencies**. As part of the approval of the IDB as a GPE GA in Belize, a Local Education Group (LEG) was created. The LEG aims to support the coordination and implementation of the BESPlan and is comprised of representatives from four government ministries, six development agencies, and four civil society organizations, as well as student and parent representatives. The LEG is formally established with three meetings per year. The LEG is co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the MoECST and by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as the Coordinating Agency (CA). The purpose of the LEG is to improve the quality and coherence of education policy dialogue and development assistance, as well as to provide a forum for information exchange, consultations on education strategies, policies and investments, guidance on partnerships, investments and efficiency, and support to effective, results-based programming.

[19] The GPE Multiplier enables countries to mobilize grant resources to strengthen their education systems. Eligible countries access the GPE Multiplier by mobilizing at least US$3 in new and additional external financing for every US$1 from the Multiplier.

B. Objective, components, and cost

1.22 **Objective.** The development objective of the program is to contribute to the closing of the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR. The specific objectives of the proposed operation are to: (i) increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills; (ii) increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills; and (iii) increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education.

1.23 **Component I- Increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills (US$2.7 million in GPE resources).** The component aims to contribute to increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills at the primary level. To achieve this objective, the component will be structured around three subcomponents:

1.24 *Sub-component 1.1 – Accelerated learning and individualized instruction*. Resources will finance: (i) professional development of approximately 500 primary education teachers, and school administrators, in accelerated learning with individualized learning plans, including coaching to provide guidance and modeling of quality pedagogical practice through accelerated learning and adaptive instruction software. The training will be rolled out nationally in three phases, targeting teachers from schools with the largest foundational skill gaps; (ii) extracurricular activities for approximately 2,000 primary students with low education achievement, including summer programs and after-school tutoring. The activities will target schools with the largest proportion of students in the lowest learning quartile; and (iii) purchase of approximately 2,000 eLearning devices[20] and adaptive instruction software to facilitate accelerated learning of foundational skills in reading and mathematics. The devices will be targeted for distribution in schools among those with the largest foundational skill gaps that have unmet needs for eLearning devices.[21]

1.25 *Sub-component 1.2 – Training of teachers in special education.* Resources will finance: (i) professional development of approximately 500 teachers and school administrators trained in: (a) the use of a screening tool for learning disabilities; and (b) IEP for children with SEN, including the development and updating of the IEP, the implementation and reporting on the IEP, parental engagement, and how to facilitate transition planning and services. The training will be progressively rolled out in three phases to each of the country's 258 publicly financed primary schools; and (ii) the project will also support test fees for IEP certification for teachers who wish to pursue it.

1.26 *Sub-component 1.3 – Strengthening of the Belize Education Management Information System (BEMIS).* Resources will finance: (i) the strengthening of the BEMIS platform to allow for more detailed analysis of different student and teacher groups. New fields of data will include more detailed data on students with SEN, home language of the students, and migratory status; and (ii) training of approximately 50 MoECST staff at the local and central levels in the use of BEMIS for education planning and monitoring, including coordination of the progress in the achievement of the targets of the BESPlan. The aim is for the training to include all MoECST staff from every district as well as staff from the central level.

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20 All eLearning devices will have the Energy Star label or equivalent to indicate highest energy efficiency rating.

21 The MoECST regularly map availability and use of eLearning devices and internet access (OEL#1).

1.27 **Component II – Increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills (US$13.8 million in loan and US$0.1 million in GPE resources).** The component aims to increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills. The skills that will be promoted under the 4iR umbrella will include STEAM skills, skills for the blue and green economy, and XXI Century skills at the primary and secondary levels. To achieve this objective, the component will be structured around three subcomponents:

1.28 *Sub-component 2.1 – STEAM facilities and equipment.* Resources will finance: (i) design, construction and equipment of science labs, workshops and maker studios at six existing secondary school campuses.[22] The criteria to identify the schools includes a student population of approximately 300 students, that the school be a publicly funded institution, that it has a central location in one of each district of the country to allow for its use as a district training ground for STEAM teachers, and that it has space or land that can be repurposed for a STEAM facility; (ii) purchase of approximately 5,000 eLearning devices[20] for secondary students at the six high schools that benefit from infrastructure improvements; and (iii) purchase of Virtual Lab (VL) Technologies (eLearning devises with software) for approximately 15 additional classrooms to allow students in under-resourced high schools to engage in the latest science innovations. Criteria for selection of high schools includes internet connectivity and low-quality or no physical science laboratories. These applications will allow students access to real-life scenarios through simulations where they interact with lab equipment, perform laboratory experiments, and learn by doing science and problem-solving.

1.29 *Sub-component 2.2 – Strengthening of 4iR teaching*. Resources will finance: (i) teacher professional development in 4iR, including STEAM and XXI Century skills, for approximately 100 secondary school teachers. Part of the training will take place at the Belize City STEAM Laboratory School where teachers will have the opportunity to observe and practice IPP instruction. Remaining training will take place online, and in each teacher's classroom through coaching visits; (ii) access to different types of international 4iR skill certification programs for approximately 200 teachers and students at the secondary level of education; and (iii) professional development of teachers from 17 primary schools in the CODE.org curriculum, including in-class coaching. The selection criteria for the CODE.org schools will include access to eLearning devices (internet connectivity is not a requirement as the platform is designed for offline usage) and low achievement levels. The schools targeted under Sub-component 1.1(iii) will be included.

1.30 *Sub-component 2.3 – Extending 4iR skill development to TVET with climate change focus.* Resources will finance: (i) development and implementation of two 4iR TVET courses for the green and blue economies in Belize City's ITVET. The courses will include the development of teaching guides and learning materials. The selection of the Belize City ITVET is based on a strategy of the MoECST to have a strong 4iR focus throughout the campus where the Belize City STEAM Laboratory School is also located; (ii) the training and tutoring of approximately 20 teachers to teach the new curriculum using guiding pedagogical principles to

[22] The design of the facilities will incorporate climate resilience and green building architecture, safety (hurricane resistance when applicable), low maintenance requirement, universal accessibility. The sustainability measures will comply at least with the EDGE certification, aiming to reach the Advanced-level (Zero-carbon ready) or the Zero-Carbon level.

facilitate quality student learning, including demonstration of learning, problem-based learning, seeing learners as knowers, active learning, and questioning; (iii) a promotion campaign to recruit students for the courses, particularly women who are underrepresented in STEM professions; (iv) rehabilitation of an existing MoECST building to house the new ITVET course offerings;[23] and (v) materials required to teach the courses, including 3D printers, drones, among others.

1.31 **Component III – Increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education (US$1 million in GPE resources).** The component aims to increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education. To achieve this objective, the component is structured around two sub-components:

1.32 *Sub-component 3.1 – Participation of women in 4iR.* Resources will finance: (i) extracurricular 4iR activities for approximately 1,000 primary and secondary female students, including reinforcement classes in STEAM and coding, as well as field visits, group mentoring and interaction with female STEAM role models; and (ii) information outreach to girls and their families to promote their continued studies and work in 4iR fields, including recruitment for the extracurricular under activity 3.1(i). Female students benefitting under 2.1 (i) and 2.2 (iii) will be targeted.

1.33 *Sub-component 3.2 – Schooling of men.* Resources will finance use of evidence-based strategies to bring awareness to the long-term returns of schooling and promote men's participation and completion of secondary education: (i) outreach activities to reengage male students who recently dropped out. The outreach activities will include community meetings, and home visits in the five geographical areas with the highest dropout rates; and (ii) group mentoring of approximately 1,000 male students to promote social norms associated with positive masculinity, such as the value of schooling, the expression of emotions, and compassion and kindness towards themselves and others.

1.34 **Component IV – Monitoring and evaluation (US$0.5 million GPE resources).** The aim of the component is to critically examine the program by collecting and analyzing information about activities, characteristics, and outcomes. Resources from the operation will finance baseline and endline data collection and analysis of data for the following evaluations: (i) an experimental evaluation of the individualized accelerated instruction intervention in elementary schools (Sub-component 1.1). The evaluation aims to assess the impact of individualized accelerated instruction on student achievement and learning gaps; (ii) An experimental evaluation of teacher IEP professional development (Sub-component 1.2), including changes in classroom practices and support to students with special needs; (iii) a quasi-experimental evaluation of the use of VL Technologies at the secondary school level (Component II), including a comparison group consisting of the secondary schools with STEAM infrastructure; and (iv) midterm evaluation of the project, and a final economic analysis of the operation.

1.35 **Component V – Project management (US$0.7 million in GPE and US$0.1 in counterpart resources).** This component covers expenses related to the Project

[23] The design will comply at least with the EDGE certification.

Execution Unit (PEU) and financial audits. It will also finance a vehicle, some office equipment and software to facilitate project execution and monitoring.

1.36 **Beneficiaries**. The program will be nationwide in scope, including investments at the primary, secondary and TVET levels. Component I will be rolled out in all districts in three phases, allowing low performing students from all government-financed primary schools nationwide to participate. Under Component II, 21 of the country's 52 high schools will receive investments in teacher training, including six that will be equipped with STEAM laboratories like those in the STEAM Laboratory school in Belize City, and 15 that will be equipped with VL technologies. The 5,000 beneficiary secondary students represent close to a third of all secondary students nationwide. In Component III, teacher professional development will target all secondary schools. Extracurricular activities will be offered in every district through promotion within every school. Taken together, the components will benefit 48% of Belize's primary, secondary and TVET institutions, 13% of the country's teachers and 19% of the students at these same levels of education. The estimated numbers of schools, teachers and beneficiaries of the program are outlined in Table I-1. The targeting criteria prioritizes schools with unfavorable education indicators, while seeking to ensure country-wide access to STEAM laboratory facilities (OEL#9).

Table I-1. Approximate Numbers of Schools, Teachers, and Beneficiaries of the Program (% of national)

School Type	Schools	Teachers	Students
Primary Education			
Government	58 (100%)	100 (16%)	2,000 (22%)
Government Financed Privately Operated*	200 (100%)	400 (15%)	8,000 (17%)
Private	n/a	n/a	n/a
Secondary Education			
Government	5 (27%)	18 (3%)	1,000 (13%)
Government Financed Privately Operated*	16 (36%)	82 (9%)	4,000 (32%)
Secondary Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)			
Government	1 (17%)	20 (27%)	90 (12%)
Total	280 (86%)	620 (13%)	16,090 (19%)

*In Belize called Grant Aided Schools that provide not for profit public education. These schools are as under-resourced as government schools and cater to students of the same SES.

C. Key results indicators

1.37 The expected development objective is to contribute to closing the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR. The impact indicators include decreases in: (i) the COVID learning gap in mathematics in Standard 6; (ii) the COVID learning gap in English language in Standard 6; (iii) 4iR mismatch between the profile of graduates and the needs of the labor market; and (iv) gender gap in the sense of belonging in exact sciences, as well as an (v) increase in the male retention rate at the secondary level. The outcome indicators of the program include increases in: (i) the number of primary students benefiting from accelerated learning and individualized instruction; (ii) the number of secondary students benefiting from STEAM laboratory facilities; and (iii) the number of students that participate in extracurricular activities that foster women in STEAM. All indicators are described in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (REL#2).

1.38 **Economic Analysis**. The program is expected to improve the cost-benefit relation of primary and secondary education by increasing student learning and creating a better match between the skills provided by the education sector and those

requested by the labor market. The ex-ante economic analysis, which employs a discount rate of 12%, shows that the overall Net Present Value (NPV) is positive, as well as that of Component I, II and III on their own. Under the conservative scenario, the NPV of the benefits stemming from Components I, II and III represent 22.6%, 66.6% and 10.8%, respectively. The most important effect is the provision of 4iR and STEAM skills to secondary and TVET students, which is expected increase student engagement in school and secondary education graduates accessing 4iR and STEAM jobs with better salaries. Taken together, the program is expected to have a positive effect on the lifetime earnings of the beneficiaries as more students graduate from primary, secondary and TVET education with 4iR and STEAM skills enhancing their labor market prospect and lifetime earnings.

1.39 **Sustainability.** This program will strengthen the government's capacity to institutionalize and ensure continuation of program interventions by training a critical mass of human resources in education planning through BEMIS, accelerated instruction, screening for SEN and 4iR skill development. The financial impact of project interventions is expected to be modest because (i) the new facilities will be installed in already existing schools and will share administrative, utilities, and other operation costs with the already existing school facilities. Since the capacity of the refurbished schools will remain the same, changes in student enrollment and teacher hiring will be minimal (OEL#1). The impact evaluations will inform needed modifications to the interventions prior to scaling to more schools.

II. Financing Structure and Main Risks

A. Financing instruments

2.1 The operation will finance an Investment Loan for a Specific Project (ESP) in the amount of US$15 million from the Ordinary Capital (OC) resources of the IDB. This instrument is considered to be appropriate due to its fixed scope, logical interdependence of the components and its physical and technical individuality. The operation is also financed through a Multiplier Grant from the GPE in the amount of US$5 million; and a local counterpart contribution of US$0.15 million.[24] The disbursement period is 48 months. The execution period was determined based on the PEP and the institutional capacity of the EA.

Table II-1 Summary of Costs (in US$1,000)

Component/Sub-component	IDB	GPE	Local	Total	%
Comp 1. Increase Access to Instruction that Accelerates Learning in Foundational Skills		**2,650**		**2,650**	**13.2**
1.1 Accelerated Learning and Individualized Instruction.		2,050		2,050	10.2
1.2 Training of Teacher in Special Education		500		500	2.5
1.3 Strengthening of the Belize Education Management Information System (BEMIS)		100		100	0.5
Comp 2. Increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR Skills	**13,833**	**98**		**13,931**	**69.1**
2.1 STEAM Facilities and Equipment	11,572	98		11,670	57.9
2.2 Strengthening of 4iR Teaching	500			500	2.5
2.3 Extending 4iR Skill Development to TVET with climate change focus.	1,761			1,761	8.7

[24] The counterpart contribution will be through salaries of staff in the PEU.

Comp 3. Increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education.		**1,000**		**1,000**	**5.0**
3.1 Participation of women in 4iR		500		500	2.5
3.2 Schooling of Men		500		500	2.5
Comp 4. Monitoring and Evaluation		**540**		**540**	**2.7**
4.1 Evaluations		540		540	2.7
Comp 5. Project Management,		**712**	**150**	**862**	**4.3**
Project Management		640	150	790	3.9
Financial Audit		72		72	0.4
Contingency	**1,167**			**1,167**	**5.8**
Total	**15,000**	**5,000**	**150**	**20,150**	**100**

Note: Costs by subcomponent or activity are indicative.

Table II-2 Disbursement Schedule (in US$1,000)

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
BID	3,813	5,440	4,859	885	15,000
GPE	1,218	1,751	1,267	765	5,000
Local	38	38	38	38	150
TOTAL	**5,069**	**7,229**	**6,164**	**1,688**	**20,150**
%	**25**	**36**	**31**	**8**	**100**

B. Environmental and social safeguard risks

2.2 In attention to the new Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF) (Document GN-2965-23), the operation was classified as Category “C” since no significant negative environmental or social effects are to be expected. Environmental and Social Performance Standards (ESPS) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10 were triggered and actions were considered during program design, considering the management system given by the local regulatory framework and the preparation by the borrower of an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) in accordance with the scope and nature of the expected impacts and risks associated with the operation.

2.3 The measures contemplated in this operation will be fully aligned with: (i) the IDB Group Measures to Address the Risk of Forced Labor in the Supply Chain of Solar Panels with Silicon Components (GN-3062-1); (ii) the new applicable requirements of the ESPF (GN-2965-3) of the IDB; and (iii) the IDB's procurement and contracting policies.

2.4 A moderate disaster and climate change risk classification has been confirmed. Based on due diligence, a disaster and climate change risk assessment will be conducted to inform the final designs. This process must be done prior to the start of work, to identify the possible threats to which the projects would be exposed, evaluate the risk, and define the mitigation measures that are required. A Disaster Risk Management Plan (DRMP) will be prepared before the start of the execution of the works, and it will be part of the ESMS.

2.5 Additionally, as a GPE Grant Agency, IDB ESPF policy is in accordance with the GPE Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) policy and GPE Minimum Standards and the classification has taken into consideration

any sexual exploitation and abuse and harassment associated risks induced or exacerbated by the GPE grant and found there to be none.[25]

C. Fiduciary risk

2.6 The institutional capacity assessment performed on the country does not raise concerns that could negatively affect the efficient, effective and responsible execution of the operation. The analysis indicates that the fiduciary systems and procedures are adequate and qualified most of the fiduciary risks as low except for one medium-high risk related to human resource capacity of the PEU. If a competent procurement specialist is not identified and contracted prior to the start of execution, it could lead to suboptimal performance of the procurement function within the first year of the project, which may lead to delays in the completion of outputs planned for year 1. To mitigate this risk, a procurement specialist should be hired, either fully dedicated to the project or on a retainer basis, as part of the conditions prior to first disbursement.

D. Other Risks and Key Issues

2.7 The institutional capacity assessment raises a medium-low risk of training teachers in high-demand skills (e.g. 4iR competencies), which could lead to teachers leaving the profession for higher wages in the private sector. In response to this risk, the project will train critical masses of teachers at each level of education, making it less exposed to the impact of any who abandon the teaching profession.

III. Implementation and Management Plan

A. Summary of implementation arrangements

3.1 **Project Execution.** The MoECST through the same PEU of EQIP I and II will execute the operation. This arrangement capitalizes on the administrative and technical capacities developed. The MoECST through the PEU will be responsible for: (i) monitoring of progress and results; (ii) procurement of goods and services; (iii) processing of payments; (iv) financial management; (v) execution of IDB supervision-related activities; and (vi) reporting to the IDB and other government entities. The PEU will comprise the same positions as those of EQIP II: a Program Coordinator, a Project Officer, a Program Engineer, a Clerk of Works, a Financial Specialist, a Procurement Specialist,[26] and an Administrative Assistant.

3.2 **Implementation supervision system.** The Program Steering Committee (PSC) of EQIP I and II will provide policy direction. The PSC comprises representatives from 12 organizations and has the following responsibilities: (i) ensure an integrated and efficient execution through policy guidance; (ii) oversight of consistency with MoECST policies and programs; and (iii) promote communication with stakeholders. The MoECST is responsible for reviewing procurement processes and products; and the MoF is responsible for approval of contracts and disbursements.

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25 The SESH assessment reviewed risks related to sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment.

26 The Procurement Specialist can be external and hired on a retainer basis.

3.3 **Operation Manual**. The Program Operation Manual (POM) sets out the terms and conditions and details the procedures and coordination mechanisms for the operational, administrative, and financial management of the program.

3.4 **Special Conditions Precedent to First Disbursement.** The first disbursement of the Loan shall be subject to the fulfillment, to the satisfaction of the Bank, of the following requirements: **(i) The approval by MoECST of the POM in terms previously agreed to with the Bank.** This condition is justified to assure that the rules of operation are in place to initiate and conduct program execution. **(ii) The hiring of a Program Coordinator, Project Officer (in charge of monitoring of program execution), a Financial Officer within the PEU, and a Procurement Specialist, either full or part time.** This condition is justified to assure that an adequate team will be in place to initiate and conduct program execution.

3.5 **Special Execution Conditions:** As a condition to the commencement of works in Sub-component 2.1, MoECST shall present evidence, to the satisfaction of the Bank, of the following: **(i) Final engineering designs prior to the call for bids for the civil works; (ii) Evidence that the MoECST has begun the call for bids for the specialized supervision firm prior to the initiation of civil works; and (iii) Has obtained all authorizations, land titles, licenses or permits which are necessary for the execution of the civil works**.

3.6 **Special disbursement.** Notwithstanding the special contractual clauses, once the Loan Contract has entered into effect and the Borrower has fulfilled the conditions precedent to the first disbursement set forth in the General Conditions of the Loan Contract, the Bank may disburse to the Borrower up to the amount of US$50,000 from the resources of the loan to hire the key personnel of the PEU. This special disbursement is needed due to the lack of additional counterpart resources.

3.7 **Procurement**. Procurement of goods, works and services to be financed in full or in part with resources of the program will be carried out in accordance with the Policies for the Procurement of Works and Goods Financed by the IDB (GN-2349-15), and the selection and contracting of consulting services will be carried out in accordance with the Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants Financed by the IDB (GN-2350-15), or those in effect at the time of project execution. Annex III includes details on program procurement. If during project execution, it is identified that the Executing Agency (EA) has developed sufficient capacity, the possibility of supervising procurement processes on an ex-post basis will be evaluated.

3.8 **Single-Source Selection and Direct Contracting.** The Single-Source Selection of the Trust for the Americas is foreseen for the Expansion of the CODE.org Curriculum(¶1.29 Sub-component 2.2); as well, the Single-Source Selection of Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is foreseen for consulting services for TVET courses(¶1.30 Sub-component 2.3). Both consulting firms are qualified and considered agencies with exceptional worth for the assignment in accordance with 3.11(d) of the Bank's Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the IDB (GN-2350-15). Additionally, the Direct Contracting of Community Systems Foundation (CSF) is foreseen for the BEMIS(¶1.26 Sub-component 1.3). In accordance with paragraph 3.7(c) of the IDB's Policies for the Procurement of Goods and Works financed by the IDB (GN-2349-15), the direct contracting is justified since the goods and related services are available

from only one source. The justifications for these single-source selections and direct contracting are provided in Annex III.

3.9 **Advanced contracting.** Due to the nature of the school year calendar, and given the urgency of address learning gaps, the EA prior to the date of loan approval may start the following procurement processes that shall be recognized and disbursed once the loan contract enters into effect: purchase of eLearning devices (Components I and II), teacher professional development (Components I and II), and the architectural design (Component II). The procurement procedures, including advertising, shall be in accordance with the Bank's Core Procurement Principles for the eventual contracts to be eligible for Bank financing, and the Bank shall review the process used by the Borrower. The Borrower undertakes such advance contracting at its own risk, and any concurrence by the Bank with the procedures, documentation, or proposal for award does not commit the Bank to grant a loan for the project in question. The contracts will be awarded only after the project reaches its eligibility (entry into force and all conditions prior to first disbursement are met). Therefore, it is not anticipated that retroactive financing will be required for these activities.

3.10 **Grant Agent.** As the GA of the GPE Multiplier Grant, the IDB will: (i) ensure proper use of GPE funds, and regular reporting on implementation to LEG and GPE; and (ii) provide support for procurement, provision of technical assistance, and capacity building. The GPE has also approved a Program Development Grant (PDG) to conduct preparatory studies related to SwD and the use of eLearning tools, which is being processed as a TC.

3.11 **Audits**. An external audit of the program will be performed by a firm of independent auditors acceptable to the Bank. The cost of the audits will be financed with program resources. Standard financial reporting requirements of the Bank will apply, including: (i) the annual financial audit report to be submitted within 120 days following the end of each program fiscal year; and (ii) a final financial audit report to be submitted within 120 days after the date of the last disbursement.

B. Summary of arrangements for monitoring results

3.12 **Monitoring and Reports**. The PEU is responsible for preparing semi-annual and annual reports, to the Bank's satisfaction, within 60 days following the end of each semester, reporting on: (i) the progress regarding the activities and outputs in the Annual Operating Plans (AOP) and the intermediate outcomes; (ii) the financial progress in terms of commitments, payments and disbursements under the loan and an updated financial plan; (iii) the updated AOP and related budgets for the next 12 months; (iv) a midterm review of the program to assess the progress of once disbursements reach 50%; (v) the updated procurement plan; and (vi) present annual construction maintenance report up to the 5th year after the expiration of the last disbursement date. The PEU will keep all relevant administrative information available to facilitate this review.

3.13 **Evaluation**. The impact evaluation will be financed with program resources (Component IV), including two Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) and one quasi-experimental evaluation to assess the effects on student learning, and identification of students with SEN(¶1.34). The rationale for the RCTs is that prior to continuing or scaling the interventions to more schools and teachers, it is necessary to ensure that any learning improvements can be attributed to the interventions (see REL#2).

Development Effectiveness Matrix		
Summary BL-L1044/BL-G1008		
I. Corporate and Country Priorities		
Section 1. IDB Group Strategic Priorities and CRF Indicators		
Development Challenges & Cross-cutting Issues	-Social Inclusion and Equality -Gender Equality and Diversity -Climate Change -Institutional Capacity and the Rule of Law	
CRF Level 2 Indicators: IDB Group Contributions to Development Results	-Students benefited by education projects (#) -Agencies with strengthened digital technology and managerial capacity (#)	
2. Country Development Objectives		
Country Strategy Results Matrix	GN-3086	Support closing the skills gap
Country Program Results Matrix	GN-3154-1	The intervention is included in the 2023 Operational Program.
Relevance of this project to country development challenges (If not aligned to country strategy or country program)		
II. Development Outcomes - Evaluability		Evaluable
3. Evidence-based Assessment & Solution	10.0	
3.1 Program Diagnosis	2.5	
3.2 Proposed Interventions or Solutions	3.5	
3.3 Results Matrix Quality	4.0	
4. Ex ante Economic Analysis	6.5	
4.1 Program has an ERR/NPV, or key outcomes identified for CEA	1.5	
4.2 Identified and Quantified Benefits and Costs	3.0	
4.3 Reasonable Assumptions	0.0	
4.4 Sensitivity Analysis	2.0	
4.5 Consistency with results matrix	0.0	
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	10.0	
5.1 Monitoring Mechanisms	4.0	
5.2 Evaluation Plan	6.0	
III. Risks & Mitigation Monitoring Matrix		
Overall risks rate = magnitude of risks*likelihood	Medium Low	
Environmental & social risk classification	C	
IV. IDB´s Role - Additionality		
The project relies on the use of country systems		
Fiduciary (VPC/FMP Criteria)	Yes	Financial Management: Accounting and Reporting.
Non-Fiduciary	Yes	Monitoring and Evaluation National System.
The IDB's involvement promotes additional improvements of the intended beneficiaries and/or public sector entity in the following dimensions:		
Additional (to project preparation) technical assistance was provided to the public sector entity prior to approval to increase the likelihood of success of the project	Yes	The Bank will continue to provide regular project financial and procurement training to the Project Coordinating Unit and the ministry.

Evaluability Assessment Note:

The development objective of this operation is to contribute to the closing of the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR (Fourth Industrial Revolution). The specific objectives of the proposed operation are to: (i) increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills; (ii) increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills; and (iii) increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education.

The diagnosis is adequate, with a well-identified problem and clear determinants. The results matrix exhibits a vertical logic with clear specific objectives, and SMART indicators that allow monitoring and evaluating the objectives. The economic analysis of the program is based in a Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) that measured 3 types of benefits: (i) earnings derived from reinsertion and/or retention in the educational system, (ii) earnings derived from delivering notebooks to secondary students, and (iii) earnings from teacher training. The estimated IRR is 14.6% and the NPV of US$5.7 million under the baseline scenario.

The program has a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that specifies: (i) the minimum monitoring activities; (ii) the evaluation questions; (iii) the methodologies for measuring the indicators; and (iv) the data sources and verification protocols, as well as the M&E budget. The Evaluation Plan proposes two experimental evaluations and a quasi-experimental evaluation to measure the causal effect of the operation on the achievement of the specific objectives. The Evaluation Plan also proposes a Before and After approach to measure the theoretical contribution of the operation to the result indicators.

RESULTS MATRIX

Project Objective	The specific objectives for this operation will be: (i) increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills; (ii) increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills; and (iii) increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education. The achievement of these objectives will contribute to the general objective of contributing to closing of the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Expected year for achievement	Target	Means of verification	Comments
General development objective: Contribute to the closing of the skills gap to prepare tomorrow's workforce for the 4iR.							
COVID-learning gap in mathematics in Standard 6[1]	Percentage Points	41	2022	2027	31	Belize Diagnostic Assessment Test (BDAT)	Measurement will be conducted in treated schools. The development objective is expected to be observed in the life of the project.[2] The baseline value of the COVID-learning gap was calculated as the percentage point decrease in learning between the 2018/19 and 2021/22 school years. The endline value will be calculate as the gap between 2018/19 and the final academic year of the execution period.
COVID-learning gap in English language in Standard 6	Percentage Points	26	2022	2027	16	BDAT	
4iR mismatch between the profile of graduates and the need of the labor market	%	50	2023	2027	40	Survey of Employers in an ex-post evaluation 5 years after the completion of the project.	The 4iR skills mismatch is defined as the percentage of employers that report that the education system is failing to develop the skills needed for the workforce[11]. The development objective is expected to be observed in an ex-post survey.[3]
Male retention rate in secondary education	%	78	2022	2027	80	Data from the Belize Education Management	Pro-gender indicator. Treated students will be compared with peers in a control group. The development

1 Standard 6 is equivalent to 8th Grade.
2 The target is based on Zoido et al 2022, which finds an impact of 0.23 standard deviations in math acceleration through high-dosage tutoring. This result is equivalent to a learning acceleration of one third over the control group.
3 The target is informed by literature which shows that perceptions of employers slowly over time (Manpower Group Survey on 40,000 employers).

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Expected year for achievement	Target	Means of verification	Comments
						Information System (BEMIS).	objective is expected to be observed in an ex-post evaluation.[4]
Gender gap in sense of belonging in exact sciences	Percentage Points	33	2022	2027	25	Endline student survey	Pro-gender indicator defined as the difference between self-reported measures of belonging for male and female students. The measurement will be conducted in treated schools. The development objective is expected to be observed in the life of the project.[5]

[4] The target value is based on RCTs reviewed by Cristia and Näslund-Hadley (2023).

[5] Sense of belonging in exact sciences is defined as “believing that exact sciences are appropriate for him/her.” The target is informed by experimental evidence showing that even a one-time exposure to light touch interventions of female role models can substantially improve women’s perceptions and participation in STEM careers for high-school girls[42]. The authors document increases of 9.5 and 14.8 percent of a standard deviation.

SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
Specific development objective 1: Increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills										
Share of primary students with an individualized learning plan.	%	0	2023	0	5	5	5	15	Project monitoring report through a student survey.	Individualized instruction will include individualized learning plan with targets, produced through adaptive instruction software used by the students. Treated students will be compared with peers in a control group.
Primary Students benefitting from accelerated learning and individualized instruction per year	#Students	0	2023	0	4,000	3,000	3,000	10,000		CRF indicator. A student benefitting will be defined as having received to at least 3 hours of individualized instruction per week. Treated students will be compared with peers in a control group.
Share of primary education teachers certified in IEP	%	0	2023	0	2	2	2	6	Special Education Module of the BEMIS.	Certification in IEP is defined as certified by the MoECST or an international entity.
Share of primary schools that conduct screening for learning disabilities.	%	0	2023	0	15	15	15	45		A school conducting screening for students with learning disabilities will be defined as at least 8% of students be screened for suspected learning disabilities.[6] Treated schools will be compared with schools in a control group.
Specific development objective 2: Increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills										
Secondary students benefitting from STEAM laboratory facilities or VL laboratories.	#Students	0	2023	0	0	0	5,000	5,000	Project monitoring report through a student survey.	CRF indicator. A student benefitting from a STEAM laboratory school is defined as use of a science lab or maker studio at least once per month.
Share of secondary students benefitting from digital learning.	%	0	2023	0	0	0	16	16		A student benefitting from digital learning is defined as having received at least 3 hours of

[6] The benchmark is based on data from the Washington Group which finds the prevalence of disability for children ages 6-17 expected to range between 4-8%[43]. This benchmark is likely to be low bound considering data from other education systems that have higher investments in screening have identified 20% as needing an individualized education program (IEP) (U.S. Department of Education).

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
										learning using a digital devise in the past week. Treated students will be compared with peers in a comparison group.
TVET students with access to learning in climate change skills per academic year	#Students	13	2023	0	0	45	45	103	Project monitoring report through a student survey.	CRF indicator. Access to climate change learning is defined as receiving at least 4 hours of instruction per week to develop the skills needed for careers in the green and blue economies. Treated classrooms will be compared with comparison classrooms
Primary students with access to computer science instruction per academic year	#Students	1,000	2023	0	0	1,000	1,000	3,000		CRF indicator. Access to computer science will be defined as access to 4 hours of instruction per week. Treated students will be compared with peers in a control group.
Specific development objective 3: Increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education										
Female students participating in annual extracurricular activities that foster women in STEAM.	#Students	0	2023	0	500	500	0	1,000	Project monitoring report through a student survey.	Pro-gender CRF indicator. As at least 5 hours of extracurricular activities per calendar year to foster women in STEAM. Female students will be targeted through role models and behavioral messaging. Treated students compared with comparison students.
Male students participating in annual extracurricular activities to foster norms related to positive masculinity.	#Students	0	2023	0	500	500	0	1,000		Pro-gender CRF indicator. Participation is defined as at least 5 hours of extracurricular activities per calendar year to foster positive masculinities and schooling of boys. Treated students compared with control students.

OUTPUTS

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
Component 1: Increase access to instruction that accelerates learning in foundational skills										
Primary teachers trained in accelerated learning with individualized learning plans	#Persons	0	2023	0	0	500	0	500	Semester Progress Report	GPE Monitoring indicator
eLearning devices distributed to primary students	#Devices	0	2023	0	2,000	0	0	2,000		Devices will have the Energy Star label or equivalent to indicate highest energy efficiency rating.
Teachers and school administrators trained in the use of a screening tool for learning disabilities; and in IEP.	#Persons	0	2023	0	0	500	0	500		GPE Monitoring indicator:
MoECST staff at the local, district, and central levels in the use of BEMIS	# Persons	0	2023	0	50	0	0	50		
BEMIS Improvement project	# Projects	0	2023	0	1	0	0	1		
Component 2: Increase access to instruction that promotes learning in 4iR skills										
Construction Document Package (Technical Drawings and Specifications) depicting the design of the STEAM facilities approved, complying at least with EDGE green building requirements.	#Document	0	2023	0	7	0	0	7	MoECST approval attained by the PEU.	The objective is to obtain all the documents needed to tender the construction, ensuring design compliance with MoECST requirements.
Science labs, maker studios, and workshops at STEAM Facilities constructed, complying at least with EDGE green building requirements.	#Classrooms	0	2023	0	0	0	18	18	Works Completion Certificate signed by the MoECST, attained by the PEU.	GPE Monitoring indicator. The objective is to provide formal evidence that the building completion has been approved by MoECST. Each area (i.e. science lab, maker studio and workshop) is defined as a classroom.
eLearning devices distributed to secondary and TVET students	#Devices	0	2023	0	5,000	0	0	5,000	Semester Progress Report	eLearning will be distributed to students attending the 6 high

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
										schools with STEAM facilities; and students attending the TVET courses in 4iR for the Green and Blue Economies at the Belize City ITVET. Devices will have the Energy Star label or equivalent to indicate highest energy efficiency rating.
Virtual Lab (VL) Technologies (eLearning devices with software) for secondary school classrooms	#Classrooms	0	2023	0	0	15	0	15	Semester Progress Report	Each VL science classroom will be equipped with eLearning devices for 35 students.
Construction Document Package (Technical Drawings and Specifications) depicting the design of ITVET Building, complying at least with EDGE green building requirements.	#Document	0	2023	1	0	0	0	1	MoECST approval attained by the PEU.	The objective is to obtain all the documents needed to tender the construction, ensuring design compliance with MoECST requirements.
Workshops and classrooms at the ITVET building constructed, complying at least with EDGE green building requirements.	#Classrooms	0	2023	0	0	0	5	5	Works Completion Certificate signed by the MoECST, attained by the PEU.	GPE Monitoring indicator. The objective is to provide formal evidence that the building completion has been approved by MoECST.
ITVET Building furnished	#Buildings	0	2023	0	0	0	1	1	Semester Progress Report	
Skill Certificates for teachers and students	#Certificates	0	2023	0	0	0	200	200		
TVET instructors trained in the 4iR courses for the green and blue economies	#Persons	5	2023	0	0	20	0	25		GPE Monitoring indicator.
Secondary education teachers trained in 4iR, including STEAM and XXI-century skills	#Persons	10	2023	0	0	40	50	100	Semester Progress Report	GPE Monitoring indicator.

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
Schools with staff trained in the code.org curriculum	#Schools	23	2023	0	17	0	0	40		
Component 3: Increase access to gender-specific education services to promote inclusive education										
Extracurricular programs with household outreach to foster women in 4iR	#Programs	0	2023	0	0.5	0.5	0	1	Semester Progress Report	
Group mentoring and outreach re-engagement program for male students	#Programs	0	2023	0	0.5	0.5	0	1		
Component 4: Monitoring and evaluation										
Experimental evaluation of the adaptive instruction intervention in elementary schools	#Study	0	2023	0	0	0	1	1	Semester Progress Report	
Experimental evaluation of teacher IEP professional development	#Study	0	2023	0	0	0	1	1		
Quasi-experimental evaluation of the use of VL Technologies at the secondary school level	#Study	0	2023	0	0	0	1	1		
Midterm evaluation	#Study	0	2023	0	0	1	0	1		
Final economic analysis	#Study	0	2023	0	0	0	1	1		
Component 5: Project management										
PEU Operated	#Year	0	2023	1	1	1	1	4	Semester Progress Report	

Country: Belize **Division**: EDU **Operation No.:** BL-L1044/BL-G1008 **Year**: 2023

FIDUCIARY AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

Executing Agency (EA): Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology (MoECST)

Operation Name: Skills for the Future Program

I. FIDUCIARY CONTEXT OF EXECUTING AGENCY

1. Use of country system in the operation.[1]

☒ Budget	☐ Reports	☐ Information System	☐ National Competitive Bidding (NCB)
☒ Treasury	☐ Internal audit	☐ Shopping	☐ Others
☒ Accounting	☐ External Control	☐ Individual Consultants	

2. Fiduciary execution mechanism

☒	Co-Financing	Global Partnership for Education (GPE) – US$5 million
☒	Particularities of the fiduciary execution	The EA will be MoECST and through its Project Executing Unit (PEU) will be responsible for fiduciary management of the Project. The PEU is staffed with a Financial Specialist, and it has a Procurement Specialist on a retainer basis, who, along with the Program Coordinator and the other members of the PEU team, will execute the fiduciary activities of the Project.

3. Fiduciary Capacity

Fiduciary Capacity of the EA	Based on the recently conducted Institutional Capacity Assessment (ICAP), the MoECST and the existing PEU have adequate capacity to execute the fiduciary activities of the Project. The ICAP found that the PEU has competent and experienced staff as well as adequate systems, including internal controls, to effectively administer the Project.

4. Fiduciary risks and risk response

Risk Taxonomy	Risk	Risk level	Risk response
Human Resources	If a competent and experienced Procurement Specialist is not identified and contracted prior to start of execution, it could lead to suboptimal performance of the procurement function within the first year of the Project, which may lead to delays in the completion of the procurements and outputs planned for year 1.	Medium-High	A Procurement Specialist should be hired, either fully dedicated to the Project, or on a retainer basis, as part of the conditions prior to first disbursement. Furthermore, the Bank will provide coaching and training in IDB fiduciary procedures to the new Procurement Specialist as part of a comprehensive onboarding process.

[1] Any system or subsystem that is subsequently approved may be applicable to the operation, in accordance with the terms of the Bank's validation.

5. Policies and Guides applicable to operation: The procurement processes financed in full or in part by Bank resources will be conducted in accordance with the Policies for the Procurement of Goods and Works Financed by the IDB (GN-2349-15) and the Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants Financed by the IDB (GN-2350-15), or those in effect at the time of project execution.

6. Exceptions to Policies and Rules: Not applicable.

II. Aspects to be considered in the Special Conditions of the Loan Agreement

Special conditions precedent to first disbursement: The first disbursement of the Loan shall be subject to the fulfilment, to the satisfaction of the Bank, of the following requirements: (i) The approval by MoECST of the POM in terms previously agreed to with the Bank; and (ii) The hiring of a Program Coordinator, Project Officer (in charge of monitoring of program execution), a Financial Officer within the PEU, and a Procurement Specialist, either full or part-time.
Exchange rate applicable to the documentation and rendering of expenditure in the Borrower's local currency is Option (b) (ii) of Article 4.10 of the General Conditions of the loan contract, i.e., exchange rate on the effective date of payment of each expenditure in local currency.
Type of Audit: Throughout the loan disbursement period, the EA will submit to the Bank annual audited financial statements within 120 days after the close of the fiscal year, March 31st. The audit will be conducted by an audit firm considered eligible by the Bank. The audit's scope and related considerations will be governed by the Financial Management Guidelines (document OP-273-12) and the Guide for Financial Reports and Management of External Audit. The audit will cover both financings from the IDB and the GPE and the audit costs could be financed with IDB or GPE resources.
Other financial reports: Within 60 days after the end of each semester, an unaudited financial execution report for the period will be submitted as part of the semi-annual progress report.

III. Agreements and Requirements for Procurement Execution

☒	Bidding Documents	For procurement of Works, Goods and Services Different of Consulting executed in accordance with the Procurement Policies (document GN-2349-15), subject to ICB, the Bank's Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs) or those agreed between EA and the Bank will be used for the particular procurement. Likewise, the selection and contracting of Consulting Services will be carried out in accordance with the Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants (document GN-2350-15) and the Standard Request for Proposals (SRP) issued by the Bank or agreed between the EA and the Bank will be used for the particular selection. For the [Title of Procurement] a procurement document shall be developed to be agreed between the competent authority of the country and the Bank [additional description] The revision of the technical specifications, as well as the terms of reference of the procurements during the preparation of selection processes, is the responsibility of the Sector Specialist of the Project. This technical review can be ex-ante and is independent of the procurement review method.
☒	Complementary Procurement Support	Yes, if needed.
	Direct Contracting and Single Source Selection	**The Single-Source Selection of the Trust for the Americas is foreseen for the Expansion of the CODE.org Curriculum (US$200,000) (Sub-component 2.2).** The Trust for the Americas is qualified and considered an agency with exceptional worth for the assignment in accordance with 3.11(d) of the Bank's Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the IDB (GN-2350-15). The Trust for the Americas was directly contracted by the IDB to implement the CODE.org curriculum in 23 Belizean primary schools (ATN/CF-17295-RG). Based on excellent work of the consultant, and to ensure consistency in service delivery, the MoECST wishes to maintain the same consultancy firm for the expansion to additional schools. The Trust for the Americas is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Organization of American States (OAS) and established in 1997 to promote public and private partnerships; it has implemented projects in 24 countries and worked with over 1,000 organizations in the region. Its initiatives seek

		to promote educational and economic opportunities as well as government accountability and transparency. The organization has ample expertise and experience in delivering education programs for: a) digital skills; b) computer science and coding, using the CODE.org curriculum; c) life and socio-emotional skills; d) youth programs; and d) mentor and coaching. **The Direct Contracting of the Community Systems Foundation (CSF) is foreseen for the BEMIS (US$100,000) (Sub-component 1.3.)**. In accordance with paragraph 3.7(c) of the IDB's Policies for the Procurement of Goods and Works financed by the IDB (GN-2349-15), the direct contracting is justified since the goods and related services are available from only one source. The BEMIS is based on the OpenEMIS software of the United Nations Organization for Education Science and Culture (UNESCO) as it is the most suitable tool for the Belize education system. The OpenEMIS software was designed by UNESCO to constitute a basic, customizable and affordable EMIS tool for countries with weak statistical database to be able to adapt it to the needs of specific national contexts. UNESCO makes the software available free of charge to member countries. Since it is an open-source software, the MoECST has the freedom to adapt the instrument to its specific needs. The non-profit CSF has been a partner of UNESCO in the development of the OpenEMIS software and is the only organization tasked by UNESCO to implement the software in UNESCO member countries. The MoECST regularly contracts the CSF to add or modify BEMIS modules, and to train MoECST staff and school administrators in the use of the BEMIS. The MoECST is satisfied with the services provided by the CSF. **The Single-Source Selection of Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is foreseen for consulting services for TVET courses on the green and blue economies sub-component (US$400,000) (Sub-component 2.3)**. The NSCC is qualified and considered an agency with exceptional worth for the assignment in accordance with 3.11(d) of the Bank's Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the IDB (GN-2350-15). The NSCC is renowned for its expertise in vocational education and training to foster skills for the green and blue economy. Following a competitive bidding process (BL-T1131-P001), the NSCC successfully developed and implemented a two-year vocational training course in renewable energy. As a result of the successful implementation, the MoECST requested the present loan operation to expand with two additional courses for the green and blue economies.
	Training	For the recruitment of TVET courses on the green and blue economies to be hired as a consultancy, the following procedures will be used: Single-Source Selection. The justification for SSS is in the prior paragraph.
☒	Recurrent Expenses	The recurrent expenses required to put the Project into operation approved by the Project Team Leader, which are financed, will be made following the executing agency's administrative procedures. Such procedures will be reviewed and accepted by the Bank, provided that they do not violate the principles of value for money, economy, efficiency, equality, transparency and integrity.
	Advance Contracting – Retroactive Financing	Due to the nature of the school year calendar, and given the urgency of addressing learning gaps, the EA prior to the date of loan approval may start the following procurement processes that shall be recognized and disbursed once the loan contract enters into effect: purchase of eLearning devices (components I and II), teacher professional development (components I and II), and the architectural design (component II). The procurement procedures, including advertising, shall be done in accordance with the Bank's Core Procurement Principles for the eventual contracts to be eligible for Bank financing, and the Bank shall review the process used by the Borrower (Paragraph 1.14 of GN-2349-15). The Borrower undertakes such advance contracting at its own risk, and any concurrence by the Bank with the procedures, documentation, or proposal for award does not commit the Bank to grant a loan for the project in question. The contracts will be awarded only after the project reaches its eligibility (entry into force and all conditions prior to first disbursement are met). Therefore, it is not anticipated that retroactive financing will be required for these activities.
☒	Procurement supervision	The method of supervision for the procurement processes executed by the EA shall be ex ante. If during project execution, it is identified that the EA has developed sufficient capacity, the possibility of supervising procurement processes on an ex-post basis will be evaluated.

☒	Records and Archives	The MoECST will be responsible for maintaining proper records and supporting documentation of all procurement processes financed with the Project resources along with the relevant payment supporting documents in accordance with the terms of the loan contract.

Main Acquisitions

Description of the procurement	**Selection Method**	**New Procedures/Tools**	**Estimated Date**	**Estimated Amount 000'US$**
Goods				
Purchase of eLearning devices and adaptive instruction software (Chromebooks for primary and secondary)	ICB	NA	04/01/2023	3,850
Virtual labs for schools (equipment and software for secondary schools)	ICB	NA	06/02/2024	550
Computer and equipment for Science Labs, Maker Spaces, and Media Studios for STEAM schools, and for ITVET	ICB	NA	07/02/2025	946
Furniture for Science Labs and for ITVET	ICB	NA	07/02/2025	182
Licenses for Media Studio learning software	ICB	NA	01/31/2024	150
Strengthening BEMIS	DC	NA	15/04/2023	100
Materials for ITVET (including 3D printers, and drones, among others)	ICB	NA	02/10/2024	100
Works				
Construction of science labs, workshops and maker studios at six existing secondary schools	ICB	NA	01/17/2024	6,566
Rehabilitation of an existing MoECST buildings to house the new ITVET course offerings	ICB	NA	01/17/2024	1,000
Non-consulting services				
Consulting Firms				
Accelerated learning to close achievement gaps, and Students' extracurricular activities	QCBS	NA	04/01/2023	900
Special education teacher training and assessment	QCBS	NA	03/26/2023	500
Women's participation in the 4iR fields	QCBS	NA	07/20/2024	500
Fostering Education Achievement of Men	QCBS	NA	01/17/2025	500
4iR TVET courses for the green and blue economies	SSS	NA	01/15/2026	400
Construction design	QCBS	NA	04/01/2023	328

Supervision of construction works	QCBS	NA	12/19/2023	328
Teacher professional development in 4iR and access to international digital skill certification	QCBS	NA	01/02/2024	300
Teachers' professional development	SSS	NA	01/02/2024	200
Experimental Evaluation Adaptive Instruction	QCBS	NA	07/15/2024	200
Experimental Evaluation IEP	QCBS	NA	07/15/2024	200
Individual Consultants				
Project Officer	IC	NA	01/02/2024	158
Works Technician	IC	NA	01/02/2024	115
Procurement Specialist	IC	NA	01/02/2024	106
Financial Specialist	IC	NA	01/02/2024	106
Programme Engineer	IC	NA	01/02/2024	96

To access procurement plan here.

IV. AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

☒	Programming and Budget	The budget preparation process begins each year with the budget call whereby the MFEDI distributes a circular outlining the procedures, timelines, and forms to be completed by each ministry, department, and agency of the Government of Belize. This process is applicable to external financing, including IDB and GPE financing for this project. The Government of Belize has committed to allocate for each fiscal year of the Project, adequate fiscal space to guarantee the timely execution of the Project. As such, no bottlenecks regarding fiscal space and the budget process are anticipated for the Project.
☒	Treasury and Disbursement Management	In accordance with the norms of GOB, bank accounts will be opened at the Central Bank of Belize for the Project. Separate bank accounts will be designated for IDB and GPE resources. Payments of project expenses in local currency will be made from the Consolidated Revenue Fund account which will then be reimbursed with resources from the IDB and GPE designed bank account at the Central Bank of Belize for those local payments. For foreign currency payments, the PEU will request to the Central Bank of Belize to make those payments directly from the designated project bank accounts. In accordance with the disbursing norms for loan operations and the anticipated commitments and obligations of the Project, it is expected that the Advance of Funds methodology will be mainly used for both IDB and GPE resources. The Advance of Funds when used, will be based on the true liquidity needs of the Project for a period not exceeding six months. Subsequent advances may be disbursed once 80% of the total accumulated balance pending justification has been submitted and accepted by the Bank. The other

		disbursement methods that may be used includes the Reimbursement of payments made and Direct Payments to Supplier.
☒	Accounting, information systems and reporting	Accounting of the Project will be facilitated through SmartStream which is the Government's national financial management system, in accordance with cash-basis international public-sector accounting standards (cash-IPSAS). Additionally, QuickBooks accounting software will be used to complement SmartStream for financial reporting purposes. A separate chart of accounts will be created in QuickBooks for each funding source, IDB and GPE.
☒	Internal Control and Internal Audit	The Internal control system of Government of Belize is weak and though an Internal Audit Unit was established at the MOF in September 2020, no internal audits have been conducted so far. To ensure the internal control systems applicable to the Project is adequate, there will be a Project Operations Manual outlining the required systems of internal controls to ensure the effective fiduciary management of the Project.
☒	External control: external financial audit and project reports	Given the capacity constraints of the Office of the Auditor General, a private audit firm considered eligible by the Bank will be hired to conduct the annual and final financial statement audits of the Project. The audit scope will cover both sources of financing, IDB and GPE, and single audit reports will be produced. The EA will select and contract the services of an audit firm considered eligible by the Bank, in accordance with the Terms of Reference agreed with the Bank.
☐	Project Financial Supervision	The financial supervision plan of the Project will focus on: (i) activities related to the implementation and follow-up of arrangements and systems being implemented for the fiduciary management of the Project; (ii) follow-up on the implementation status of risk mitigating measures; and (iii) capacity building of PEU personnel in the Bank's procedures and requirements. Disbursements from both IDB and GPE resources will be reviewed on an ex-post basis.

SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM

BL-G1008

CERTIFICATION

The Grants and Co-Financing Management Unit (ORP/GCM) certifies that the referenced operation will be financed through:

Funding Source	Fund Code	Currency	Amount up to
Global Partnership for Education Fund	GPE	USD	5,000,000

For operations financed by funds where the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) does not control liquidity, the availability of resources is contingent upon the request and the receipt of the resources from the donors. Additionally, in case of operations financed by funds that require a post-approval agreement with the donor, the availability of resources is contingent upon the signature of the agreement between the Donor and the IDB. (i.e.: Project Specific Grants (PSG), Financial Intermediary Funds (FIF), and single donor trust funds).

Certified by: Copy signed — May 1, 2023 | 5:42 PM EDT

Maria Fernanda Garcia — Date
Chief
Grants and Co-Financing Management Unit
ORP/GCM

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

PROPOSED RESOLUTION DE-__/23

Belize. Loan _____/OC-BL to Belize
Skills for the Future Program

The Board of Executive Directors

RESOLVES:

That the President of the Bank, or such representative as he shall designate, is authorized, in the name and on behalf of the Bank, to enter into such contract or contracts as may be necessary with Belize, as borrower, for the purpose of granting it a financing aimed at cooperating in the execution of the Skills for the Future Program. Such financing will be for the amount of up to US$15,000,000 from the resources of the Bank's Ordinary Capital and will be subject to the Financial Terms and Conditions and the Special Contractual Conditions of the Project Summary of the Loan Proposal.

(Adopted on ___ _____ 2023)

LEG/SGO/CID/EZIDB0000366-1672162870-23048
BL-L1044

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

PROPOSED RESOLUTION DE-___/23

Belize. Nonreimbursable Investment Financing GRT/_____
Skills for the Future Program

The Board of Executive Directors

RESOLVES:

That the President of the Inter-American Development Bank ("Bank"), or such representative as he shall designate, is authorized, in the name and on behalf of the Bank, acting as Grant Agent of the Global Partnership of Education Fund ("Fund"), to enter into such agreement or agreements as may be necessary with Belize, for the purpose of granting it a nonreimbursable investment financing for the amount of up to US$5,000,000 chargeable to the resources of the Fund, and to adopt any other measures as may be pertinent for the execution of the project proposal contained in document PR-____.

(Adopted on ___ _____ 2023)

LEG/SGO/CID/EZIDB0000366-1672162870-23049
BL-G1008