



**MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY**

Level 14, Eric Williams Financial Building, Independence Square, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, WI  
Tel: 612 9700 ext. 2016/1329

**File Ref: 11/4/74**

November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Ms. Rocío Medina Bolívar  
Representative  
Country Office of Trinidad and Tobago  
Inter-American Development Bank  
17 Alexandra Street, St. Clair  
Port of Spain

Dear Ms. Bolívar,

**RE: Regional Technical Cooperation – Teacher Training on Digital Education & Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean with the Government of Finland**

I refer to correspondence received from the Ministry of Education expressing interest in participating in the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Regional Technical Cooperation: *Teacher Training on Digital Education & Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean with the Government of Finland*. This project is especially relevant to the country's education sector given Trinidad and Tobago's decision to facilitate online education during the global COVID-19 pandemic as well as the thrust towards blended learning in 2021. Furthermore, this initiative is in alignment with Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 National Development Strategy, namely *Theme I: Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Assets* which aims to develop the education sector into a modern, inclusive, accessible and relevant system.

In light of the foregoing, the Ministry of Planning and Development requests the approval for Trinidad and Tobago's participation through the Ministry of Education in the IDB Regional Technical Cooperation: *Teacher Training on Digital Education & Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean with the Government of Finland*.

I take this opportunity to thank the Bank for its support in this initiative.

Sincerely,

Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Planning and Development

PERMANENT SECRETARY  
MINISTRY OF PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly,  
*Minister of Education*

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2020

The Honourable Camille Robinson-Regis  
Minister of Planning and Development and  
Level 14, Eric Williams Finance Building  
Independence Square  
Port of Spain



Dear Honourable Minister

**Re: Regional and Technical Co-operation on Teacher Training on Digital Education and Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean with the Government of Finland**

The purpose of this letter is to request participation and execution in the Technical Co-operation between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) and the Government of Finland with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) as the executing arm. The Government of Finland has provided resources to our teachers on Digital Education and Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean.

This training is particularly relevant given the country's decision to facilitate online education during the global pandemic as well as its thrust towards Blended Learning come 2021. (Please see attached Appendix with the details of the Technical Co-operation Agreement).

The Ministry of Planning and Development, as the executing arm of the GORTT, with the IDB, has the responsibility to facilitate the rolling out of this programme.

In this regard, a request is now being made to gain the required approval via written correspondence to start the programme, in collaboration with the IDB.

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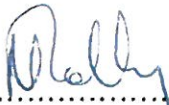
17<sup>th</sup> November, 2020

The Honourable Camille Robinson-Regis

Given that the approval deadline for this project is December 11, 2020, we ask for your kind co-operation in expediting this approval.

We look forward to your kind co-operation

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dolly', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly  
Minister



## TC ABSTRACT

## I. Basic Project Data

• Country/Region:	REGIONAL/CCB - Caribbean Group
• TC Name:	Teacher Training on Digital Education and Distance Learning Pedagogies in the Caribbean
• TC Number:	RG-T3793
• Team Leader/Members:	RIEBLE-AUBOURG, SABINE (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; HOBBS, CYNTHIA MARIE (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; BLASCO, IVANA (SCL/EDU); HOLGUIN MADRINAN, ALEJANDRA (SCL/SCL); THAILINGER, AGUSTINA (SCL/EDU); VITERI, ADRIANA (SCL/EDU)
• Taxonomy:	Client Support
• Number and name of operation supported by the TC:	N/A
• Date of TC Abstract:	01 Oct 2020
• Beneficiary:	Ministries of Education
• Executing Agency:	INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
• IDB funding requested:	US\$200,000.00
• Local counterpart funding:	US\$0.00
• Disbursement period:	48 months
• Types of consultants:	Individuals; Firms
• Prepared by Unit:	SCL/EDU - Education
• Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	SCL/EDU - Education
• TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
• TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
• Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	

## II. Objective and Justification

- 2.1 The general objective of this project is to provide support to the Ministries of Education of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago in improving the skills of teachers and teacher trainers in digital education and distance learning pedagogies. This program will contribute to their transformation efforts towards a more digital, resilient, inclusive, and quality education system. Secondly, it will strengthen the Ministries' knowledge base on digital teacher training as a catalyst for recovering and accelerating learning achievement in students in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.
- 2.2 Education is a priority sector in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), particularly now as the countries are experiencing economic challenges brought about by COVID-19. The pandemic has highlighted the need for skilled workers in more diversified fields to remain competitive in the medium and long term and to better participate in the global economy. The Caribbean region has made noticeable progress in access to education, nearing universal primary schooling and increasing secondary enrollment rates. Net primary school attendance in 2018 was 90.2 percent for Barbados and 91.8 percent in T&T. At the secondary education level, net enrolment for low-secondary education in Barbados in 2019 was 94.9 percent (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). In T&T, the net attendance rate for low-secondary education in 2018 was 69.1 percent (CIMA, 2018). Despite improved access, low pass rates on the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination indicate the need for improved

quality of education and limit students' opportunities for continued studies, training and employment.

- 2.3 The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted already existing inequalities and problems in the education system of almost every country in the region. Unequal access to connectivity, digital devices and technology for students and teachers, limitations in most countries' curricular digital content, and educators' limited capacity to effectively teach remotely using the available technologies all need to be addressed to prepare the education systems for the reopening of schools and future hybrid education models, that is, the use of both face-to-face and distance learning methods for teaching and learning.
- 2.4 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from March to June 2020 schools were closed in Barbados and T&T and education services were disrupted, affecting nearly 35,000 students. The new academic year has started in Barbados (September 21, 2020), and T&T is expected to commence in January 2021. T&T will continue with an online modality, while schools in Barbados are expected to implement a hybrid model including face-to-face classes in small groups. In both countries, new digital skills and distance learning pedagogies are of paramount importance for teachers in order to maintain continuity of learning.
- 2.5 The emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 required teachers to use distance learning modalities. In both countries, the greatest obstacles in terms of continuity of classes were connectivity issues and the lack of preparedness of teachers. Barbados' Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training is working with private internet providers towards the expansion of internet access, and there is a plan to distribute SIM cards to students. In addition, the IDB has collaborated with the Ministry of Education to develop a short introductory program to train some teachers in digital skills and distance learning pedagogies. In T&T, the Ministry of Education is coordinating the provision of chargeless internet access for everyone. There will be continued need to better equip teachers and teacher trainers to work with online and low technology mediums for teaching and learning. Moreover, even if/when students can return to full-time schooling, the Caribbean region is susceptible to natural disasters such as hurricanes, making distance learning tools useful for the short, medium and long term.

### III. Description of Activities and Outputs

- 3.1 **Component I: Teacher training and mentoring.** This component will strengthen skills of a core group of teacher trainers and primary school teachers in the use of digital tools and distance education modalities. Teacher trainers will be trained to ensure the adoption of digital tools by teacher training institutes for long-term training benefits; and a group of primary teachers will be trained to in turn train teachers at their respective schools. A mentoring program will encourage and counsel participants.
- 3.2 **Component II: Teacher training evaluation.** To appraise and determine the effectiveness of the teacher training programs, a program evaluation will be carried out. This component will finance a consultancy to: (a) collect qualitative information from the teacher trainers and teachers; (b) catalog teacher training experience on digital skills, use of technology and distance learning pedagogies; and (c) develop an evaluation study based on the teacher training program.
- 3.3 **Component III: Contingency.** Contingency

### IV. Budget

#### Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	IDB/Fund Funding	Counterpart Funding	Total Funding
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Teacher training and mentoring	US\$150,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$150,000.00
Teacher training evaluation	US\$40,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$40,000.00
Contingency	US\$10,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$10,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$200,000.00</b>	<b>US\$0.00</b>	<b>US\$200,000.00</b>

#### **V. Executing Agency and Execution Structure**

- 5.1 The program will be executed by the Education Division (SCL/EDU) of the Bank. The TC will be implemented over a period of 48 months. All activities to be executed under this TC will be included in the Procurement Plan and will be contracted in accordance with Bank policies as follows: (a) AM-650 for Individual consultants; (b) GN-2765-1 and Guidelines OP-1155-4 for Consulting Firms for services of an intellectual nature and; (c) GN-2303-20 for logistics and other related services.
- 5.2 The TC will be executed by the Bank in order to coordinate regionally across the countries in the identification and selection of training programs that will benefit both countries, and to enhance independence in the design and implementation of the evaluation of the training programs. The activities require strong coordination and collaboration with the Ministry of Education in each country, a role that the Bank will carry out given its solid relationships with education authorities in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. This will ensure successful completion of the TC activities. Finally, given that Caribbean countries face similar challenges in the areas covered under this TC, a regional perspective is a powerful instrument to identify synergies between countries and lessons learned.

#### **VI. Project Risks and Issues**

- 6.1 There are no major issues associated with this operation.

#### **VII. Environmental and Social Classification**

- 7.1 The ESG classification for this operation is "undefined".