

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC7262

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 13-Jan-2014

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I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Dominican Republic	Project ID:	P146831
Project Name:	Education System Management (P146831)		
Task Team Leader:	Peter Anthony Holland		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	02-May-2014	Estimated Board Date:	15-Jul-2014
Managing Unit:	LCSHE	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	General education sector (70%), Public administration- Education (20%), Pre-primary education (10%)		
Theme(s):	Education for all (100%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	50.00	Total Bank Financing:	50.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			0.00
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			50.00
Total			50.00
Environmental Category:	C - Not Required		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

B. Project Objectives

The proposed Project Development Objective is to support the Dominican Government in improving the management of the education system by: (a) improving teacher policies, (b) developing a comprehensive evaluation system, (c) strengthening the quality assurance of Early Childhood Development services, and (d) enhancing the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Education.

C. Project Description

2. The proposed Project would support the Dominican Government in implementing key priority policies that will improve the management of the education system. The policy areas to be supported are those elements most linked to improving the quality of education: teacher policies that aim to bring the maximum talent to the classroom, student assessments that would identify the specifics that need to be improved and track progress, quality assurance mechanisms for ECD services, as well as institutional modernization to render more efficient the functioning of the system. As such, the Project aims to put in place the necessary conditions at the system-level for improving education quality, at a critical juncture where much needed increased investment and substantial expansion of supply are coinciding with broad-based civil society support for meaningful education reform.

Component One: Supporting Results Required for Improved Education Management (US\$40 Million)

3. The objective of this component would be to support the Dominican Government in enhancing the management of the education system, a precondition to improving the quality of education. Priority policy areas that have been identified as key to this transformation are:

(i) Improving Teacher Policies

4. Among the programs that the Dominican Republic plans to implement as part of a comprehensive re-conception of the teaching career to improve the quality of education are: a) improved quality of entering teachers through more rigorous selection of applicants to teacher training institutions, the application of training standards, and changes in the pedagogical and subject-specific contents of curricula, b) the professionalization of the teaching career, using evaluation, induction and certification processes as tools to make the career both attractive and challenging, c) a system of in-service training and professional development for different education levels and curricular areas, responding to needs emphasized by schools, and d) training of school directors to develop true pedagogical leaders as well as administrative managers.

5. The envisaged outcome of this sub-component at the end of the project is a teacher policy framework that would make the teaching profession more attractive and challenging, including revised and endorsed standards, with clear expectations in at least some areas such as pre-service training, in-service training, directors' training, and informed by students' performance in national assessments. The project would support results in a subset (one or more) of the above areas, with DLIs reflecting progressive implementation results in the selected areas..

(ii) Developing a Comprehensive Evaluation System

6. The proposed activities around strengthening the evaluation system are concentrated in three areas: a) student assessment, b) school assessment, and c) institutional and technical capacity strengthening. This subcomponent would include a cross-cutting focus on improving the use of data generated to inform educational practices, for example, by determining institutional improvement plans, the supply of training programs, and the content of education materials etc.

7. The envisaged outcome of this sub-component is a functioning evaluation system, with capable staff, that provides useful information about the performance of primary and secondary students. In addition, more detailed information about school characteristics would be available to inform decision making (eg. training, school administrative functioning, academic improvement plans, content of educational materials, etc). Results for this component could include the online

publication and dissemination of national assessment results for a proportion of school districts, the use of assessments data for school improvement plans, and the design, production, and dissemination of reports using data from TERCE-2013 and PISA-2015.

(iii) Strengthening the quality assurance of ECD Institutions

8. Priority areas to support the strengthening of ECD quality assurance include: a) the design of a pre-service training and professional development system for human resources under the Quizqueya Empieza Contigo program, b) the development of an information and communications strategy with the dual aims of maximizing public understanding of the program and improving parenting practices, and c) the organizational design and institutional strengthening of the National Institute of Comprehensive Care for Early Childhood (Instituto Nacional de Atención Integral a la Primera Infancia - INAPI), including the development of its quality management and certification strategy.

9. The envisaged outcome of this sub-component is a system of ECD quality assurance mechanisms that evaluates the quality of services against standards. The activities mentioned above would produce results such as 5,000 teachers trained and certified for pre-primary grades according to quality standards and a percentage of ECD centers providing quality service according to the standards of service delivery.

(iv) Enhancing the Institutional Capacity of the Ministry of Education

10. Priority areas for improving institutional capacity include: a) supporting the decentralization of Ministry functions and resources by increasing the proportion of the education budget transferred to regional and district-level school boards, and training school directors and board members in the execution of these funds, as well as carefully monitoring their use, and b) strengthening the Ministry's human resources system for both teaching and administrative staff.

11. The envisaged outcome of this sub-component is a system that allows the MINERD to fully understand how its financial and human resources are being used, in order to inform the ongoing decentralization process. Activities under this sub-component would lead to: a higher percentage of the MINERD's budget to be transferred to district and school boards, a number of schools and districts being externally for the quality of their service provision and their use of financial resources, and the production and dissemination of a report where the Human Resources System is used to help identify savings, and reallocate personnel and financial resources.

Component Two: Technical Cooperation on Priority Education Policies (US\$10 Million)

12. This component would provide technical cooperation to the Ministry of Education and other system actors such as the MESCyT that support the technical development and implementation of policies. Specifically, the technical cooperation agenda would help the actors in the system achieve the strategic targets known as DLIs. For each of the chosen policy areas and associated targets, the technical assistance would support the critical pathways, resolving the bottlenecks that would lead to the achievement of the DLIs. Examples of such technical cooperation activities in each policy area include, among others: i) an evaluation of a representative sample of teachers in terms of both content and pedagogical knowledge, to identify weak areas in which teacher training should focus its improvements, ii) inputs to ensure the continuity and comparability of national assessments over time and the dissemination and use of evaluation results to inform other priority areas for the

improvement of education quality (e.g. teacher training, development of education materials, etc.), iii) the organization of workshops on topics such as the formation, training and audit of school boards, or the LAC experience with full-time schools, and iv) the drafting of an institutional framework of the INAIPI. In addition this component would include the design and implementation of two impact evaluations (IEs): one IE of the government's extended school day program, and another of the impact of teacher training programs on student learning as measured by results in national student assessments.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

13. None of the Project components involve civil works, such as improvement or rehabilitation of buildings. The policy and administrative changes to be executed do not have connected environmental safeguards aspects, but instead are focused on improving the management and efficiency of the education system programs. Accordingly the Project is considered Category C (no adverse environmental impacts).

14. There are no indigenous peoples in the Dominican Republic that meet the characteristics as specified in the OP 4.10 Indigenous Peoples. However, there are many vulnerable people belonging to ethnic minorities that would require specific measures for them to be able to benefit from the Comprehensive Evaluation System (component 1.2) and to avoid that the more rigorous student and school assessments lead to lower completion rates for these groups.

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

15. The Project would be implemented by the MINERD, the Ministry in charge of all pre-tertiary public education in the Dominican Republic. The MINERD and its autonomous agencies responsible for the policy areas identified as priorities would be responsible for implementing all activities related to Component 1, under the coordination of the Office of International Cooperation (OCI). The OCI is the office responsible for coordinating and overseeing all internationally-funded projects in the education sector, as well as overseeing and supporting all institutions involved in their implementation. Specifically, of the autonomous agencies, ISFODOSU and INAFOCAM would be responsible for the implementation of policies related to Improving Teacher Policies, together with MESCyT, and the Dominican Institute of Research and Evaluation (IDEICE) for those related to Developing a Comprehensive Evaluation System, while the General Directorate of Special Programs of the Presidency (DIGEPEP) would oversee all implementation relating to Strengthening ECD Institutions. The OCI would coordinate the technical cooperation under Component 2. During the Bank's previous Early Childhood Education (ECE) Project (P054937), which closed in August 2011, the OCI carried out thorough monitoring of project activities during implementation in compliance with its agreement with the Bank, and was responsible for the elaboration of process and impact evaluations at various stages, which were one of the Project's strengths. Although there are no significant environmental or social negative impacts expected, the OCI has good institutional capacity with regards to safeguard policies, accumulated through years of experience in implementing projects financed by the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Union, among other actors.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Glenn S. Morgan (OPSOR)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	No	<p>The project team proposes an environmental category of C per OP/BP 4.01 since the nature and scope of project activities (improving teacher policies, developing an evaluation system and quality assurance strengthening) are not expected to cause adverse environmental impacts.</p> <p>To ensure that the project does not have any negative social impacts and is sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities, assessment information at the individual level will be confidential and new assessments will be included as diagnostic tools and not used for promotion of students. These measures in the project will (a) avoid potentially adverse effects on the ethnic minorities; and (b) ensure that the ethnic minorities benefit from the project in a culturally appropriate and gender and intergenerationally inclusive manner.</p> <p>The team will prepare a social assessment to analyze potential negative social impacts on vulnerable populations by using existing data from standardized student assessments. This will be important to identify whether specific adaptations are necessary within the design of the evaluation system and/or to the teacher training (i.e. additional support for poor performing students or schools). These measures will help prevent any potential adverse distributional impacts the project might have.</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	The project will not affect any natural habitats. The Project will not support actions linked to the construction or rehabilitation of schools and/or other civil works that could adversely degrade or convert critical natural habitats.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	The project does not involve the management or use of forest resources. The Project will not support actions linked to the construction or rehabilitation of schools and/or other civil works that could adversely degrade or convert critical forest areas.

Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The project will not involve the purchase or use of any significant quantities of pesticides.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	The project will not result in any impacts on physical cultural resources. The project will not support activities that will impact the quality or management of physical cultural resources as defined under the policy.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	There are no indigenous groups in the DR that meet the characteristics as specified in the policy.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	The project will not support construction or other activities that would lead to involuntary resettlement or land acquisition.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	The project will not support the construction or rehabilitation of dams nor will it support investments which rely on the operation of existing dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The project will not affect any international waterways as defined under the policy.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The Project will not be implemented in areas known to be disputed or affect disputed areas as defined under the policy.

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 31-Mar-2014

B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed.

The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:

June 1, 2014.

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Peter Anthony Holland	
Approved By:		
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Name: Glenn S. Morgan (RSA)	Date: 27-Jan-2014
Sector Manager:	Name: Janet K. Entwistle (SM)	Date: 29-Jan-2014

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.