Technical Cooperation Abstract

I. BASIC PROJECT DATA

Country:	Belize
TC name:	Monitoring System for School Leadership and Education Quality
TC number:	BL-T1069
Team leader/members:	Emma Näslund-Hadley, Team Leader (SCL/EDU); Analía Jaimovich and Livia Mueller (SCL/EDU); Jane Chow and John Primo (CID/CBL); Paula Louis-Grant (FMP/CGY); Alejandro Pareja, Jorge Kaufman, and Mauricio García Moreno (IFD/ICS); and Alejandro Cruz Fano (consultant).
Indicate if: Operational Support, Client Support, or Research & Dissemination.	Operational Support
Number and name of Operation Supported by the TC:	BL-L1018
Reference to request:	IDBDOC #38646787
Date of TC abstract:	11 October 2013
Beneficiary:	Ministry of Education Belize
Executing agency and contact name:	SCL/EDU, Emma Näslund-Hadley
IDB funding requested:	US$750,000
Local counterpart funding:	US$100,000 (in kind)
Disbursement and execution period:	Disbursement: 36 months – Execution: 30 months
Required start date:	March 2014
Types of consultants:	Firms and individual consultants
Prepared by unit:	SCL/EDU
Unit of disbursement responsibility:	SCL/EDU
Included in Country Strategy (y/n);	Yes
TC included in CPD (y/n):	Yes
GCI-9 Sector Priority:	Yes, social policy for equity and productivity

II. JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVE

2.1 **Justification.** Across the world, school leadership has become an education policy priority. The focus on leadership is fueled by research that shows that effective school leadership can improve learning outcomes, equity, and efficiency (Pont et al 2008; Leithwood et al 2006). At the same time, many countries have decentralized their education systems, making schools more autonomous in their decisions over human and financial resources, thus expanding and intensifying the role of school leaders who need to balance tasks related to: (i) improvement of the performance of staff and students; (ii) management of school operation; and (iii) routine administration (Dimmock 1999). Although there are success stories, school autonomy and evolving expectations of what schools should accomplish may sometimes also lead to overload of school leaders. This risk is of particular concern in developing countries, where investments in human capital tend to be more limited. If curriculum decisions are given to school leaders without training as instructional leaders the expected effects on education quality are unlikely to materialize. If school leaders who lack financial management skills are given autonomy over the school budget this may not lead to the desired efficiency gains.

2.2 Belize is an example of a country where school leaders have large autonomy over curriculum and human resource decisions, and also some decision making authority over financial resources. Unfortunately, the instructional leadership of principals is weak, making it hard for them to manage the curriculum and teaching program, monitor and evaluate teachers, and support teacher professional development (Stewart 2011). There is also some evidence that the financial resource management of teachers is weak, hampering the efficient use of the schools' financial resources (Cercone 2012).

2.3 The situation is further complicated as indicators of school accountability developed by the World Bank (Arcia and Patrinos, 2011; Arcia et al., 2011) suggest that Belize has low levels of accountability. The schools are not accountable for how resources are used and there are no consequences for underperforming schools. Parental involvement in school management is generally minimal, again weakening provider accountability (Cercone, 2012). The lack of an information system and monitoring capacity of the MOEYS precludes them from intervening in low performing schools in a timely manner.

2.4 Against this background, the Belize government has made school leadership and accountability a priority area in its national education strategy (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports 2012). A new Bank financed lending operation (BL-L1018) is being designed to assist the country in the implementation of a system to strengthen school leadership and accountability, including training and technical assistance to school leaders, as well as MOEYS staff at the district and central levels. A key component of the leadership and management system will be the development of a new information database, which will need to be developed and validated prior to the launch of the lending operation through support from the proposed technical cooperation. It is expected that with the help of this management tool, vital information for schools operation will be readily available for principals while overload will be significantly reduced. This, in turn, will allow education leaders to concentrate more on leadership and business than administrative and red tape issues.

2.5 **Objective.** The Technical Cooperation (TC) aims to help plan, monitor, and coordinate the education sector. To accomplish this objective, the TC has two specific objectives. First, it aims to develop and pilot a prototype for a new quality management syste,m which will be brought to scale with resources from the Education Quality Program (BL-L1018). Second, it aims to develop a quality management system for the MOEYS.

2.6 **GCI-9 Alignment**. The 9th General Capital Increase (GCI-9) sets out five priority areas. This TC is aligned with the first priority area on social policy for equity and productivity.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

3.1 To accomplish its objectives, the TC will be structured around four components:

3.2 **Component 1. Development of Quality Management Information System Prototype (US$200,000).** The TC will finance the design and development of an information system that will lay out the main indicators, based on automation of school activity data acquisition and processing. The system will cover the entire education system, including both privately operated and publicly operated schools. The design

will take into account all possible data sources, the strategies to integrate those data sources, the needs of the different users, and output models (school score cards, summary statistics). The system will contain data entered by school principals, school inspectors, district education officers, as well as different service areas of the MOEYS. Indicators will be related to school infrastructure, teacher turn over and attendance; use of curricula and textbooks; student enrollment, student welfare support provided by schools (academic support, feeding programs, counseling services, special needs, etc.); teacher professional development, attendance, repetition and dropout; parent and community involvement in school management; as well as effective school days. The system would also contain information on the existing student external learning exams (BJAT, PSE, CCSLC, CSEC, and CVQ). The information will be presented in terms of national learning standards that the MOEYS can monitor based on the existing external exams. In addition, the system will include already developed teacher and student database, and be able to be linked to other information systems such as the Single Beneficiary Information System (SBIS) and the Belize Health Information System (BHIS).

3.3 **Component 2. Piloting and validation of the Quality Management Information System prototype (US$200,000).** The TC will finance the rollout of the prototype in a pilot scale to validate that it responds to the needs of the end users at the school, district and central levels of the education system. For example, the pilot aims to validate that end users of the data system can easily use it to: (i) produce summary statistics on groups of students, educators, and schools (e.g. student drop-out patterns by district, and teacher attendance rates by school) to monitor quality in the delivery of the curriculum as well as other school needs; (ii) help educators and school leaders produce early warning reports for individual students at risk of dropping out; (iii) help school leaders analyze the timely delivery of the curriculum to make instructional adjustments in the course of the academic year; (iv) identify resource gaps to help school and MOEY leaders better allocate human and financial resources; and (v) provide timely alerts (at the school, district and central level) when schools need assistance to achieve their academic goals. The pilot will be implemented in approximately 5 schools, as well as at the central and district levels of the MOEYS, including training and technical assistance.

3.4 **Component 3. Assessment of the effectiveness of the quality assurance system (US$90,000).** The TC will finance a process evaluation of the quality assurance system prototype, assessing key indicators on perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, user acceptance; need for additional indicators, and other remaining challenges. The collection of the baseline and data processing will take place at the beginning of the school year. The second application of the evaluation instruments will take place during the last two months of the school year.

3.5 **Component 4. Strengthening of Institutional Capacity of the Ministry of Education (US$250,000)**. The component aims to increase the capacity of the MOEYS to do results based management through the following activities: (i) develop an institutional strengthening plan based on the National Education Strategy and the Education Act; (ii) develop and validate instruments for the implementation of the institutional strengthening plan, including a procedural manual, and a planning,

budgeting and monitoring software; as well as (iii) training in the use of the new procedures and instruments.

IV. BUDGET

4.1 The amount of funding needed to implement the proposed activities is indicated below. US$500,000 will be financed through the Korea Poverty Reduction Fund, US$250,000 will be financed through the PRODEV Special Program; and US$100,000 will be financed in kind through local counterpart from the MOEYS.

Table iv-1: Indicative budget in US$

Activity/Component	Description	Korea Poverty Reduction Fund	PRODEV Special Program	Counterpart Funding	Total
Comp. 1. Information System Prototype	Firm + consultants	200,000	-	-	200,000
Comp. 2. Pilot	Consultants	200,000	-	100,000	300,000
Comp. 3. Evaluation	Firm	90,000	-	-	90,000
Comp. 4. Institutional Strengthening			250,000	-	250,000
Miscellaneous		10,000	-	-	10,000
Total		**500,000**	**250,000**	**100,000**	**850,000**

V. EXECUTING AGENCY AND EXECUTION STRUCTURE

5.1 **Executing agency.** A recent risk assessment of the MOEY indicates limited fiduciary and procurement capacities of the MOEYS. The TC will therefore be executed by the Education Division (SCL/EDU). The TC execution will be under the supervision of Emma Näslund-Hadley (SCL/EDU).

5.2 **Execution period.** The TC will disburse in 36 months and execute in 30 months from the approval date.

5.3 **Procurement.** Standard Bank procedures will be followed.

VI. PROJECT RISK AND ISSUES

6.1 The execution of a pilot based on an experimental design in C countries presents logistical challenges. However, the SCL/EDU has many years of experience in the execution of such evaluation designs in remote geographic areas with difficult terrain.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION

7.1 The pilot is not anticipated to have direct environmental or social impacts and is expected to be classified as a "C" according to the Safeguard Classification Tool. No environmental impact is foreseen as the initiative is limited to consultancies and the production of didactic materials. No Bank resources will be used to finance investments in infrastructure or large scale equipment.