PUBLIC
SIMULTANEOUS DISCLOSURE

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

SURINAME

SKILLS FOR GROWTH: IMPROVING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND COMPETITIVENESS

(SU-L1072)

LOAN PROPOSAL

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ABBREVIATIONS	
AOP	Annual Operating Plan
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CSME	CARICOM's Single Market and Economy
EA	Executing Agency
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESPF	Environmental and Social Policy Framework
GOS	Government of Suriname
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
IOL	Instituut voor de Opleiding Van Leraren (teacher training institute)
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOESC	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
MOFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
PEP	Pluriannual Project Execution Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
PP	Procurement Plan
PTC	Polytechnic College
SSLC	Suriname Survey of Living Conditions
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training

PROJECT SUMMARY
SURINAME
SKILLS FOR GROWTH: IMPROVING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND COMPETITIVENESS
SU-L1072

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">Financial Terms and Conditions</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Borrower</td><td colspan="3">Flexible Financing Facility[a]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Republic of Suriname</td><td colspan="2">Amortization Period:</td><td>25 Years</td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6">Project Objective/Description: The general objective of the project is to promote the development of skills for growth and competitiveness, focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work. The specific objectives are to: (i) strengthen the quality of English language instruction; (ii) strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills; and (iii) develop high-quality relevant TVET programs that respond to evolving needs of the labor market.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Special Contractual Clauses prior to the first disbursement: (i) verification that the Borrower through the Executing Agency has assigned execution of the Project to the Project Management Unit currently executing 4984/OC-SU with its key personnel in accordance with the terms and conditions included in the Project Operations Manual (POM); (ii) approval and entry into effect of the POM in terms previously agreed with the Bank(¶3.3).

Special Contractual Clauses of execution: Prior to purchasing ICT items under Component 2, MOESC must present: (i) the list of schools to benefit with connectivity and technology kits; and (ii) final implementation plan for distribution and monitoring of technology kits and training in digital skills(¶3.4).

Prior to purchasing TVET equipment in selected schools under Component 3, the optimization study that defines the beneficiary schools under this Component must be finalized and approved by the Bank (¶3.5).</td></tr>
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[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] O1 (Reduce poverty and inequality); O2 (Address climate change); and O3 (Bolster sustainable regional growth).

[e] OF1 (Biodiversity, natural capital and climate action); OF2-G (Gender equality); OF2-D (Inclusion of diverse population groups); OF3 (Institutional capacity, rule of law, and citizen security); OF4 (Social protection and human capital development); OF5 (Productive development and innovation through the private sector); OF6 (Sustainable, resilient, and inclusive infrastructure); and OF7 (Regional integration).

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS MONITORING

A. Background, problem addressed, and justification

1.1 **Economic context.** Suriname is confronting a severe macroeconomic crisis. The country had not fully recovered from the 2015 commodity price shock when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020. After consecutive annual contractions of 16.0% and 2.4% in 2020 and 2021, Suriname's economy is estimated to have grown by 2.4% and 2.1% in 2022 and 2023, respectively[1]. From 2024 onwards, economic growth is projected to achieve the medium-term rate of 3.0%[2]. By sector, however, growth projections are variable, with some sectors as low as 0.6%. In addition, there are large disparities between economic opportunities for people in urban and coastal areas versus largely indigenous and Maroon communities in the interior, where education and jobs are scarce.[1] The Government of Suriname (GoS) is seeking ways to bolster the economy following the pandemic and the downturn in economic growth (GN-3065). Investment in human capital is key to support economic growth, competitiveness and diversification of the economy.

1.2 **Overview of the education sector.** In Suriname's education system, pre-primary education includes grades 1-2 (ages 4-5), primary comprises grades 3-8 (ages 6-12), lower secondary includes grades 9-12 (ages 13-16), upper secondary comprises grades 13-15 or 16 (ages 17-20) and post-secondary includes all programs offered for secondary graduates. The system offers academic and technical vocational/TVET tracks in lower secondary, upper secondary and post-secondary. Students are assigned into tracks in lower secondary based on their performance on a placement exam, and students with the lowest academic performance are assigned into TVET. In upper secondary some students opt for TVET programs, especially for technical areas which lead to immediate employment. TVET enrolment represents 34% in lower secondary, 48% in upper secondary and 19% in higher education considering the enrolment in the Polytechnic College (PTC)[3].

1.3 According to data from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC) and e-Government[2] officials, Suriname has 572 schools including 63% in urban areas, mostly in Paramaribo and its surroundings, 21% in rural areas in the northern coastal zone, and 16% in the rural interior area. The total number of students enrolled in primary and secondary schools in 2021 was approximately 140,000 with 10,450 teachers[4].[3]

1.4 **The general problem is that students in Suriname are not prepared with the skills needed to thrive in the current labor market and are ill-equipped to**

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1 Suriname's population is racially and ethnically diverse, divided into urban, coastal, and 'Interior' areas. Most people in the Interior belong to Indigenous and Maroon communities who are historically, economically, and culturally distinct from the rural and urban populations[6].

2 Suriname's e-Government (e-Gov) aims to enhance public service delivery through digital technologies and improve efficiency of government operations. Its education initiatives focus on leveraging digital technologies to modernize educational practices, enhance access to learning opportunities, and bridge the digital divide.

3 Exact numbers may vary once MOESC´s data availability is strengthened through the EMIS being developed under 4984/OC-SU.

contribute to the development and modernization of the economy[5]. In Suriname's 2023 Education Congress, participants discussed the skills needed to stimulate the productive sector, bolster competitiveness, and ensure successful participation in a highly competitive labor market. In an increased globalized economy, there is greater demand for international skills such as cultural competencies, *foreign languages such as English*, and intercultural understanding. Technological changes require *digital skills* such as data management, computational thinking and problem solving, these skills will be increasingly demanded as technology adoption advances and permeates the labor market as seen in other countries[7]. Agricultural technology and skills will also be required as existing firms move towards greener production mechanisms, in addition to other *technical skills for work* required for jobs today and in the future.[4]

1.5 **Gender and race inequalities are also a challenge**. Surinamese girls attain higher levels of schooling than boys, as is seen in other Caribbean countries[8]. The gap favoring girls in education completion starts at the primary school level (2 percentage-points/pp) and increases significantly at the secondary education level where 51% of women ages 22-24 have finished compared to 31% of men. This gap of 20pp in 2022 increased from a 16pp gap in 2017. The early school dropout rate (the percentage of people aged 18-24 who have not completed secondary education and do not attend any educational institution) also shows less favorable results for males with a rate of 37% (13pp higher than for females). School attainment also varies across racial and ethnic groups. The Maroon population has the lowest average years of schooling (5.5) followed by Indigenous/Amerindian (7.6), Hindustani (8.3), Mixed Ethnicity (8.4), and Javanese (8.7). Creole and others have the highest years of schooling (9.5), four years more than Maroons[9].

1.6 The Government has identified the low quality and relevance of instruction in **English language, digital skills, and technical skills for work** as key drivers for the lack of competencies to support economic growth and to thrive in a rapidly changing labor market.

1.7 English language is taught in secondary schools, but the quality and relevance need to be improved(¶1.8, 1.11). Digital skills are not currently taught in schools, nor do teachers and students have access to technology for teaching and learning. Internet connections at schools are used primarily for administrative purposes, but technology could improve quality and relevance of education(¶1.9, 1.13-1.14). TVET programs, which comprise nearly half the student population in upper secondary(¶1.2) are of low quality and low relevance to current labor market demands(¶1.10, 1.15-1.19).

1.8 Improved quality and relevance of English language, digital skills and skills for work can benefit Suriname in tangible ways. **English language skills will open opportunities for greater regional and global participation.** Suriname belongs to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a regional intergovernmental

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[4] These skills needs were identified during Suriname's Education Congress 2023, held in Paramaribo October 6-7. https://sites.google.com/view/onderwijscongresminowc2023/home?authuser=1. The needs align with defined needs from other countries (https://publications.iadb.org/publications/spanish/viewer/El-futuro-del-trabajo-en-America-Latina-y-el-Caribe-Cual-es-el-impacto-de-la-automatizacion-en-el-empleo-y-los-salarios.pdf)

organization of 15 member states of which 12 are English-speaking. Suriname's official language is Dutch, and most Surinamese also speak Sranan Tongo and additional original languages. CARICOM's Single Market and Economy (CSME) policy allows for free movement of CARICOM nationals across member states starting in 2024[10]. Without strong English language skills, Surinamese cannot actively participate in the CSME and in global markets and emerging sectors in Suriname, nor access online learning opportunities offered in English. Further, research shows that increased English proficiency correlates with a country's improved economic performance.

1.9 **Digital skills can enhance teaching and learning trajectories.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, Suriname kept schools open with reduced numbers of students attending classes two to three days weekly.[5] This face-to-face instruction was the only option since less than one third of schools had internet connection, and teachers and students did not have access to digital devices. In countries worldwide, the pandemic accelerated adoption of remote and online learning solutions. This aligns with Suriname's National Digital Strategy 2023--2030, which aims to ensure hybrid and distance learning and emphasizes the transformative potential of digital technologies in education[11]. Technology could provide higher quality education to those who have historically faced the greatest barriers, including Amerindians, Maroons and other indigenous groups in the interior, as well as broader education opportunities for all. Digital skills are also increasingly demanded in the labor market.

1.10 **Closing gaps in skills for work can support economic growth and improve labor market opportunities for graduates.** Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs are the natural place to develop skills for work[12]. In Suriname, employers also identify this connection; 63% recognize the main reason for skills shortage is the low quality of education offered and/or the lack of proper skills, and 67% report that TVET offerings are not sufficient[13]. Regarding relevance, over 75% of employers express difficulties finding and recruiting employees with the right skills to fill their vacancies and more than 50% report that this lack of qualified candidates negatively impacts their activities. Moreover, 70% consider lack of skills as a major obstacle for innovation activities[14]. These skills gaps must be closed, particularly in the most promising economic sectors with high expected growth in labor demand, such as Agriculture-particularly climate smart agriculture, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services, and Tourism/ecotourism[15][6],

1.11 **Vertical Logic.** The main driver of the general problem identified is low quality and relevance of instruction in three key areas: English skills, digital skills, and skills for work. To address low quality and relevance of English language instruction, new pedagogical practices, new curriculum, assessment and resources, and teachers with upgraded qualifications are needed. To address low quality and relevance in the instruction of digital skills, the project will provide technology to aid learning, teacher training, and pedagogical resources tied to the curriculum. Finally, to tackle the same challenge in skills for work, there needs to be updated

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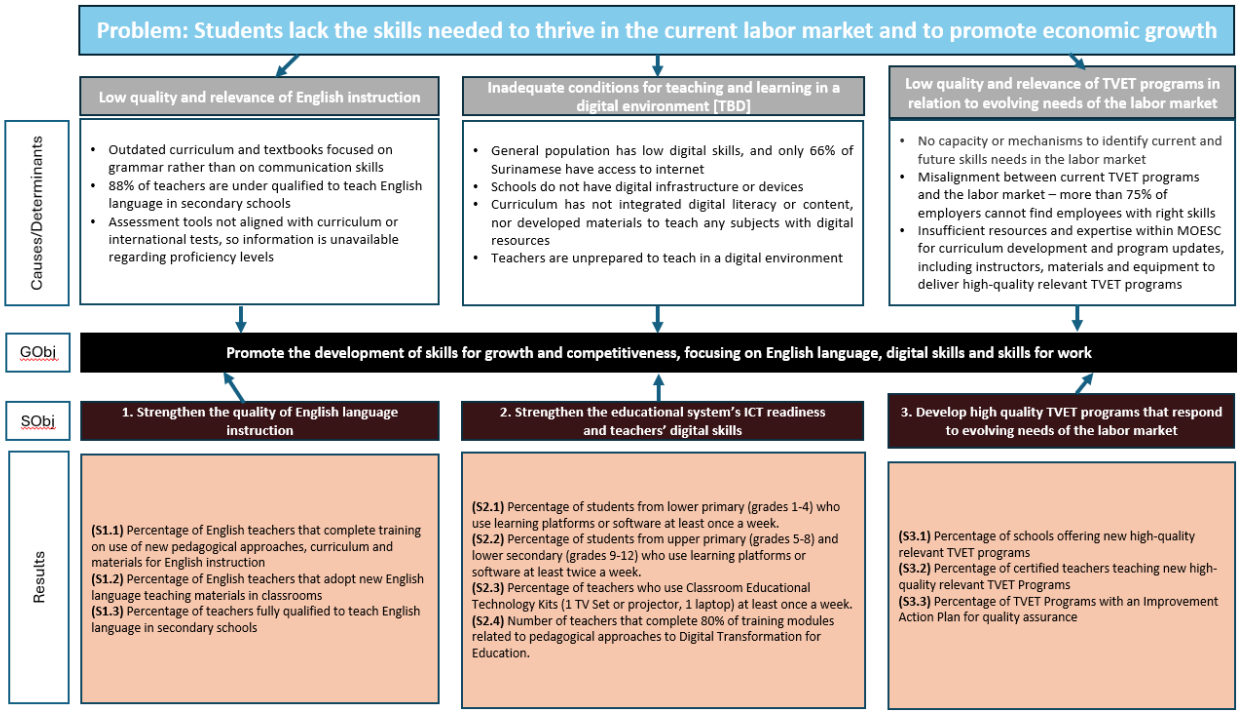
5 IDB financed sanitary facility upgrades in 110 schools in the interior to enable students to attend school safely during the pandemic under 3603/OC-SU.

6 A recent study, commissioned by IDB, identified these sectors using quantitative analysis and semi-structured interviews with key informants.

curricula and equipment for relevant technical programs, and adequately trained instructors (See Figure-1).

Figure 1-Vertical Logic



1.12 **Challenges to offering high-quality, relevant English instruction in Suriname**. English language is taught in secondary schools, from three to five hours per week. Challenges are observed in three dimensions: (i) *Curriculum and methodology:* Instruction is guided by the textbook, rather than an established curriculum, and the materials are outdated. The lower secondary textbook, from 1967, focuses heavily on grammar and vocabulary. Upper secondary uses a 2007 textbook but the digital and online materials are not accessible due to lack of digital infrastructure at schools and absence of a digital education strategy[16]. There is little opportunity for students to practice speaking and listening skills, critical for communication. (ii) *Certification and assessment:* The teaching college curriculum is not aligned with international standards nor the CARICOM qualifications framework. Assessments focus on grammar, vocabulary, and summarizing texts. (iii) *Teacher qualifications:* Initial teacher education programs are administered by *Instituut voor de Opleiding* Van Leraren (IOL). The IOL's English Department is small and has limited capacity to upgrade curriculum and assessment or train additional teachers. Only 12% of the approximately 300 English teachers are fully qualified to teach secondary school English compared to the qualifications required for new teachers[17]. The majority of current teachers have the two-year degree (MO-A or *Meer Onderwijs Akte*, equivalent to an Associate's degree) formerly offered by IOL. Incoming teachers are now required to complete a four-year Bachelor's degree. MOESC is developing a program to upgrade the qualifications of teachers with MO-A degrees.

1.13 **Inadequate conditions for teaching and learning in a digital environment.** (i) *Access to technology and connectivity:* Suriname is reportedly covered by

mobile-cellular network[18]. However, only a low percentage of people (66%) uses the internet, compared to 76% in LAC[19]. There are several ongoing national initiatives[20][21] to provide internet connectivity to schools, and the President recently announced an agreement between MOESC, Ministry of Telecommunications and Technology, Telesur and e-Gov to connect all schools in 2024. Yet currently, only 29% of public and subsidized schools have internet connection (according to e-Gov data) provided by MOESC through Telesur[7], and meaningful connectivity for teaching and learning is limited. The connection typically only reaches the director's office and is used for administrative purposes, and there are bandwidth issues and service interruptions. By educational levels, 89% of upper secondary schools report having internet connection, but this decreases to 51% in lower secondary and to 11% in primary. Schools in the interior, mostly primary, are rarely connected. As connectivity expands, MOESC's ICT Department has limited capacity to manage and monitor digital infrastructure, including ICT support and maintenance.

1.14 (ii) *Training in using technology for teaching and learning*. In Suriname's efforts to digitally transform its government, no clear learning goals have not been established on the education front. According to UNDP Digital Readiness Assessment[22] results, published in 2022 jointly with e-Gov to inform the national ICT Vision 2030, the population's digital literacy is low due to the education system's lack of prioritization of ICT skills development[23]; 71% of the assessment's participants considered that few graduates have digital skills, and 80% believed digital services were not reaching many people or only reaching some people. Only 40% of Surinamese youth ages 15-24 have at least one of nine ICT skills measured by UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) (2019)[24]. Teachers and students use mobile phones for personal use, but few have other devices, and digital skills training opportunities are scarce. There are large disparities among youth with digital skills by socioeconomic status, geographic location, and ethnicity according to UNICEF's MICS data. Around 13% of the poorest youth have digital skills compared to 73% of the wealthiest, 46% of urban youth compared to 31% in rural coastal areas and 10% in the interior, and 20% and 23% of Indigenous/Amerindian and Maroon youth compared to at least 45% of their peers[25]. Regarding levels of education attained, 8% of youth with primary education possess ICT skills compared to 63% of secondary school completers and 87% of those with higher education.

1.15 **Main challenges to offer high-quality, relevant TVET in Suriname**. According to the literature and international best practices, TVET systems must comply with conditions in four areas[26][27][28][29]**:** *1: Be able to identify current and future skills needs* with mechanisms to ensure a structured, and stable collaboration between MOESC and industry. *2: Have the capacity to translate identified skills needs into corresponding study programs* with appropriate curricula. *3: Have the capacity to deliver programs with the highest quality standards.* This comprises well-trained teachers with pedagogical and technical knowledge; infrastructure, and equipment aligned with the curricula ; a pedagogical model emphasizing practical learning; workplace learning opportunities integrated into the curriculum; and assistance to support students' transitions. *4: Have a robust quality assurance mechanism* that creates incentives for continuous improvement. This involves

[7] Telesur.sr is a state-owned telecommunications company.

establishing rigorous assessment and evaluation mechanisms to monitor program quality, identifying areas for improvement, and developing targeted action plans. Quality assurance mechanisms lead to higher program satisfaction among stakeholders and improved outcomes in TVET[30].

1.16 There are two *challenges for Areas 1 and 2:* (i) The country lacks institutional capacity and procedures required to capture labor market needs and use them as input for curricular design or program development[31]. Though curriculum development investments were made for Competency-Based Training (CBT) and to upgrade some technical fields, strategic curricular realignments based on industry needs are pending. TVET programs have not undergone significant reforms since their inauguration 30 years ago. (ii) MOESC has no established mechanism to ensure a systematic relationship with the private sector to continuously align curriculum and coordinate practical workplace opportunities for students[31].

1.17 There are two main challenges to *delivering TVET programs with high-quality standards (Area 3)*: (i) There is a shortage of quality instructors and insufficient training opportunities for them. There are approximately 2,400 TVET teachers (51% in lower secondary, 39% in upper secondary, and 10% in post-secondary). According to MOESC officials, more than 40% of lower secondary teachers lack the certification required to teach. Furthermore, the TVET teacher training institution (LOBO) does not offer regular in-service training; beyond some training associated with specific projects.[8] (ii) Inadequate school infrastructure and equipment hinder practical hands-on learning experiences essential for TVET. Ministry officials reported that most schools require basic repairs to ensure safety and good conditions for learning. Despite recent investments from Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in TVET infrastructure, more than 77% of lower secondary schools still lack adequate classrooms and workshops to meet regional accreditation standards, and equipment is often not aligned with curriculum standards or is outdated or non-existent.

1.18 For *Area 4*, the main problem is the absence of a *quality assurance framework and mechanisms* to oversee, guide, and support schools/institutions offering TVET programs. Suriname is missing a framework that defines the parameters for high-quality programs, and the instruments to oversee delivery at institutional, program and individual levels. Although MOESC's TVET division oversees all education levels, upper secondary and post-secondary institutions apply their own procedures without systematic review and/or communication with MOESC, leading to quality variations TVET programs that undermine the credibility and effectiveness of the entire system.

1.19 Finally, there are sizable **gender-related education completion gaps** that **are more prevalent in TVET**. As described in ¶1.5, females attain higher levels of education in Suriname (50.7% of girls finish secondary school versus 30.8% of boys). Although no comparable information is available for higher education, in the aggregate only 8.7% of males have completed some post-secondary education

[8] Recent projects from IsDB and CDB have trained approximately 200 teachers in specific topics like Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET).

versus 13.5% of females[32]. These education gaps are more noticeable in TVET programs because: (i) males are overrepresented, comprising 65% of enrolled TVET students in lower secondary, 75% in upper secondary (except for one institute) and 61% in higher education. This may be explained by boys' lower performance on the assessment that assigns students to TVET or academic tracks in lower secondary. (ii) Completion rates are lower in TVET than in academic education for males and females at all levels. Males in TVET are at particularly high risk of dropping out.[9] This is consistent with findings from other Caribbean countries where early employment or economic needs, societal norms, or perceived relevance of higher education to career aspirations might influence male students' decision to leave the education system[8].

1.20 **Project strategy.** The Project aims to improve acquisition of relevant skills for the current labour market in all three areas (English, digital and skills for work). In each case, this requires foundational frameworks, resources, and training. To achieve high-quality English instruction, the Project will focus on the design and implementation of a relevant curriculum and teaching methodology focused on communication skills, internationally recognized certifications and upgraded teacher qualifications. To address inadequate conditions for teaching and learning in a digital environment, the Project will provide an ICT strategy for education, technology and digital content aligned with school curricula, digital skills training for teachers and students, and an ICT team capable of planning, implementing, and maintaining the digital environment. Finally, to improve quality and relevance of TVET programs, the project will provide institutional frameworks, guidelines and procedures to enable MOESC to develop high-quality relevant TVET programs that respond to evolving labor market needs, as well as equipment and training of instructors.

1.21 **Research indicates that teacher quality is the main determinant for student learning and skill development**[33][34][35][36][37]. Well-trained teachers with the necessary pedagogical and technical knowledge are required to deliver programs with high quality standards. At the secondary education level, teachers specialized in their subject area are most effective in improving students' learning achievements. Teacher effectiveness can be measured through teacher qualifications such as subject-specific degrees or certifications(GN-3012-3). Well-trained qualified teachers are important to skills training in all three areas-English language, digital skills and skills for work.

1.22 **To improve English language instruction, the Project will focus on curriculum, practices, and teacher qualifications:** (i) *Curriculum and methodology:* English proficiency is often a prerequisite for accessing higher education and employment opportunities. English is intrinsically interconnected with development of a global economy and growing ties across countries[38]. A recent OECD report indicates that for online work opportunities, "Across countries included in the analyses, a English knowledge was explicitly required in 22% of all vacancies and English was the sixth most required skill overall"[15]. A robust language program addresses the evolving communication needs in today's world, and for Suriname in the CSME. Instructional goals should shift from learning about how English works to learning to use English by developing communicative

[9] In-depth analysis of these differences can be found in OEL#5.

language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, writing)[39]. The workplace requires specific language skills[40], including speaking fluently, presenting to an audience[41] and writing[42]. (ii) *Certification and assessment:* To facilitate individuals' mobility and certifications' legibility regarding language skills, several frameworks of reference have been developed. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* [43][44][45] (CEFR) is the most used worldwide and would legitimize Suriname's program. Evaluation and testing has also evolved, focusing on reliability and validity of tests and alignment with the curriculum. (iii) *Teacher qualifications:* More competent teachers yield better learning opportunities for students, in general[46][47][48] and in specific subject areas as cited above. A study in Mexico found that students' English language skills improved in 7.5 months after exposure to teachers trained in English language and language teaching methods[49]. Additional teacher qualifications would lead to promotion opportunities.

1.23 **For teachers and students to develop digital skills, they require (i) *access to technology and connectivity* and (ii) *training in how to use technology as a tool for teaching and learning*.** For (i), by allowing teachers and students to access knowledge in multiple formats, from different locations, technology can help bridge learning gaps[50]. Educational systems' ICT readiness involves setting the enabling conditions for integrating technology into teaching and learning, including digital skills, internet access, funding, and regulatory framework to inform policy development[51]. In (ii), technologies and connectivity in schools can contribute to improving teaching and learning, student outcomes, and digital skills. A review of technology education interventions evaluated in developing countries and relevant for LAC showed that technology in education programs have an overall positive impact on student learning. In particular, programs that offer guidance and instruction on technology usage result in significantly greater improvements compared to those primarily focused on access to resources[52]. A study in Peru showed that internet access initially resulted in some increases in math scores and notably grew as schools hired teachers with computer training[53]. These researchers also studied the effects of introducing internet access in Peruvian public primary schools on national standardized test scores, finding significant and economically meaningful enhancements in student performance. The gains became more pronounced over time, starting at 0.018 - 0.028 standard deviations in the year of installation and increasing to 0.063 - 0.111 standard deviations after five years[54]. To develop teachers' digital skills, a comprehensive training program must integrate various essential elements. Following IDB and UNESCO's framework on "Preparing teachers to deliver hybrid education" for LAC, an effective program includes professional development tailored to address identified needs; ethical considerations (data privacy and protection); self-reflection and continuous learning; collaboration with peers to exchange best practices; and individualized support, especially during initial phases. Training programs should prioritize seamless integration of technology into pedagogies, fostering digital literacy and competencies across diverse learning environments[55][56]. The TPD@Scale Coalition for the Global South advocates leveraging ICT to ensure equitable and quality Teacher Professional Development for all teachers[57].

1.24 To address the need for high-quality relevant TVET programs, the Project will focus on (i) strengthening institutional capacity for the provision of

high-quality relevant TVET programs[10], (ii) implement high-quality relevant TVET programs, and (iii) implement retention strategies in these programs. Strategies (i) and (ii) respond to key areas identified by relevant literature on characteristics of high-quality TVET programs, and additional teacher qualifications lead to promotion opportunities. Strategy (iii) responds to the observed attainment gap in Suriname, which especially affects boys(¶1.5). International evidence shows that high-quality relevant TVET can be a powerful tool to prevent early dropout and improve graduation, particularly among underperforming and at-risk students.[11] Thus, investments to improve male completion rates in TVET are one key measure to close these gender gaps and improve their economic opportunities.

1.25 **Programmatic approach of Bank operations**. The first four Bank education operations (1521/OC-SU, 2742/OC-SU, 3603/OC-SU and 4984/OC-SU) focused on building foundational skills in math and language for primary and lower secondary education and improving MOESC's management skills and information systems. These paved the way for this new Project dedicated to specific skills development. 1521/OC-SU, 2742/OC-SU and 3603/OC-SU supported curriculum reforms for pre-primary and primary (grades 1-8/ages 4-12), accompanied by textbooks, teaching and learning materials. 4984/OC-SU is continuing curriculum reform for lower secondary (grades 9-11). Teachers were trained in each project to use the textbooks and learning materials; under 3603/OC-SU and 4984/OC-SU new student-centered teaching methods were introduced and continue. 3603/OC-SU financed an infrastructure census and MOESC began to prepare annual statistical reports. The education management information system (EMIS) is being expanded and strengthened under 4984/OC-SU to improve data collection and use. In all four projects, schools were renovated, in 1521/OC-SU 10 satellite teacher training centers were built, teacher housing was constructed under 2742/OC-SU, and 3603/OC-SU financed a centralized training center (CENASU). To protect infrastructure investments, a national school maintenance plan was developed under 3603/OC-SU and is being piloted under 4984/OC-SU. This succession of activities in curriculum, training, management and infrastructure have contributed to strengthening the sector and education reform process. In this new project, online resources will complement the textbooks introduced under 4984/OC-SU; they will be accessible to teachers and students on the learning platforms. Teachers will be trained on interactive, engaging teaching methods using technology to encourage active student participation. The EMIS will capture data on schools' physical and digital infrastructure to monitor adequate spaces for technology and TVET equipment and distribution and technology use. Finally, this project will provide more comprehensive services to indigenous communities connected to energy and telecommunications (4931/OC-SU), and active labor

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10 New high-quality relevant TVET programs: 1) respond to labor market needs, including new green skills related to sustainable development; 2) effectively translate identified skills needs into study programs/curricula, and certifications; 3) are offered following the New guidelines to implement high-quality TVET programs in institutions in the respective level of education; and 4) have a quality assurance model in place.

11 TVET, when relevant and offered with high-quality standards, has proven effective in enhancing student motivation and reducing dropout, particularly at the secondary level among underperforming and at-risk students. This is partly explained by proximity of TVET to the world of work, compared to academic education, the importance placed on practical work experience, and the possibility it offers to solve financial constraints that often force students to join the workforce[58][59][60][61][62][63].

market policies under 5626/OC-SU will complement the high-quality TVET programs (See OEL#9 regarding the operations' status).

1.26 **Bank's experience in the sector and lessons learned.** The Bank has learned the importance of high-quality, contextualized materials and assessments in the development of English language training programs (3225/OC-UR) for Component-1. Teacher training methodologies in current education projects in Suriname will be replicated for the proposed English language and digital skills pedagogy and training (3603/OC-SU, 4984/OC-SU). The IDB has experience regarding Component-2 in digital transformation of school management, teaching, and learning (ATN/OC-18966-JA, ATN/OC19514JA), and is developing a tool for teacher self-assessment of digital skills (ATN/OC19645RG). Schools' readiness for digital learning and connectivity is addressed in Guyana and Brazil under similar circumstances (5809/OC-GY, 5750/OC-BR). Ongoing training in digital skills for teachers and trainers has provided lessons regarding challenges in Suriname due to poor access to connectivity (ATN/CF-18864-RG). Deployment of technological devices (laptops/tablets, and televisions) is expensive and ensuring their safety is key. Infrastructure adjustments (secure cages, barred windows, locked safes) are important, and community engagement is crucial. As in Suriname's school maintenance plan (4984/OC-SU), guidelines and protocols elaborated jointly by school leaders/parents/community leaders could create shared sense of ownership and understanding of the benefits for students. Related to Component-3, IDB has developed a framework to identify essential elements for successful TVET systems (IDB-TN-1328), which has guided IDB's work (ATN/OC15890-CH, 5749/OC-BL). Salient lessons learned from IDB's operational work in TVET highlight: (i) training and continuous support for teachers (3773/OC-UR); (ii) curricular transformations required to ensure that skill needs are formally incorporated in the education system (3539/OC-CH); and (iii) strong cooperation between schools and the private sector to identify and update skills required by employers (3787/OC-BH, 2739/OC-BA, 4645/OC-JA).

1.27 **Justification.** Suriname's Multiannual Development Plan 2022-2026 identifies the need for expansion of ICT/digital and TVET programs to help citizens improve their skills and reach higher educational levels. Digital and technical skills facilitate active participation in the labor market and contribute to the country's economic growth. English proficiency enables international communication and competitiveness in the global job market. The proposed Project addresses development of English language, digital skills and skills for work and improves programs and connectivity options for students, building on ongoing national efforts such as e-Gov and enabling the Government to reach its digital citizen goals established in Suriname's National Digital Strategy 2023-2030 and the Surinamese Government's ICT Vision 2030[64]. Strategies will be developed to make these education opportunities available to students in the interior.

1.28 **Strategic Alignment.** The Project is consistent with the IDB Group Institutional Strategy: Transforming for Scale and Impact(CA-631) and is aligned with the objectives to: (i) reduce poverty and inequality through targeted opportunities for males in TVET programs and new opportunities for indigenous children via digital skills and connectivity, and (ii) address climate change through acquisition of

energy efficient equipment[12] and development of skills for green industries. The Project is aligned with the operational focus areas of: (i) gender equality and inclusion of diverse population groups; (ii) social protection and human capital development; and (iii) sustainable, resilient, and inclusive infrastructure.

1.29 The project is aligned with the Bank's regional ONE Caribbean (Partnering for Caribbean Development Framework)(GN-3201-2), in strengthening institutions and facilitating digital transformation. Specifically, the project's objective "to promote the development of skills for growth and competitiveness, focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work", will support the realization of ONE Caribbean's thrust towards improving productivity and safety in youths, and facilitating the transition from analogue to digital in Suriname. The Project is consistent with IDB's Amazonia Forever Program and is aligned with the pillars: (i) people and (iv) sustainable infrastructure, cities and connectivity by providing adequate access to quality education and promoting innovative solutions to learning programs adapted to the local conditions of the population of the Amazon region. The Project is also aligned with the transversal areas of action of women, indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, local and/or intercultural communities. It aligns with the IDB Group Country Strategy with Suriname (2021-2025)(GN-3065) in the strategic objective, "Improving education and labor market outcomes", by developing a strategy for improving English language, digital and TVET skills needed to close skills gaps and meet future labor market demands and a plan to provide connectivity in all schools. It is aligned with the Gender and Diversity Sector Framework Document(GN-2800-10) and the Employment Action Framework with a Gender Perspective(GN-3057). The project is consistent with the Sector Framework Document for Skills Development(GN-3012-3) by fostering digital skills for teaching and learning and by supporting development of skills that allow students to continue education and access high-quality jobs. The Project is aligned with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the World Bank Group and the IDB (August 2023). Particularly, the project's specific objective to "strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills" will support the MOU's Connected Schools for All initiative which focuses on narrowing the digital gap in education across LAC to accelerate learning.[13]

1.30 **Gender and diversity.** This project supports grade retention and completion focused on underperforming boys in secondary vocational schools and new opportunities for indigenous and Maroon children via digital skills and connectivity. Activities include materials(¶1.38) and digital educational resources(¶1.39) for schools in the interior to support indigenous and Maroon students, and studies, retention strategies, and communication campaigns(¶1.44) to close gender gaps.

1.31 This operation has been analysed using the Joint MDB Assessment Framework for Paris Alignment and the IDB Group PAIA (GN-3142-1); it has been determined that it is: (i) aligned to the adaptation goal of the Paris Agreement (PA); and (ii) universally aligned to the mitigation goal of the PA.

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[12] The requirements for the acquisition of equipment and components will be guided by the MDB common principles for climate mitigation finance.

[13] Under the MOE, the IDB and World Bank will pilot a public good, the digital learning calculator, used by education systems to estimate costs of implementing digital learning nationally based on prioritized needs. The results of this pilot are key inputs for the dialogue, design, and later Project execution.

1.32 It is estimated that 18.47% of the operation's resources will be invested in climate change mitigation and adaptation activities, according to the Multilateral Development Banks´ Joint Methodology.

B. Objective, components, and cost

1.33 **Objective**. The general objective of the project is to promote the development of skills for growth and competitiveness, focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work. The specific objectives are to: (i) strengthen the quality of English language instruction; (ii) strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills; and (iii) develop high-quality, relevant TVET programs that respond to evolving needs of the labor market.

1.34 **Component-1. Strengthen the quality of English language instruction** (US$5 million). This component will improve the quality of English language programs in secondary schools and increase the number of fully certified English teachers. It also will strengthen the capacity of the teacher training institute (IOL) that prepares English language teachers. There are two main areas of focus.

1.35 *Enhanced quality of English instruction in schools (US$4 million).* This area will focus on teaching practices in classrooms in lower and upper secondary schools. It will introduce a more communicative pedagogical approach and corresponding resources to foster teaching of better communication skills. It will finance: (i) an updated pedagogical proposal and curriculum following international good practices with a focus on speaking, listening, reading, and writing; (ii) new assessment tools aligned with the curriculum; and (iii) updated teaching materials including textbooks for students, audio equipment for teachers, and kits with lesson plans and supplementary materials for each school.

1.36 *Updated and upgraded English teachers´ education (US$1 million)*. A program will be designed to allow approximately 200 practicing teachers to obtain upgraded qualifications aligned with the new bachelor's program for incoming teacher candidates. In addition, resources will be provided to improve the quality of teacher education activities and professional development opportunities for teacher trainers at the IOL. This subcomponent will finance: (i) a consultancy to design the upgrade qualification program; (ii) delivery of the upgrade qualification program, including webinars with international experts; (iii) creation and maintenance of a digital library for the IOL; (iv) technological equipment for the IOL, including energy-efficient laptops, televisions and audio equipment; and (v) post-graduate online courses for IOL faculty and English courses for TVET teachers and MOESC personnel.

1.37 **Component-2. Strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills** (US$19 million). Building on current government efforts to provide connectivity to schools, this component will improve ICT readiness of Suriname's educational system and support the development of teachers' digital skills to enhance students' access to quality and relevant educational opportunities. This includes strengthening MOESC's capacity and digital governance, developing teachers' digital skills, improving schools' ICT readiness and enabling conditions to effectively integrate digital technologies into teaching

and learning, and creating community engagement awareness regarding caring for and sustaining the technology.

1.38 *Educational digital transformation governance (US$1.3 million)*. The Project will finance technical assistance to update the Ministry's governance and policy for digital transformation in education and sustainably develop its institutional capacity with a plan to manage, implement and evaluate the policy countrywide. This will include: (i) review or design of a national policy for digital transformation for education, integrated with related digital transformation government policies; (ii) strengthening/consolidation of MOESC's ICT Department with pedagogical and technological experts, goals, responsibilities and sustainability plan; (iii) data-driven digital governance and procedures in MOESC's EMIS to safely store and manage educational data; (iv) a digital strategy for schools to guide integration of digital technologies for pedagogy and management, according to the country's different contexts, including specific materials for schools in the interior to support indigenous and Maroon students.[14]

1.39 *Teachers' digital skills and content for digital teaching and learning (US$3.8 million)*. This includes the creation and assessment of quality standards for teacher training in digital skills and teachers' development opportunities, as well as student platforms, formative assessments and content aligned with the curriculum to enhance teaching and learning. This comprises: (i) creation of teachers' digital competence framework and guidelines for teachers to develop the competencies; (ii) self-assessment tool and centralized platform for teacher training opportunities (Edutech Guide); (iii) design of training plan and streams according to different competency levels and schools' needs; (iv) development of course materials, training of tutors, implementation and evaluation of courses; (v) adaptation of learning management system and online formative assessment platform; (vi) curation of digital educational resources aligned with the curriculum, including specific adaptations for the interior to support indigenous and Maroon students;[15] (vii) creation and maintenance of a digital library; and (viii) selection, deployment, use and maintenance of platforms with digital resources and adaptative platforms.

1.40 *Schools' ICT readiness (US$13.9 million).* This includes schools' ICT infrastructure and equipment, according to different characteristics and contexts, to enable educational digital teaching and learning. It will finance: (i) classroom equipment kits (including but not restricted to audiovisual equipment, laptop and internal network enablers); (ii) energy-efficient devices for students according to their different needs and learning levels, including guidance on required equipment maintenance and repairs agreements with local providers; (iii) minor building works to accommodate equipment instalment and usage, provide equipment safety measures, and improve school's resiliency to flood and sea level-rise; and

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14 This includes, for example, translation of key materials to the native language or most used language in the community, consultation with community leaders and students' parents, and materials that are culturally relevant, representing popular songs/games/stories/characters and learning styles, among others.

15 Ibid.

(iv) provisions to strengthen schools' access to reliable electricity and connectivity during learning hours, including solar panels.[16]

1.41 **Component-3**. **Develop high-quality relevant TVET programs** (US$14.5 million). This component aims to strengthen MOESC's capacity to design and implement high-quality relevant TVET programs in secondary and tertiary education (lower secondary-LBO, upper secondary-MBO and post-secondary-HBO in PTC). This includes the development of methodologies and procedures, their application to implement TVET programs in selected sectors (Tourism- including eco-tourism, ICT, Agriculture- including climate-smart practices, and Industrial Maintenance[17]), and support to close gender gaps in TVET.

1.42 *Institutional capacity for high--quality relevant TVET (US$0.4 million).* Development of methodologies, guidelines and procedures, and training of MOESC staff to replicate them. Resources will support a consulting firm to: (i) develop an institutional framework to capture labor market needs and standard methodology to translate them into state-of-the-art TVET curricula; (ii) design comprehensive guidelines to implement high-quality TVET programs in lower and upper secondary and post-secondary institutions, including teacher training needs and support, description of equipment and materials, pedagogical practices, workplace learning practices; (iii) design a quality assurance framework for TVET programs adapted to each education level and mechanisms to transition students between levels, institutions and areas of study; and (iv) develop an optimal school selection strategy based upon readiness, geographic location and local labor market needs.

1.43 *High-quality relevant TVET in selected schools[18] (US$13.6 million),* including: (i) development of curricula and pedagogical materials for approximately 10 TVET programs; (ii) industry-aligned equipment and minor renovations to TVET facilities to accommodate the equipment; and (iii) training for teachers to impart new programs and for school counselors to guide workplace learning opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, etc.).

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16 The Government intends to provide these services. However, they are included in the Project as a contingency to ensure schools have enabling conditions to use technology investments, representing 5% of the overall loan. Selection criteria to define beneficiary schools will be established during the first year; key criteria include infrastructure adequacy, electricity, and safety measures to protect equipment. To ensure inclusivity, schools will be selected from urban, coastal and rural communities, starting with those already meeting requirements while assisting remote schools with electricity and connectivity. Around two-thirds of all schools are expected to benefit from the project, including schools with socio-economic and geographic vulnerability.

17 The first three sectors are expected to experience growth in labor demand, according to a recent study[65]. Industrial Maintenance is prioritized because of its multifaceted contributions to Suriname's economy, workforce, and infrastructure. A significant portion of TVET programs belong to industrial maintenance (14 of 59 programs currently provided). Program graduates are required to ensure reliability, efficiency, and safety of infrastructure in a many economic sectors where operations depend on equipment (i.e., manufacturing, energy, transportation, logistics).

18 School selection will be determined during project implementation through an optimization study considering school readiness to offer and implement the new programs (i.e., available infrastructure, strong school leadership, etc.), the relative cost of providing the new programs, and proximity to local companies offering jobs or workplace learning opportunities for students.

1.44 *Retention strategies in TVET to increase completion rates in secondary schools and close gender gaps (US$0.5 million).* Resources will finance: (i) a study to assess main bottlenecks and reasons for dropping out, and selection of evidence-based activities to be implemented in selected schools; (ii) comprehensive retention strategies targeted to underperforming boys at high risk of dropping out of school (LBO & MBO), including an early warning system and individualized support and school interventions; and (iii) communication campaigns.

1.45 **Project administration** (*US$1 million*) and evaluation (*US$0.5 million*). The objective is to facilitate execution of the Project by supporting project management. This covers expenses related to the Project Management Unit, financial audits, and monitoring and evaluation, including staffing, office equipment and software to facilitate project execution and monitoring. An impact evaluation of the English language program is also covered.

1.46 **Beneficiaries.** For Component-1, approximately 40,000 students in lower and upper secondary will benefit from new curriculum and materials; IOL's English Department faculty members will benefit from equipment, bibliographic material and access to postgraduate studies, and all 100 IOL students will have an updated program and access to new technological equipment; all 300 current English teachers will have access to teaching materials, audio equipment and training, and approximately 200 of them will upgrade their qualifications; and MOESC's evaluation team will receive training in exam development. For Component-2, approximately 65% of primary and lower secondary schools (340 schools and 3,500 teachers, benefiting around 66,000 students)[19] will receive classroom educational technology kits and teachers will be trained in digital skills for teaching. Around 6,000 tablets or laptops will be available in these schools for students' individual use.[20] For Component-3, fifteen MOESC staff members will benefit from training for capacity building. The 10 new programs in Tourism, ICT, Industrial Maintenance, and Agriculture will be implemented in a subset of selected schools.[21] Direct beneficiaries will be the students and teachers from these selected schools. Although exact numbers are not available, approximately 3,400 students and 400 teachers will directly benefit[22]. In addition, approximately 1,600 TVET students from Grades 12-15, identified at risk of dropping out, will benefit from dropout prevention strategies.

C. Key results indicators

1.47 **Expected outcomes**. The program's expected outcomes associated to the general objective are to contribute to an increase in the percentage of: (i) students from grade 12 who attain expected proficiency level in English language; (ii) teachers at the primary and lower secondary levels with satisfactory achievement in digital competencies; and (iii) students enrolled in new high-quality relevant TVET programs (LBO, MBO and PTC) that successfully complete their

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19 Final numbers of beneficiaries may vary once MOESC´s data availability is strengthened, and school and student information is consolidated into the EMIS being developed under 4984/OC-SU.

20 Device usage and access to learning platforms is estimated at least once weekly in grades 3-5 and at least twice weekly in grades 6-8 and in secondary schools.

21 Final selection of schools will be defined during project implementation. See ¶1.43 and footnote 18.

22 Estimates were calculated using recent enrolment data in the new careers and projections based on preliminary costing and past projects (SU-L1061).

first year (disaggregated by sex). The expected outcomes under specific objective 1 are an increase in the percentage of: (i) English teachers that complete training on use of new pedagogical approaches, curriculum and materials for English instruction; (ii) English teachers that adopt new English language teaching materials in classrooms; and (iii) teachers fully qualified to teach English language in secondary schools. The expected outcomes under specific objective 2 are an increase in the percentage of: (i) students from grades 9-12 who use learning platforms or software at least twice weekly; (ii) teachers who use classroom educational technology kits at least once weekly in grades 3-8 in schools with predominantly indigenous and Maroon students, at least once weekly in grades 3-8 in all other schools, and twice weekly in grades 9-12; and (iii) teachers that complete 80% of training modules related to pedagogical approaches to Digital Transformation for Education. The expected outcomes under specific objective 3 are an increase in the percentage of: (i) schools offering new high-quality relevant TVET programs; (ii) certified teachers teaching new high-quality relevant TVET programs; and (iii) TVET programs with an Improvement Action Plan for quality assurance.

1.48 The Project has been designed for scalability and long-term impact. The new English language curriculum and materials will be used in every school (Grades 9-12) by project's end, and IOL will have increased capacity to offer high-quality teacher education programs. Resources under Component-2 will reach 65% of schools. The project will leave a distribution and maintenance plan and a strong ICT team in MOESC to manage technology in schools, which will enable the Government to reach its future goal of introducing technology and meaningful connectivity in all schools. Component-3 is designed to create guidelines, methodologies, and procedures and to build MOESC's capacity to continue developing TVET programs to meet Suriname's evolving needs. This will prepare MOESC to replicate the model for future generations. The long-term impact of students with English and digital skills and skills for work has been calculated in the economic analysis.

1.49 **Economic analysis**. The economic analysis shows that the project is financially feasible overall, and financially viable for each of its three components. The analysis monetizes the project benefits by estimating: (i) salary differentials for secondary school students with higher levels of English proficiency, which are likely to benefit students in lower and upper secondary; (ii) a positive impact of increased digital connectivity, which is estimated to produce net savings from reductions in repetition in all grades of basic education, and benefits from increased wages due to increased years of schooling. These benefits would result from better access to internet resources by teachers and students, which is likely to increase access to pedagogical resources and teacher training, leading to improved educational quality; (iii) increased salary income resulting from improved TVET training under the updated facilities provided by the Project, and by a newer mix of skills more in line with market demands in current and prospective labor markets. Using a discount rate of 12%, the project is likely to produce a Benefit/Cost ratio of 4.32 under a Conservative scenario; a B/C ratio of 6.52 under the most likely Intermediate scenario, and a B/C ratio 9.31 under the Optimist scenario. In addition, the Internal Rate of Return is also favorable, ranging from 16 percent for the Conservative scenario, to 20 percent for the Intermediate scenario, and 26 percent for the Optimistic scenario.

II. FINANCING STRUCTURE AND MAIN RISKS

A. Financing instruments

2.1 To achieve the goals of this project, the GOS and the Bank agreed that a specific investment loan is the most suitable instrument. This instrument is considered to be appropriate due to its fixed scope, logical interdependence of the components and its physical and technical individuality. The total amount of the loan is US$40 million to be financed by the IDB from the Ordinary Capital resources and disbursed over a period of five-years. The tables below show the summary of Project costs and tentative disbursement schedule for the operation.

Table II-1.Summary of Project costs (in US$million)[23]

Components	Total	%
Component-1. Strengthen the quality of English language instruction	**5.0**	12
Enhanced quality of English instruction in schools	4.0	
Updated and upgraded English teachers' education	1.0	
Component-2. Strengthen teachers' digital skills and educational system's ICT readiness	**19.0**	47
Educational digital transformation governance	1.3	
Teachers' digital skills and content for digital teaching and learning	3.8	
Schools' ICT readiness	13.9	
Component-3. Develop high-quality relevant TVET programs	**14.5**	36
Institutional capacity for high-quality relevant TVET	0.4	
High-quality relevant TVET in selected schools	13.6	
Retention strategies in TVET	0.5	
Project administration, Evaluation and Audit	1.5	5
Total	**40.0**	**100**

Table II-2.Disbursement Schedule (US$million) [24]

Source	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Total
IDB	2.08	7.95	15.70	11.40	2.86	40
%	5	20	39	28	7	100

B. Environmental and social safeguard risks

2.2 In attention to the Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF), the operation was classified as Category "C" since only minimum or no negative environmental or social effects are to be expected.

2.3 If solar panels are purchased(¶1.40), 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 (GN-2349-15 and GN-2350-15).

[23] Costs are indicative.

[24] This is a 60-month project, expected to be signed in 2024. Execution will begin in 2025, and end in 2029.

2.4 The analysis carried out during due diligence confirms the classification of disaster risk and climate change as Low, so the operation will comply with national legislation related to disaster risks and climate change where applicable and necessary.

C. Fiduciary risk

2.5 An institutional capacity assessment and risk management exercise identified four fiduciary risks. Three related to the EA's human resource capacity to implement the project. HIGH: (i) Due to organizational complexities and remuneration constraints in the public sector, the MOESC/Project Management Unit (PMU) may have difficulties attracting and retaining requisite human resources. Mitigating actions are: (a) incorporate a competitive remuneration package comparable to other international development organizations, including financial incentives, opportunities for training and development; (b) offer PM4R (Project Management for Results) courses to PMU staff, and fiduciary trainings according to Bank Policies and Procedures. MEDIUM-HIGH: (ii) Loss of institutional knowledge may occur due to changes in PMU and MOESC staff. To mitigate this: (a) PMU staff will document all relevant procedures, processes, policies, lessons learned and issues; (b) the Project Operations Manual (POM) will clearly outline policies, processes and procedures related to project execution. (iii) Resistance by internal stakeholders in supporting the project and related activities may lead to delays in project execution. The mitigation strategies are: (a) hire change management resources to develop and implement related change management plans for the project; (b) hire technical consultants to lead each component, liaising with MOESC staff to generate project buy-in. (iv) An economic and financial medium-high risk related to increasing globalization, heightened currency volatility, and changes in exchange rates in Suriname, which could negatively influence the MOESC/PMU's ability to attract local firms/consultants to respond to requests for proposals and expressions of interest. MOESC and Ministry of Finance developed a mitigation strategy: (a) Incorporate payment of USD fees in local currency at a fixed daily rate of exchange of the Central Bank of Suriname and pay portions of the contract in foreign currency for goods imported from overseas, based on proof of purchase.

D. Other risks and key issues

2.6 Additional risks were identified. MEDIUM-HIGH: (i) change in government/political administration may create change/shift in planned education policy and project direction. Mitigation actions are: (a) utilize Loan contract clauses to safeguard project objectives; (b) conduct information sessions and validation missions with respective stakeholders, agencies and/or Ministries; (c) adhere to policies, processes and procedures in the POM. (ii) Misuse of internet access, digital devices and content by teachers and students may lead to temporary suspension of project activities related to connectivity and/or use of internet; this due to inexperience with access to technology and internet for teaching and learning. The mitigation actions are: (a) develop clear rules and guidelines regarding introduction of devices and use of internet for teaching and learning; (b) provide timely comprehensive training in digital skills to teachers and ongoing support as they begin to use technology. These actions would take place prior to introducing devices to schools. (iii) There is lack of reliable data to monitor project activities.

Expansion and strengthening of MOESC's EMIS under Loan 4984/OC-SU (¶ I.1.25) will mitigate this risk. HIGH: (iv) Dependency on internal/external agencies (MOESC's ICT department, Telesur, e-Gov) may cause delays in project execution. To mitigate this: (a) a coordination committee will be created to coordinate the technical work of different entities; (b) the PMU will identify a focal point within each agency who has sound decision-making powers; (c) the PMU will recruit external consultants in specific areas of need and assemble a strong team to work in the ICT Department to build MOESC's capacity to plan, procure, manage, maintain and monitor technology in schools.

2.7 **Sustainability.** This Project supports significant investments in training and technology which must be managed properly. The program Project emphasizes capacity building within MOESC for each component. Under Component-1, professional development for IOL staff and their involvement in the design and implementation of the certification program will contribute to long-term improvements in English language training. Component-2 builds on Suriname's ICT Vision 2030 and National Digital Strategy 2023-2030; coordination with e-Gov and other ministries will contribute to sustainability of connectivity and technology use and generate strong commitment to continue allocating sufficient resources after project completion. Investments to expand MOESC's ICT department will build their capacity to oversee selection, use and upkeep of technology for MOESC and schools; ICT experts will train MOESC staff and gradually transfer full ownership to the Ministry. The EMIS being developed under 4984/OC-SU will allow MOESC to monitor distribution and technology use and adequate school infrastructure to accommodate technology and TVET equipment. The approach for involving communities in national preventive school maintenance, financed under 4984/OC-SU, will be used for community-led plans to protect technology. Digital skills training of teacher trainers (ongoing under ATN/CF-18864-RG) will ensure training of current and incoming teachers. Component-3 is designed to model development of TVET programs that respond to labor market needs, building MOESC's capacity to design and implement future programs. Finally, technological systems may quickly become obsolete, which would adversely affect the sustainability of investments made in all three components. To address this, technical specifications to select providers will emphasize digital solutions that can be easily updated.

III. Implementation and Management Plan

A. Summary of implementation arrangements

3.1 **Project execution.** The Borrower is the Republic of Suriname, and the Executing Agency is MOESC working with a Project Management Unit (PMU). The PMU will oversee technical and operational implementation of the Project, including administrative tasks, procurement, financial management, and coordination with MOESC staff on technical decisions and project execution. An experienced PMU is currently responsible for two IDB-financed education loans. Its structure will continue, comprising a Project Manager. Operations Officer, Procurement Officer, Finance Officer and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer. The Project will contract technical coordinators to work with MOESC departments for joint execution of Project activities in English language instruction, ICT adoption and

use, and TVET, and with external stakeholders like MOFP, Ministry of Labor, e-Government, and IOL. The POM will establish the operational guidelines, fiduciary arrangements, procurement procedures, auditing mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and the institutional and technical framework for Project execution. This will include the overall governance structure, PMU responsibilities, and interinstitutional collaboration mechanisms of the coordination committee(¶2.6).

3.2 **Reports**. The PMU will prepare the Pluriannual Project Execution Plan (PEP) and semi-annual and annual reports for MOESC and IDB detailing: (i) progress regarding activities and outputs in the Annual Operating Plans (AOP) and intermediate outcomes, according to Project indicators; (ii) financial progress of commitments, payments and disbursements under the loan and an updated financial plan; (iii) annual financial statements audited by independent auditors acceptable to the Bank; (iv) the updated AOP and related budgets for the next 12-months; (v) the updated procurement plan (PP); and (vi) an annual maintenance report up to the fifth year after expiration of the last disbursement date.

3.3 **Special Contractual Conditions or Clauses prior to the first disbursement.** (i) verification that the Borrower through the EA has assigned execution of the Project to the PMU currently executing 4984/OC-SU with its key personnel in accordance with the terms and conditions included in the POM; (ii) approval and entry into effect of the POM in terms previously agreed with the Bank. Such conditions will address the institutional support required by the EA to effectively implement the Project, as well as the provision of the guidelines, norms and procedures for Execution of the Loan.

3.4 **Special Contractual Clauses of execution, prior to purchasing ICT items for Component-2.** MOESC must present: (i) the list of schools to benefit with connectivity and technology kits; and (ii) final implementation plan for distribution and monitoring of technology kits and training in digital skills. MOESC should provide access to electricity and internet, conditions imperative to ensure the requisite infrastructure is in place to support meaningful connectivity.[25]

3.5 **Special prior condition for certain activities under Component-3.** Prior to purchasing TVET equipment in selected schools, the optimization study that defines the beneficiary schools under this Component must be finalized and approved by the Bank. This will ensure the investments are suitably placed.

3.6 **Procurement.** Procurement of goods, works, and consulting services to be financed with Project resources are included in the PP covering five years of project execution starting on the date of effectiveness of the Project. All procurement will be carried out in accordance with the Policies for the Procurement of Goods and Works financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2349-15); and the Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank(GN-2350-15). The PP will be updated semi-annually or as necessary or required by the Bank.

[25] The project's budget includes contingency funds for fixed, wireless, or satellite internet services, their installations, maintenance, or monthly service fees if they are not already provided for.

3.7 **Audits.** The EA will submit to the Bank the Project's annual financial audit within 120 days after the close of each fiscal year. The audit will be conducted by an independent audit firm considered eligible by the Bank. The scope and related considerations will be governed by the Financial Management Guidelines (OP-273-12) and the Guide for Financial Reports and Management of External Audits. Annual financial audit costs will be financed with Project resources. A final financial audit report of the Project should be submitted within 120 days after the date of the last disbursement.

B. Summary of arrangements for monitoring results

3.8 **Monitoring.** In addition to the PEP, AOP, and annual PP, the PMU will submit semi-annual progress reports throughout the project, within 60 days following the end of each semester. The PMU will keep all relevant administrative information available to facilitate this review.

3.9 **Evaluation.** A Project midterm evaluation will be conducted to assess execution progress once 50% of project resources are committed, and a final evaluation upon disbursement of ninety percent (90%) of project resources to assess achievement of agreed outcomes, outputs and lessons learned regarding project performance. The Project will be evaluated following an evidence-based strategy using a before and after evaluation for the outcome indicators; (ii) a critical review of the vertical logic or theory of change of the Project during preparation, implementation and completion; and (iii) an analysis of project results in the context of existing evidence of effectiveness of similar interventions. The cost-benefit analysis will be updated ex-post with respect to the ex-ante evaluation. Finally, to assess the attribution of observed results to specific objective (i), an impact evaluation will determine the effectiveness of the program to upgrade English teachers' qualifications and English language proficiency and teaching methods.

Development Effectiveness Matrix		
Summary	SU-L1072	
I. Corporate and Country Priorities		
Section 1. IDB Group Institutional Strategy Alignment		
Operational Focus Areas	-Gender equality and inclusion of diverse population groups -Social protection and human capital development -Sustainable, resilient, and inclusive infrastructure	
[Space-Holder: Impact framework indicators]		
2. Country Development Objectives		
Country Strategy Results Matrix	GN-3065	Improving education and labor market outcomes
Country Program Results Matrix	GN-3207	The intervention is included in the 2024 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	8.3	
3.1 Program Diagnosis	2.5	
3.2 Proposed Interventions or Solutions	1.9	
3.3 Results Matrix Quality	3.8	
4. Ex ante Economic Analysis	10.0	
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	2.5	
4.4 Sensitivity Analysis	2.0	
4.5 Consistency with results matrix	1.0	
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)		
Non-Fiduciary		
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		

Evaluability Assessment Note: *The general objective of the project is to promote the development of skills for growth and competitiveness, focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work in Suriname. Consistently, the specific objectives address the three main determinants of the problem: low quality and relevance of instruction in English language, digital skills, and technical skills for work. The diagnosis of problem and determinants is based on quantitative and qualitative evidence. A well-developed vertical logic links the problem to its determinants and proposed solutions (components). For English language instruction, the solution includes an updated curriculum and assessment tools aligned with an international framework, new teaching materials, teacher training and certification. For the system's ICT readiness, the solution proposes a new digital transformation strategy, teacher training, educational resources, classroom equipment, and school connectivity. Finally, for relevant TVET programs, the solution includes curriculum and guidelines for industry-aligned TVET programs, equipment, teacher training and certification. The proposed solutions are based on international research and evidence. However, the project would benefit from more detailed information on incentives and their potential effect on users, use of outputs and outcomes.*

The results matrix is consistent with the vertical logic of the operation. The outcome indicators are adequate to measure the achievement of the specific objectives. However, there is no detailed information on how some targets were defined (size and timing). Evaluation of outcomes will be based on a before-after analysis. In addition, an experimental impact evaluation of English language instruction is planned. The M&E plan would benefit from a more detailed information on data sources, availability, and planned collection for outcome indicators.

The ex-ante economic analysis shows that the program would generate added benefits ranging from US$83.5 million (conservative scenario) to US$179.3 million (optimistic scenario), and an internal rate of return of 16% to 24% using a discount rate of 12%. The assumptions for estimating benefits are well supported (derived from increased learning associated with higher wages). The analysis includes all project costs. A sensitivity analysis is also provided.

The project obtained an Environmental and Social rating in category C, since only minimum or no negative environmental or social effects are expected. In addition, the project identifies five medium-high risks and two high risks. The risks classified as high are related to difficulties in attracting and retaining human resources, and dependency on internal and external government agencies that may cause delays. Mitigation measures have been proposed and can be monitored throughout the project.

RESULTS MATRIX

Project Objective	The specific objectives of this operation are: (i) Strengthen the quality of English language; (ii) Strengthen the educational system´s ICT readiness and teachers´digital skills; and (iii) Develop high-quality relevant TVET programs that respond to evolving needs of the labor market. The achievement of these objectives will contribute to the general objective of promoting the development of skills for growth and competitiveness focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Expected year for achievement	Target	Means of verification	Comments
General development objective: Promote the development of skills for growth and competitiveness focusing on English language, digital skills and skills for work							
Percentage of students in grade 12 who attain expected proficiency level in English language	% [Students/Students]	TBD	2025	2029	+10 pp	Standardized examination results reported by MOESC	Expected proficiency level is defined as B1 in the CEFR or equivalent by end of project, using a standardized test. Numerator: Y12 student test results who attain expected level Denominator: All Y12 students There is no baseline because students have not taken a proficiency assessment that can be compared with international standards. The first application will take place in 2025.
Percentage of teachers at the primary and lower secondary levels with satisfactory achievement in digital competencies	% [Teachers/Teachers]	TBD	2025	2029	+20 pp	Edutech-Guide results	Satisfactory achievement is defined as meeting at least Level 2 in the Edutech Guide. Numerator: number of teachers who reach level 2 or higher in at least 2 of the 3 areas assessed by Edutech Guide. Denominator: number of teachers who take the assessment. Target based on data from Edutech Guide implementation in Honduras. There is no baseline because Edutech Guide has not been introduced in Suriname. Teachers will first take the assessment in 2025.
Percentage of students enrolled in new high-quality TVET-LBO	% [Students/Students]	0	2024	2029	45	Program Evaluation based on	MOESC EMIS Reports and Promotion rates statistics (Moving Up Percentage): defined by MOESC as “% of pupils who

(lower secondary) Programs, that successfully complete their first year						MOESC-EMIS Reports	have successfully completed a school year (moved up) and are enrolled in the next year of the same educational level". Numerator: students who have successfully completed the first school year in new HQR TVET programs and are enrolled in the second year Denominator: students who enrolled in new HQR TVET programs in the first school year. Baseline set to zero because programs have not been offered yet. Sources for current passing rates: Lower secondary LBO: MOESC (2022) Education Statistics and Indicators 2020. Sub-directorate Development Service Research and Planning Department, December. Upper secondary: own calculations using administrative data from AMTO, IMEAO and NATIN (2023) PTC: TBD
Males		0	2024	2029	44		
Females		0	2024	2029	46		
Percentage of students enrolled in new high-quality TVET MBO (upper-secondary) Programs, that successfully complete their first year		0	2024	2029	75		
Males		0	2024	2029	69		
Females		0	2024	2029	81		
Percentage of students enrolled in new high-quality relevant TVET PTC (higher-education) Programs, that successfully complete their first year		TBD	2024	2029	+3pp		
Males		TBD	2024	2029	+3pp		
Females		TBD	2024	2029	+3pp		

SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Year-6[1]	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
SO#1.Strengthen the quality of English language instruction												
S1.1.Percentage of English teachers that complete training on use of new pedagogical approaches, curriculum and materials for English instruction	%	0	2024	0	0	20	40	60	80	80	MOESC-reports (CENASU)	Numerator: number of English teachers that complete the training modules Denominator: Total number of English teachers who start training modules
S1.2.Percentage of English teachers that adopt new English language teaching materials in classrooms	%	0	2024	0	0	20	40	60	60	60	MOESC-Inspection Dept. reports	Numerator: Teachers using new textbooks and audio equipment in classes. Denominator: Teachers who have received the materials A representative sample of teachers would be observed using Teach or similar classroom observation tool.
S1.3.Percentage of teachers fully qualified to teach English language in secondary schools	%	12	2025	12	12	30	65	75	75	75	MOESC-reports (Planning Dept. and IOL) and examination results	Baseline is teachers already qualified. Numerator: Teachers fully qualified to teach English Denominator: Total number of teachers teaching English. Qualified means they have completed the program and passed the final exam recognized by MOESC.

[1] This is a 5-year project. However, since it will start at the end of 2024, it will run across six-years, into 2029.

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Year-6[1]	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
SO#2.Strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills												
S2.1.Percentage of students from lower secondary (grades 9-12) who use learning platforms or software at least twice weekly	% [Students/Students]	0	2024	0	0	0	30	50	70	70	Platform/software reports	Numerator: Students who use the learning platforms or software at least twice weekly (at least 2 school hours in total, where a school hour is at least 30 minutes) Denominator: Students with access to the platforms (devices and internet)
S2.2.Percentage of primary level teachers (grades 3-8) who use Classroom Educational Technology Kits at least once weekly	% [Teachers/Teachers]	0	2024	0	0	20	50	80	80	80	MOESC data, platform, software and EMIS reports	As measured by login times retrieved by tracking applications installed in the devices or platform usage reports associated with individual logins (data feeds into EMIS reports). Numerator: teachers who use the kits at least once weekly (1 school hour) for primary schools or twice weekly (2 school hours) for secondary schools. Denominator: number of teachers who receive the classroom kits.
S2.3.Percentage of primary level teachers (grades 3-8) who use Classroom Educational Technology Kits at least once weekly in schools with predominantly Indigenous & Maroon students	% [Teachers/Teachers]	0	2024	0	0	0	10	30	50	50	MOESC data, platform/software reports, EMIS reports	
S2.4.Percentage of secondary level teachers (grades 9-12) who use Classroom Educational Technology Kits at least twice weekly	% [Teachers/Teachers]	0	2024	0	0	20	50	80	80	80	MOESC data, platform/software reports, EMIS data	

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Year-6[1]	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
S2.5.Percentage of teachers that complete 80% of training modules related to pedagogical approaches to Digital Transformation for Education	% [Teachers/Teachers]	0	2024	0	0	20	40	60	60	60	MOESC reports (CENASU)	End of project goal based on similar experiences in Philippines (Marcial & Habalo, 2017) and Indonesia (Yarrow et al., 2022). Numerator: Teachers who complete at least 80% of the training modules Denominator: Teachers enrolled in the training program
SO#3.Develop high-quality relevant TVET programs[2] that respond to evolving needs of the labor market												
S3.1.Percentage of schools offering new high-quality relevant TVET programs	% [Schools/Schools]	0	2025	0	0	25	55	85	85	85	MOESC reports (TVET Education Dept.)	Numerator: number of schools offering at least one TVET program in the calendar year with students enrolled that comply with all 4 areas (described in footnote 2 and TVET annex) Denominator: Number of selected schools defined by the optimization study that will be conducted during implementation Target calculated using past experiences of IsDB and CDB projects in TVET in Suriname and implementation of SU-L1061.

[2] New high-quality relevant TVET Programs: 1) respond to labor market needs, including new green skills related to sustainable development; 2) effectively translate identified skills needs into study programs/curricula, and certifications; 3) are offered following the New guidelines to implement high-quality TVET programs in institutions in the respective level of education; and 4) have a quality assurance model in place.

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Year-6[1]	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
S3.2.Percentage of certified teachers teaching new high-quality relevant TVET Programs	% [teachers/teachers]	0	2025	0	0	10	20	40	40	40	MOESC reports (TVET-Education Dept. and LOBO)	For lower secondary, upper secondary, and post-secondary (LBO, MBO and PTC, respectively). Numerator: teachers that pass the assessment and receive the certification Denominator: teachers that take the assessment Target set considering the annual average of students certified at LOBO (30%) and the average number of certified teachers from the ETVET-project (50%).
S3.3.Percentage of TVET Programs with an Improvement Action Plan for quality assurance	% [programs/programs	0	2025	0	0	10	25	55	70	70	MOESC reports (TVET-Education Dept. and Suriname National Training Authority)	MOESC reports on number of programs with an improvement plan will be produced by TVET education Department or NTA depending on NTA's role. Numerator: TVET programs with Improvement Action Plan (IAP). Denominator: Universe of TVET programs The project will create guidelines, templates and will invest in capacity-building within MOESC and schools to have one IAP. The result is the schools producing

Indicators	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3	Year-4	Year-5	Year-6[1]	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments
												their own IAP following guidelines. Target set using experience of implementing similar projects in other countries (unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373007_eng/PDF/373007eng.pdf.multi)

OUTPUTS

Indicators	Unit of measurement-Number	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments[3]
Component 1: Strengthen the quality of English language instruction												
P1.1.New English language curriculum developed for grades 9-12	Curriculum	0	2024	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	MOESC report (Curriculum Dept.)	
P1.2.Teachers enrolled in training for new pedagogical approach and use of new teaching materials	Teachers	0	2024	0	0	150	150	0	0	300	MOESC report (CENASU)	
P1.3.Students assessed for English skills using new assessment tools	Students (cumulative)	0	2024	0	0	20,000	30,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	MOESC report (Inspection Dept.)	
P1.4.New English language books delivered	Books	0	2024	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000		
P1.5.English teachers enrolled in program to upgrade qualifications in English language teaching	Teachers	0	2024	0	0	100	100	0	0	200	MOESC report (IOL)	
P1.6.New English courses offered for IOL, TVET teachers and MOESC personnel	Courses	0	2024	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	MOESC reports (IOL, TVET Education Dept., LOBO, HR Dept.)	
Component 2: Strengthen the educational system's ICT readiness and teachers' digital skills												
P2.1.New technical teams hired for Educational Digital Transformation Governance operational in MOESC	Teams (cumulative)	0	2024	0	2	3	3	3	3	3	MOESC reports	
P2.2.Teachers that completed basic training	Teachers	0	2024	0	0	1,400	1,400	700	0	3,500	MOESC report (CENASU)	

[3] See Monitoring&Evalution Plan

Indicators	Unit of measurement-Number	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments[3]
modules to develop digital skills for teaching												
P2.3.New Teaching and Learning platforms developed and operational.	Platforms (cumulative)	0	2024	0	0	4	6	6	6	6	MOESC report (ICT Dept., Research & Planning/EMIS Dept.)	.
P2.4.New Teaching and Learning platforms contextualized for schools in indigenous and Maroon communities	Platforms (cumulative)	0	2024	0	0	0	1	2	3	3		
P2.5.Classrooms equipped for technology aided teaching	Classrooms	0	2024	0	0	1,400	1,400	700	0	3,500	MOESC report (ICT Dept.)	
P2.6.Student devices delivered at schools	Devices	0	2024	0	0	0	3000	2000	1000	6000		
P2.7.Schools with minor safety or infrastructure improvements delivered to accommodate technological investments	Schools	0	2024	0	100	100	140	0	0	340	MOESC report (ICT and Infrastructure Depts.)	
P2.8.Schools with electricity and connectivity improvements delivered	Schools (cumulative)	0	2024	0	0	80	200	300	300	300		
Component 3. Develop high-quality relevant TVET programs.												
P3.1.Policy documents for high-quality relevant TVET programs approved	Documents	0	2024	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	MOESC report (TVET Dept) indicating approval of the institutional framework, guidelines and quality assurance framework	
P3.2.New high quality TVET Programs developed with curriculum and materials for implementation	Programs	0	2024	0	2	2	4	2	0	10	MOESC reports (TVET Dept)	

Indicators	Unit of measurement-Number	Baseline value	Baseline year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	End of Project	Means of verification	Comments[3]
P3.3.TVET School facilities renovated and fully equipped to offer high quality TVET Programs	Schools	0	2024	0	0	0	11	14	0	25	MOESC reports (TVET Dept)	
P3.4.TVET Teachers, instructors, and school personnel trained for new pedagogical approaches and quality assurance processes	Teachers	0	2024	0	0	0	115	172	113	400	MOESC reports (TVET Dept and LOBO)	
P3.5.Retention strategies to close gender gaps in TVET developed and being implemented	Strategies (cumulative)	0	2024	0	0	1	2	3	3	3	MOESC report (TVET Dept)	

Country: Suriname **Division**: EDU **Operation No.:** SU-L1072 **Year**:2024

FIDUCIARY AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

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

Operation Name: Skills for Growth: Improving Education Opportunities and Competitiveness

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

☒	Particularities of the fiduciary execution	The loan will be executed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC).

3. Fiduciary Capacity

Fiduciary Capacity of the EA	The result of the ICAP assessment indicates that **MOESC has the capacity to undertake the implementation of the proposed IDB-financed project.** MOESC has demonstrated experience and strengths in project management, procurement management, and financial management. Notwithstanding the experience in these areas, the main gaps existing in the institutional arrangements are centered around managing project partners, human resource management (i.e. staff recruitment and compensation), and technical quality management support and oversight. To address these areas of weakness, the following recommendations are presented.

4. Fiduciary risks and risk response

Risk Taxonomy	Risk	Risk level	Risk response
Economical financial	Due to increasing globalization, heightened currency volatility, and changes in exchange rates in Suriname, there can be a negative influence on the MOESC/PMU's ability to attract local firms/consultants to respond to requests for proposals and expressions of interest.	Medium-High	Incorporate payment of US$ fees in local currency at a fixed daily rate of exchange of Central Bank of Suriname (CBvS) and pay portions of the contract in foreign currency for goods imported from overseas, based on proof of purchase.

[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.

Human Resources	Due to organizational complexities and renumeration constraints in the public sector, MOESC/PMU may have difficulties attracting and retaining requisite human resources for the project.	High	Incorporate a competitive remuneration package comparative to other international development organizations, including financial incentives, and opportunities for training and development.
Human Resources	Loss of institutional knowledge may occur due to changes in PMU and MOESC staff.	Medium-High	Develop a knowledge management strategy that documents all relevant procedures, processes, policies, lessons learned, and issues.
Human Resources	Resistance by internal stakeholders in supporting the project and related activities (especially for connectivity/ICT and vocational education) may lead to delays in project execution.	Medium-High	Hire change management resources to develop and implement related change management plans for the project.

5. Policies and Guides applicable to operation: Policies for the procurement of Goods and Works financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, GN-2349-15, and Policies for the selection and contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, GN-2350-15.

6. Exceptions to Policies and Rules: not applicable

II. ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF THE LOAN AGREEMENT

Exchange Rate: For purposes of Article 4.10 of the General Conditions, the Parties agree that the applicable exchange rate shall be that which is indicated in paragraph (b)(ii) of said Article. Accordingly, the agreed exchange rate shall be the exchange rate on the effective date on/in which the Borrower, the Executing Agency, or any other person or legal entity in whom the power to incur expenditures has been vested makes the related payment to the contractor, the supplier, or beneficiary.
Type of Audit: Financial, Accounting, and Institutional Inspection visits or meetings will be performed with regards to: (i) Review of the Reconciliation and supporting documentation for disbursements; (ii) Compliance with financial and procurement procedures; (iii) Review of compliance with lending criteria; and (iv) Follow up on audit findings and recommendations. Review of Disbursements will be ex-post.

III. AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PROCUREMENT EXECUTION

<table>
<tr><td>☒</td><td>Bidding Documents</td><td>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, selection and contracting of Consulting Services will be carried out under 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.</td></tr>
<tr><td>☒</td><td>Procurement supervision</td><td>The method of supervision shall be ex-ante supervision.
<table>
<tr><td>Executing Agency</td><td>Works</td><td>Goods/Services</td><td>Consulting Services</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

		MOESC	≥50,000	≥25,000	≥25,000 Firms ≥10,000 Singles
☒	Records and Archives	The PMU will have the responsibility for maintaining the Project files and records . All records and files will be maintained according to standards acceptable to the Bank (best practices) and kept for a minimum of three (3) years after the end of the project's execution period.			

Main Acquisitions

Description of the procurement	Selection Method	Estimated Date	Estimated Amount US$
Goods			
ICT Equipment for MBO TVET facilities	International Competitive Bidding (ICB)	[01/01/2028]	2,200,000
English Learning Books for Students		[01/12/2025]	2,300,000
Works			
Minor infrastructure renovations and adequation of spaces for MBO TVET facilities		[01/01/2027]	3,000,000
Non-consulting services			
ICT Educational Platforms (Software) and Digital contents for Educational Digital Teaching & Learning		[01/03/2026]	2,400,000
Consulting Firms			
Consulting Firm for development of "Training Packages" for the most demanded occupations	Quality- and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS)	[01/05/2026]	1,400,000
Individuals			
ICT Project Manager	Selection of individual consultant (by open invitation)	[01/02/2025]	240,000

Access Procurement Plan

IV. AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

☒	Programming and Budget	The EA will prepare and implement an operational plan to include the budget plan, procurement plan, and financial plan, consistent with a required 12--month financial plan. The Borrower has committed to allocate, for each fiscal year of project execution, adequate fiscal space to guarantee unrestricted execution of the project.
☒	Treasury and Disbursement Management	The disbursement mechanism shall be Manual and will follow the methods stated in the OP-273-12 and the Disbursement Handbook. The currency to manage the operation is the United States Dollar (US$). The operation will generally work with a financial period of 6 months due to the planning cycle for the project. The

		Preferential Disbursement Method will be advance of funds, but other types of disbursements will be available. The operation is expected to justify 80% of accumulated balances pending of justification before requesting another advance of funds.
☒	Accounting, information systems, and reporting	Specific accounting norms: IFRS (International Financing Reporting Standards). Accounting reports: The Executing Agency will utilize the off-the-shelf accounting and financial management software QuickBooks currently used for accounting and financial reporting of many programs in the country. Financial Statements of the project will be prepared based on IDB rules given that the PFM reform is still in process. The financial specialist should maintain under his/her responsibility auxiliary records and systems (e.g. QuickBooks or similar).
☒	External control: external financial audit and project reports	The Borrower and EA, as agreed with the Bank, will hire services of an audit firm through a bidding process. The audit's scope and related considerations will be governed by the Financial Management Guidelines (document OP273-12) and the Guide for Financial Reports and Management of External Audit. The annual financial audits/assurance reports should be submitted within 120 days of the end of a fiscal year and within 120 days after the date of the last disbursement.
☒	Project Financial Supervision	Financial, Accounting, and Institutional Inspection visits or meetings will be performed for: (i) Review of the Reconciliation and supporting documentation for disbursements; (ii) Compliance with financial and procurement procedures; (iii) Review of compliance with lending criteria; and (iv) Follow up on audit findings and recommendations. The Review of Disbursements will be ex-post.