

## TC Document

### I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	SURINAME
▪ TC Name:	Language Training and Connectivity
▪ TC Number:	SU-T1170
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Hobbs, Cynthia Marie (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; Gabriela Gambi (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Alejandra Forero Perez (SCL/EDU); Berlanda Custodio Da Silva, Cleide (VPC/FMP); Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU); Cuartero Montilla, Jorge (SCL/EDU); Mendoza Benavente, Horacio (LEG/SGO); Sefanya Pierpont (SCL/EDU); Wip, Shannon (CCB/CSU); Cuartero Montilla, Jorge (SCL/EDU); Berlanda Custodio da Silva, Cleide (VPC/FMP)
▪ Taxonomy:	Operational Support
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	SU-L1072
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	17 Apr 2023
▪ Beneficiary:	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC)
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development(W2E)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$200,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	24 months
▪ Required start date:	July 2023
▪ Types of consultants:	Individual Consultants; Firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	SCL/EDU-Education
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	SCL/EDU-Education
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality; Productivity and innovation; Diversity

### II. Description of the Associated Loan/Guarantee

- 2.1 A new loan, SU-L1072, Skills for Life and Work: Improving Education Opportunities and Competitiveness through Bilingual Education and Technology, will aim to support the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture (MOESC) in strengthening the teaching of English as a second language, expanding connectivity options for all schools, and building teacher capacity in digital skills and new pedagogies. The government requested this loan on January 30, 2023, to be included in the IDB's pipeline for 2024. The IDB team has not yet initiated project preparation because the Minister of Education, Science and Culture who requested the loan left shortly thereafter, in March 2023, and a new Minister was not appointed until late May 2023. He will assign a team to work on the design of the new loan. The Identification Mission is planned for late August 2023.

### III. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 3.1 The general objective of the TC is to support the MOESC to develop a strategy to strengthen teaching of English as a second language. The specific objectives are to: (i) identify a proposed pedagogy and teaching modalities, and (ii) explore connectivity options for schools. The Government of Suriname has identified the need for its citizens to strengthen their English language skills to improve their educational opportunities and Suriname's competitiveness<sup>1</sup>. People with strong English language skills will improve their own opportunities for professional growth since English will be increasingly used for the service industry and for emerging energy sectors, which will benefit Suriname's economic development. Learning English will allow students to engage and participate in a globalized and plural world, expanding their possibilities for interaction and mobility<sup>2</sup>. Due to limited numbers of qualified English teachers, online options will be explored. Although about two thirds of schools have an internet connection provided by the MOESC, these schools are all located in urban or coastal areas, and even in those schools there are issues with the quality of the service (bandwidth and service interruptions). Connectivity is low or absent in rural schools serving Maroon and indigenous communities. Improved connectivity will allow for hybrid education and expand opportunities for teaching and learning 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. It will also allow schools to share information with the central MOESC on a more regular basis, enhancing the education management information system (EMIS). This TC will identify the different levels of connectivity at schools across the country and prepare a connectivity framework, to be carried out during the loan's execution.
- 3.2 *The MOESC faces challenges delivering the English language curriculum.* Teacher qualifications are insufficient for upper secondary levels. For the past forty years, English language has been a part of the curriculum of lower secondary education, as well as some upper secondary and vocational education programs in Suriname. Currently there are 305 teachers teaching English at lower and upper secondary schools in the academic and vocational tracks. The required qualification for teaching English at lower secondary is an MO-A degree<sup>3</sup>, and for upper secondary it is an MO-B degree<sup>4</sup>. Some 88 percent of the English teachers are qualified to teach lower secondary English, but only one of the 78 teachers currently teaching upper secondary English is qualified for that level.<sup>5</sup> At the teacher college level, most lecturers have an MO-A degree in English and a master's degree in a related field (Education or Psychology). However, the curriculum at the teaching college is not defined. Each lecturer determines what is taught and how.
- 3.3 *Materials and assessments for English language teaching are outdated.* The textbook used for English language teaching in lower secondary (VOJ), *First Things First*, dates

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<sup>1</sup> This will allow for greater participation in CARICOM, following the decision in the 2023 annual meeting to complete the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) policy and regulatory work as well as an agreement on free movement of CARICOM nationals across the predominantly English-speaking member states by 2024. <https://caricom.org/communique-forty-fifth-regular-meeting-of-the-conference-of-heads-of-government-of-caricom-trinidad-and-tobago-3-5-july-2023/>

<sup>2</sup> Pereira T. and Stanton S. 2023 *Aprendizado de Inglês no Brasil*.

<sup>3</sup> The MO-A is equivalent to a two-year degree program in higher vocational education (HBO in Dutch) in teaching, following completion of upper secondary school.

<sup>4</sup> The MO-B is equivalent to an HBO Bachelor's degree in teaching.

<sup>5</sup> Data reported by the MOESC. April 2023.

to 1967 and focuses heavily on grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, it is not measured against any standard for language learning - for example, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which is an international standard used to measure language proficiency. A more recent textbook, *Cutting Edge* (2007), is used for upper secondary but not all the provided resources are available to teachers, such as digital and online materials. This is due to a lack of digital infrastructure at schools as well as the absence of an ICT in education strategy and specialized staff to develop and monitor the strategy. There is no uniformity in teaching methods for either secondary level. According to sources at the teaching college (IOL), the quality of the class depends on the level of experience and instructional practices of each teacher. Various mostly summative assessment methods are used. The IOL is currently working on aligning the content of the IOL program with the CEFR international language learning standards and the CARICOM qualifications framework.

- 3.4 *Connectivity issues limit opportunities for digital learning.* According to World Data<sup>6</sup>, Suriname ranked 150<sup>th</sup> in an international comparison, with an average download speed of 11.09 Mbit/second for fixed-network broadband internet. They ranked even lower (154<sup>th</sup> place) on their upload rate of 5.7 Mbit/second. The Government of Suriname started an e-government initiative in 2011. The e-government Strategy Working Document describes the goals of the program including establishment of high-speed connectivity among all government entities and between government entities and citizens. Within the education sector, approximately 325 of the 500 public and subsidized schools have an internet connection provided by MOESC through Telesur. However, as mentioned above, schools in the interior are rarely connected and there are issues with the quality and reliability of the internet service for the urban and coastal schools.
- 3.5 Preparation of the loan operation has been delayed by changes in the MOESC leadership, including the Minister and some technical directors. In addition, more information is required regarding the status of connectivity of schools and training requirements needed to build teacher capacity in digital skills and new pedagogies for hybrid teaching and learning. The studies to be carried out under the proposed TC will provide background information and help to define the activities to be carried out under the loan. It is for this reason that TC resources are needed prior to the initiation of project preparation.
- 3.6 **Strategic Alignment.** This TC is consistent with the Bank's Second Update to the Institutional Strategy (UIS) 2020-2023 (AB-3190-2) and is aligned with the following areas: (i) Social inclusion and equality through a strategy for English language training which will improve labor market opportunities for all students. A plan to connect all schools to the internet will lead to improved quality education opportunities for all; (ii) Productivity and innovation by exploring connectivity options for the different realities of schools on the coast and in the interior; (iii) Gender equality and diversity in that the strategies for English language classes and connectivity for schools across the country, in urban and rural settings, will lead to new opportunities especially for

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.worlddata.info/america/suriname/telecommunication.php>. Information downloaded on June 16, 2023.

children from indigenous communities in the interior. The TC is consistent with the Sector Framework Document for Skills Development (GN-3012-3) by fostering digital transformation for teaching and learning through a plan for connectivity of all schools. It aligns with the current IDB Group Country Strategy with Suriname (2021-2025) (GN-3065) in objective 2.2 Improving education and labor market outcomes by developing a strategy for improving English language skills needed to close skills gaps and meet future labor market demands and a plan to provide connectivity in all schools. Additionally, the TC is aligned with objective (iii) of priority area 5 of the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program (OC SDP) Window 2, Inclusive Social Development (W2E) that supports the reduction of poverty and inequality through students' access to quality education, in this case quality English language training for all students and fosters social inclusion through the design for service delivery of connectivity for all schools (GN-2819-14). Expanded connectivity aligns with the Education Management Information System (EMIS) component of the ongoing loan operation SU-L1059 and will allow schools to share on-time information about school infrastructure.

#### **IV. Description of activities/components and budget**

- 4.1 **Outcome statement.** Assist the MOESC in developing improved strategies for teaching of English as a second language and a plan to provide connectivity for all schools.
- 4.2 **Component 1: Model for English language teaching (US\$100,000).** This supports the development of a strategy for English language teaching<sup>7</sup>. Consultants will be hired to carry out three activities: (i) Development of a pedagogical proposal including methodology, schedule, teaching practices, and a training plan for teachers; (ii) Development of a proposal for technological kits for schools, based on different proposed teaching methodologies; and (iii) Elaboration of guidelines for teachers and principals on how to use the kits and apply the methodologies. The expected outputs are a pedagogical proposal for teaching English as a second language, specifications for proposed technological kits for schools to support the pedagogy, and the guidelines for the application of the selected methodologies. The expected result would be a detailed design for a pilot and subsequent rollout nationwide with support from the new loan operation. TC resources will finance the contracting of individual consultants (i and ii) and a firm (iii) to carry out these activities.
- 4.3 **Component 2: Connectivity and data management (US\$100,000).** The TC resources will be used to hire individual consultants for the following: (i) Mapping of current connectivity conditions in schools and strategic planning of viable connectivity options in the coastal and rural areas; and (ii) Development of a roadmap for the MOESC's Education Management Information System (EMIS), which will include regular school infrastructure and connectivity updates and school information (teachers/subjects, students, and so forth). The expected outputs are reports with a complete mapping of the status of school connectivity, a plan for connecting them, and a roadmap for EMIS strengthening in core aspects to support the digital infrastructure

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<sup>7</sup> Strategies may differ for native Dutch speakers and indigenous language speakers. This will be included in the development of the plan.

and pedagogical model. The expected result will be compiled information necessary to move forward with providing connectivity to schools and assessing the needs to be supported by the new loan operation. An additional consultant will be hired to oversee successful navigation and implementation of the digital transformation activities in Component 2 and ensure linkages with the technological proposal and guidelines in Component 1.

- 4.4 **Budget.** The total cost of the TC is US\$200,000, to be financed by the OC SDP Window 2 – Social Development (W2E). No local counterpart funding is anticipated.

#### Indicative Budget (US\$)

Activity/Component	Description	IDB/Fund Funding	Total Funding
<b>Component 1.</b> Model for English language teaching	Pedagogical proposal	40,000	40,000
	Technological kit proposal	25,000	25,000
	Guidelines for teachers and principals	35,000	35,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>Component 2.</b> Connectivity and data management	Mapping of school connectivity	25,000	25,000
	EMIS roadmap	25,000	25,000
	Digital consultant	50,000	50,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>

- 4.5 **Monitoring.** The Education Division will be responsible for the supervision and oversight, led by the Team Leader (TL) for Suriname operations in coordination with the MOESC. The Education TL will liaise with the Education consultant located in the country office (COF) to ensure alignment of related activities. The monitoring of the execution of the TC program will be carried out through the definition of an initial work plan and monthly follow-up meetings with the MOESC. The Bank will work closely with the ministry's appointed team to ensure direct dialogue and involvement of relevant government authorities and stakeholders and will carry out regular progress checks based on the outputs and expected results shown in the Results Matrix (see Annex II).

## V. Executing agency and execution structure

- 5.1 The Bank's Education Division (SCL/EDU) in collaboration with the country office (CCB/CSU) will execute this TC per the request of the Government of Suriname (see letter from the Ministry of Finance in Annex I). The Project Management Unit responsible for the ongoing loans (SU-L1038 and SU-L1059) has been affected by staffing issues over the last three years. These constraints undermine the PMU's institutional, technical, and operational capacity to duly and timely execute the TC activities and are congruent with the justification for Bank execution according to document OP-619-4, Annex II.

- 5.2 **Execution and disbursement period.** The TC will be implemented over a period of 24 months and disbursed over a period of 24 months as of the date of approval.
- 5.3 **Procurement.** All activities to be executed under this TC have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) and will be contracted in accordance with Bank policies as follows: (a) AM-650 for Individual consultants; (b) GN-2765-4 and Guidelines OP-1155-4 for Consulting Firms for services of an intellectual nature; and (c) GN-2303-28 for logistics and other related services.
- 5.4 All deliverables and any other material prepared under this TC are the sole and exclusive property of the Bank, and as such, the Bank has title, rights (including copyrights) and exclusive interests in the ownership of said products. However, the knowledge products generated within this TC may be made available to the public under a creative commons license. Also, at the request of the beneficiary, in accordance with the provisions of AM-331, the intellectual property of said products may also be licensed to the beneficiary through specific contractual commitments that shall be prepared with the advice of the Legal Department.

## **VI. Major issues**

- 6.1 One potential risk to the implementation of this TC is the challenge of reaching schools in the interior of the country. This could hamper the consultants' ability to adequately assess the state of these schools, particularly with regards to their connectivity options, as well as determine viable options for the pedagogy and technological kits. The IDB will work with the MOESC to provide adequate transportation. In addition, a checklist may be developed to send to schools that are not accessible. Finally, INE/ENE is installing solar panels in several communities in the interior and is sharing information with SCL/EDU and the COF regarding school infrastructure in those areas.

## **VII. Exceptions to Bank policy**

- 7.1 There are no known exceptions to Bank policy.

## **VIII. Environmental and Social Strategy**

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

### **Required Annexes:**

[Request from the Client - SU-T1170](#)

[Results Matrix - SU-T1170](#)

[Terms of Reference - SU-T1170](#)

[Procurement Plan - SU-T1170](#)