

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	SURINAME
▪ TC Name:	Support for Implementation of Consolidating Access to Inclusive Quality Education in Suriname
▪ TC Number:	SU-T1154
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Hobbs, Cynthia Marie (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU); Emilio Laguillo (SCL/EDU); Greco, Maria Sofia (LEG/SGO); Sefanya Pierpont (SCL/EDU); Wip, Shannon (CCB/CSU) Sefanya Pierpont (SCL/EDU); Wip, Shannon (CCB/CSU)
▪ Taxonomy:	Operational Support
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	SU-L1059
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	22 Apr 2022
▪ Beneficiary:	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC)
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development(W2E)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$150,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	30 months
▪ Required start date:	November 1, 2022
▪ Types of consultants:	Individuals
▪ Prepared by Unit:	SCL/EDU-Education
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	CCB/CSU-Country Office Suriname
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	Yes
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	Yes
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality; Productivity and innovation; Diversity

II. Description of the Associated Loan/Guarantee

- 2.1 The program *Consolidating Access to Inclusive Quality Education in Suriname* (SU-L1059) was approved by the IDB in February 2020 for US\$30 million. The contract was signed by the Government of Suriname in February 2022. The general objective of the program is to improve the quality of education in Suriname which will be pursued by achieving the following specific objectives: (i) to increase the quality of teaching practices and content in lower secondary, and early childhood education services for children with low readiness to learn and non-native Dutch speakers; and (ii) to improve access to adequate school infrastructure for children in remote and semi-urban areas in four priority districts (Wanica, Sipaliwini, Marowijne, and Coronie). The project achieved eligibility on August 30, 2022. Technical working groups are currently meeting to prepare for the project launch at the end of October 2022.

III. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 3.1 The general objective of this Technical Cooperation (TC) is to assist the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC) in the technical and operational execution

of SU-L1059 in specific areas which are new for the Ministry and for which studies were carried out during the project design phase. This will include: (i) support for the development of an inclusive education strategy and awareness campaign; (ii) the identification of assessment tools for early detection of disabilities and special needs; (iii) the design of a fund to improve school infrastructure for public and private schools; and (iv) technical support for the school infrastructure component.

- 3.2 **Challenges to be addressed.** During the design phase of SU-L1059, two relevant studies were carried out: one on special education, and one on a new public-private partnership (PPP) between the MOESC and the privately run FIBOS schools. The first study focused on reviewing the status of Special Education.¹ It found that there is no clear or uniform definition on the concept of disability nor a clear classification of the severity of each disability. As a result, in Suriname's special education schools there is a broad mix of children with physical and intellectual disabilities, as well as children with behavioral issues. Many of them could take part in activities in traditional school, and their development opportunities are curtailed by placement in special education schools with less stringent curriculum. Additionally, most teachers in these schools are not trained in special education and there is a lack of proper diagnosis and assessment tools that are culturally sensitive. In order to face these challenges, the report recommended: strengthening the capacity of the various departments for special education², early diagnosis of disabilities and learning support, a digitalized system to monitor the trajectory of students with disabilities, a system to register, allocate and train teachers in special education, curricular adaptation with its respective support services, and a mechanism to support schools and families. The study also recommended movement towards an inclusive education system. The Government has requested support through this TC to establish a common understanding of inclusive education between the main stakeholders in order to pave the way for the implementation of a national inclusive education strategy under Component 1 of the project, as well as the identification of assessment tools, following international good practice, to identify disabilities and special needs at an early age.
- 3.3 The second study reported challenges faced by privately-run denomination schools, largely dependent on public funding³. The denomination schools initiated an annual charge of roughly 250 SRD to families in 2017. This has raised concerns that these schools are no longer affordable or accessible. Conversely, the MOESC has concerns about data sharing and transparency, and about the efficient use of the resources that denomination schools are receiving. Under the current relationship with the MOESC, the ministry has a very limited role in supervising the quality of education provided in these schools. The study recommended closer collaboration between the MOESC and FIBOS, the organization representing the denomination schools, and a new regulatory

¹ Saric, D. 2019. Panorama de la Educación Especial en Surinam. IDB (unpublished).

² The special education departments of MOESC include the Pedological Institute (PI), which focuses on guidance and counselling of students, parents, and teachers of children with special educational needs, and the Bureau of Special Education, which focuses on curriculum, teacher training and placement, and evaluation.

³ Harris, D. and Pabon, V. 2020. Support to Increase Access to Inclusive Quality Education in Suriname through Private Public Partnership. IDB (unpublished). The term "denomination schools" is used in Suriname to refer to privately run schools with a religious background. In 2018, they represented 43% of the total number of schools and 36% of the student population (MOESC, 2019). They are publicly funded and receive a direct subsidy per student and other transfers from the MOESC.

framework to guarantee stability, predictability, timeliness, and fairness in funding and good quality education.

- 3.4 Further, quality of education across all schools is an issue. The 2018 GLO 6 national exam results showed that only 28% of students had satisfactory grades in Math and only 56% in Language (MOESC, 2019). This percentage has remained low since 2011: 28% and 54% in Math and Language, respectively. Factors that affect the quality of education include: (i) the school; (ii) the household and environment; and (iii) the education system (Vegas and Petrow, 2008). On the school side, teachers are the most important factor for students to learn and acquire the necessary skills (Hanushek 2011; Rivkin et al.2005). They are followed by physical (school infrastructure and equipment) and learning resources (books and technology), necessary to create the right conditions for children to learn (IDB, 2016). The Minister has requested the establishment of a School Quality Improvement Program or fund to help low performing schools to improve the quality of their education services. Support is required under this TC to establish the parameters of the program to be executed under Component 3 of the project.
- 3.5 Finally, previous IDB education projects have included school infrastructure and teacher housing. Preliminary observations from the 2019 school census revealed that they have suffered deterioration, in part due to lack of preventive maintenance. The proposed activities under Component 2 of the project include the development of guidelines, awareness campaigns and training. Green principles will be introduced for construction of two new schools and renovation of 10 schools. These are new areas for the MOESC, and the government has requested technical support to introduce and develop these areas, provide capacity building and assist the Building Commission and the Project Management Unit with strategic management of school infrastructure.
- 3.6 This TC is necessary because there was a two-year delay in signing the loan document. During this time, the Minister and the entire MOESC's technical team has changed, and much of the technical expertise has been lost. International expertise will be required to establish the groundwork for the proposed activities. In the case of special education and establishment of the school quality improvement fund, the TC resources will be needed immediately. Infrastructure support will be needed on an ongoing basis.
- 3.7 This TC is consistent with IDB's Second Update of the Institutional Strategy (UIS) (AB-3190-2) and is aligned with the development challenge of productivity and innovation by emphasizing the improvement of the quality of education in Suriname, and with the cross-cutting issue of diversity through its focus on inclusive education. This TC is aligned to the social inclusion and equality development challenge by supporting the Ministry's strategy to build an inclusive education strategy for children with special needs. It also is aligned with the objectives stated in GN-2819-14, specifically with Priority Area 5 Inclusive Social Development (W2E) by focusing on strengthening the MOESC's efforts to become more effective and efficient in the use of resources to reach all students in the country and provide quality education. The operation is consistent with the second strategic goal identified in the IDB Group Country Strategy with Suriname (GN-3065), promoting private sector competitiveness, by including activities to improve education quality and learning outcomes. Finally, it aligns with the Education Division's Skills Development Sector Framework Document, (GN-3012-3) approved in 2020, under the line of action 1 to ensure access to high-quality and relevant learning opportunities through life, and line of action 3, to consolidate and

develop better funding and cofunding mechanisms to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and coverage of skills development opportunities.

IV. Description of activities/components and budget

- 4.1 **Outcome statement.** Assist the MOESC in the technical and operational execution of SU-L1059 in specific areas which are new to the Ministry and for which studies were carried out during the project design phase.
- 4.2 **Component I: Groundwork for the implementation of an inclusive education strategy and early identification of disabilities.** An initial review was carried out on the status of Suriname's special education schools and programs, but the implementation of an inclusive education strategy (sub-component 1.2 of the loan program – *Inclusive early childhood education*) requires more detailed information and a plan to facilitate this transition, beginning with a shared understanding of what inclusive education entails. Building on the recommendations of the previous study, this component of the TC will socialize its results and recommendations, aiming to establish a common understanding among stakeholders of the concept of disability and awareness regarding what is required for the transition to inclusive education. The objective of this component is to lay the groundwork for the implementation of an inclusive education strategy, which will be designed under the loan program. The TC will finance the hiring of an international consultant to develop a plan to introduce the concept of inclusive education and the preparation of materials for an awareness campaign. It also will finance a consultant to explore good practice approaches to identifying disabilities and special needs at an early age and addressing those needs in an inclusive education environment. The expected outputs for this component are: (i) a document which outlines the steps for the introduction of inclusive education in Suriname, including a strategy and materials for an awareness campaign; and (ii) documentation of viable assessment tools for early identification of disabilities and special needs.
- 4.3 **Component II: Design of a fund to improve school quality.** Component 3 of the loan program (*Management and monitoring of the education sector*) supports the development of a School Quality Improvement Program to support primary and lower secondary schools in meeting the quality requirements established under the ongoing curriculum reform. This program comprises a fund for infrastructure improvements, equipment, and teacher training. A consultant will be hired under this TC component to design the fund, including objectives, guidelines, criteria for selection of schools to be financed, and operational aspects of the fund. The expected output is a manual that fully describes how the fund will operate.
- 4.4 **Component III: Technical support to school infrastructure component.** This TC will support the hiring of an international consultant to provide technical expertise in various areas of school infrastructure included in component 2 of the loan program (*Access to adequate infrastructure*). The consultant will be responsible for the review and validation of school infrastructure maintenance guidelines and planning tools and training in their use, sharing of good international practices for and participation in the design of new and renovated infrastructure, and introduction to green infrastructure principles. This person will work closely with the MOESC's Technical Infrastructure Department and the Project Management Unit responsible for infrastructure components. The expected outputs are maintenance guidelines adopted by the MOESC, inclusion of green principles in new and renovated schools, and reports on work with the MOESC and PMU.

- 4.5 The total cost of the TC, needed to achieve the expected outputs is US\$150,000, to be financed by the OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development (W2E). There is no local counterpart funding anticipated. The indicative budget is shown in the table below.

Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	Description	IDB/Fund Funding	Total Funding
Component 1. Groundwork for the implementation of an inclusive education strategy and early identification of disabilities	1. Strategy for introducing inclusive education	US\$30,000	US\$50,000
	2. Review of approaches to early detection of children with disabilities	US\$20,000	
Component 2. Design of a fund to improve school quality	Design of a fund for school quality improvements	US\$20,000	US\$20,000
Component 3. Technical support to school infrastructure components	Technical support for school infrastructure	US\$80,000	US\$80,000
Total		US\$150,000	US\$150,000

- 4.6 **Supervision, monitoring and evaluation.** The monitoring of the execution of the TC program will be carried out through the definition of an initial work plan and monthly follow-up meetings with the MOESC. The Bank will work closely with the ministry's appointed team to ensure direct dialogue and involvement of relevant government authorities and stakeholders and will carry out regular progress checks based on the outputs and expected results shown in the Results Matrix (see Annex II).

V. Executing agency and execution structure

- 5.1 This TC will be executed by the Bank's Education Division (SCL/EDU) per the request of the Government of Suriname (see letter from the Ministry of Finance in Annex I). The Project Management Unit responsible for SU-L1038 has suffered staffing issues over the last two years. The onset of SU-L1059 brings additional work. These constraints undermine the PMU's institutional, technical, and operational capacity to duly and timely execute the TC activities and is congruent with the justification for Bank execution according to document OP-619-4, Annex II. Further, the Government recognizes the Bank's expertise and access to international experts in the areas for which the MOESC seeks technical assistance. The TC will be implemented over a period of 30 months. The UDR will be in the Country Office in Suriname.
- 5.2 **Procurement.** All activities to be executed under this TC have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) and will be contracted in accordance with Bank policies as follows: (a) AM-650 for Individual consultants; (b) GN-2765-4 and Guidelines OP-1155-4 for Consulting Firms for services of an intellectual nature; and (c) GN-2303-28 for logistics and other related services.

VI. Major issues

- 6.1 One potential risk to the implementation of this TC is resistance to the introduction of new concepts, namely inclusive education and preventive maintenance that will require buy-in from key stakeholders. For this reason, the consultancies include focus group interviews and/or workshops and the development of awareness campaigns to inform and develop shared responsibility for implementation of new policies.

VII. Exceptions to Bank policy

- 7.1 There are no known exceptions to Bank policy.

VIII. Environmental and Social Strategy

- 8.1 This Technical Cooperation is not intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects or environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, this TC does not have applicable requirements of the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

Required Annexes:

[Request from the Client - SU-T1154](#)

[Results Matrix - SU-T1154](#)

[Terms of Reference - SU-T1154](#)

[Procurement Plan - SU-T1154](#)