



1. Project Data

Project ID P174244	Project Name Guyana ESPIG	
Country Guyana	Practice Area(Lead) Education	
L/C/TF Number(s) WBTF-B5951	Closing Date (Original) 30-Jun-2024	Total Project Cost (USD) 6,700,000.00
Bank Approval Date 17-Jun-2021	Closing Date (Actual) 31-Mar-2025	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	0.00	6,700,000.00
Revised Commitment	0.00	6,700,000.00
Actual	0.00	6,700,000.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

As stated in the Grant Agreement (p. 5) and the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, p. 2), the project development objectives (PDOs) were to: (i) improve learning conditions at the nursery level in selected areas; (ii) increase use of technology-assisted learning at the primary level in selected areas, and (iii) improve functionality of the education management information system (EMIS) nationally.



The "selected areas" were Regions 1, 7, 8, and 9, commonly known as the "hinterland" regions, which had the country's lowest economic and other social outcomes (PAD, p. 13).

At a 2024 restructuring, several intermediate and outcome indicators and targets were revised to improve measurement and revise baselines in light of newly available data. Targets were adjusted such that the ambition of the project was not changed. A split rating methodology is therefore not required for this review.

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

Yes

Date of Board Approval

20-Mar-2024

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

The project was structured around three core components (ICR, p .6):

Component 1: Improving Learning Conditions at the Nursery Level (Original & Actual Allocation, US\$ 2.3 million). This component involved three subcomponents: Teacher training (1.1) was to focus on capacity building for educators and administrators on a reformed curriculum (being developed under the parallel Guyana Education Sector Improvement Project, P159519, 2017-2025, US\$11 million), emphasizing foundational skills, student-centered pedagogy, and formative assessments, supported by mentorship and classroom observation (using the TEACH Early Childhood Development [ECD] tool, a free classroom observation tool developed by the Bank). Provision of accompanying learning materials (1.2) was to secure and distribute age-appropriate, play-based materials for Nursery Level 1 and 2 children in the targeted regions, with later reallocation to scale up distribution to Region 2. Lastly, primary caregiver education (1.3) was originally to support ten "parenting circles" to strengthen caregiver knowledge of children's emerging literacy and numeracy, but this subcomponent was largely cancelled during the 2024 project restructuring, with its unused funds reallocated to allow for a significant scale-up of project activities expanding the distribution of materials and number of beneficiaries in selected regions (ICR, pp. 5-6).

Component 2: Promoting Technology-Assisted Learning at the Primary Level (Original allocation US\$2.5 million, Actual allocation at project close US\$1.7 million). This component sought to increase the use of technology at the primary level to supplement teaching and support student learning in foundational skills in mathematics and literacy. The first subcomponent, provision of tablets to support mathematics and literacy (2.1), was to involve distributing tablets pre-loaded with learning software, such as Kolibri (providing access to Khan Academy Lite), to Grade 4 students in selected schools. These devices were specifically chosen for their offline capability to support learning in areas with poor internet connectivity and therefore to allow for hybrid learning models. The second subcomponent, smart classrooms to support learning (2.2), was to focus on equipping ten chosen Grade 4 classrooms with comprehensive digital



equipment (including smartboards, tablets, and projectors) to serve as "Smart Classrooms," thereby supporting technology-assisted instruction and enabling potential remote links between classrooms.

The actual allocation was lower than planned due to procurement factors and budgetary reallocations. During the implementation of Subcomponent 2.1, the project generated US\$810,000 in savings from the purchase of digital tablets intended to support mathematics and literacy learning. These cost efficiencies allowed the project to meet its original target of providing 7,250 tablets while spending less than initially budgeted. Following the March 2024 Level II restructuring, these savings were reallocated to Subcomponent 3.1 to support the national rollout of the EMIS. The reallocated funds were specifically used to purchase and distribute tablets to 426 additional schools to facilitate real-time data entry for the EMIS, representing a strategic shift of resources to scale up the data management infrastructure (ICR, p. 6).

Component 3: Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Project Management (Original allocation US\$1.9 million, Actual allocation at project close US\$2.7 million) aimed to support the effective management of the education system through better data and to support project management, monitoring, and evaluation. Subcomponent 3.1, support to the national EMIS, was dedicated to the development and national implementation of an integrated EMIS across the nursery, primary, and secondary sectors. Activities were to include securing a consultancy to design the system, procuring essential hardware (like tablets for data uploading) for schools without computers, developing the necessary software, and conducting training for school leaders, teachers, and Ministry of Education (MoE) staff. Subcomponent 3.2, project management, monitoring, and evaluation, was to finance all necessary project management tasks, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, and mandated auditing requirements.

e. **Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates**

Costs and Financing: The project was financed solely by a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (TF-B5951). The original commitment amount was US\$6.7 million. The actual total disbursed amount reached US\$6.7 million, representing full disbursement of the GPE funds.

Borrower Contribution: No borrower contribution was planned or made.

Project Dates and Budget Reallocation: The project was approved on June 17, 2021. The original closing date was June 30, 2024, but a Level 2 restructuring was approved on April 2, 2024, extending the closing date to March 31, 2025. This restructuring involved significant reallocations across components and revision of some indicators and targets, as noted above. Some intermediate and outcome-level indicators were revised to provide more clarity in light of learning experienced during the first year of implementation. The baseline for the main outcome indicator under the first objective (teachers meeting standards for student-centered practice at the nursery level) was revised to reflect new baseline data collected using the TEACH tool; the target was adjusted to retain the original level of ambition.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale



The project's objectives were consistently aligned with critical development challenges in Guyana and the strategic priorities of both the government and the World Bank throughout the project's lifecycle (ICR, p. 7). At the time of appraisal, Guyana faced a severe crisis in learning outcomes despite high enrollment rates, evidenced by the fact that the average student was expected to achieve only 6.8 years of learning for every 12.2 years spent in school (PAD, p. 8). This deficit stemmed from pervasive low quality, outdated curricula and pedagogy at the nursery level (leading to poor school readiness) and limited teacher capacity, particularly in vulnerable areas like the hinterlands. Additionally, sector planning was hindered by an outdated statistics system that prevented MoE from collecting and using timely data (PAD, p. 10).

The PDOs maintained strong strategic alignment with the government's Education Sector Plan 2021-2025, supporting all five of its core priorities, including improving performance, governance, and efficiency, and reducing inequities (PAD, p. 10). The project was fully consistent with the World Bank Group's strategic documents, supporting the FY16-18 Country Engagement Note's objectives to set up foundations for high-quality education, human resource development, and capacity building (PAD, p. 10), and the recommendations of the 2020 Systematic Country Diagnostic that emphasized investing in education quality as a prerequisite for inclusive growth. The project was also strategically designed as an extension of prior Bank engagements, extending technology pilots and EMIS development from the secondary level to the primary level nationally, thereby demonstrating responsiveness to previous sectoral experience (ICR, p. 2). Specifically, this project built on the contributions of the Guyana Secondary Education Improvement Project (P147924, US\$23.5 million, 2014-2023), which piloted technology-assisted learning and EMIS functionality at the secondary level. This project's objectives also remained relevant at closing, aligning with the "improved human capital" outcome of the subsequent World Bank Country Partnership Framework for FY23-26, which has an objective to improve education quality at the nursery and primary levels (ICR, p. 7).

The choice of the investment project financing (IPF) modality was appropriate, as the project's design required direct financing for concrete inputs and capacity building interventions critical to achieving the PDOs. Project interventions focused on physical investments (like tablets and learning materials), sustained teacher and caregiver training, and technical assistance for institutional systems, notably the national EMIS (ICR, p. 5). The interventions were technically sound and supported by evidence, reflecting lessons learned from prior Bank-financed engagements in the sector (PAD, p. 22). The use of the IPF modality was further validated by leveraging the MoE's existing satisfactory fiduciary and implementation arrangements established through previous projects, which ensured a consistent operational framework for delivering the reforms and institutionalizing new systems and pilots (ICR, p. 15).

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

Improve learning conditions at the nursery level in selected areas



Rationale

Theory of Change. The project's theory of change was logically structured and well-supported by evidence. The planned activities to provide teacher training on a new curriculum and distribute age-appropriate learning materials were designed to improve instructional quality and the classroom environment, thereby leading to improved learning conditions. A key element of the theory was that teacher training would not be a one-off event but would be coupled with follow-up mentorship and classroom observations using the TEACH Early Childhood Development (ECD) tool to institutionalize student-centered pedagogy (ICR, p. 8). The design also originally included caregiver education to improve the home learning environment. The theory identified critical assumptions, such as teachers applying new skills and caregivers engaging children with grade-appropriate materials. Risks were identified at appraisal, including COVID-19 disruptions and institutional capacity constraints, which were mitigated by including remote training options and utilizing an existing project implementation unit (PIU) within the MoE.

Outputs

- **Teacher Training:** The project provided training on the revised nursery curriculum to 3,774 teachers (target 2,200 teachers). This included approximately 2,800 government teachers and was expanded to include 200 teachers from private schools, representing a deviation allowed by project savings.
- **Mentorship and Observation:** The project conducted more than 2,000 classroom observations using the TEACH ECD tool and performed 1,486 follow-up mentorship visits. While the results framework did not set a specific numeric output target for mentorship, the design required continuous support and follow-up visits after the initial training.
- **Learning Materials:** The distribution of textbooks and age-appropriate play-based learning materials reached 14,985 students in Regions 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9, nearly tripling the original numeric target of 5,000 students.
- **Communication Materials:** 15,000 brochures and posters regarding nursery readiness were printed and distributed through the Ministry of Human Services and the Ministry of Health. The original plan for an outreach campaign did not specify a numeric target for these materials at appraisal.
- **Caregiver Education:** Subcomponent 1.3, which had an original target of training 150 caregivers through 10 "parenting circles" in Regions 1 and 7, was canceled during restructuring. The MoE determined that this activity was no longer a priority, and the associated funds (US\$264,311) were reallocated to scaling up learning materials distribution to Region 2. The overall theory of change was not adversely affected by dropping this subcomponent.

Outcomes

The project measured achievement of Objective 1 through one PDO-level indicator:

- **PDO Indicator 1: Percentage of school teachers meeting standards in student-centered teaching practices at the nursery level.**
 - **Baseline:** 46.33 percent (determined October 2022).
 - **Achievement:** 74 percent (as of February 2025).
 - **Final Target:** 70 percent.

The original target in the PAD was set at a placeholder value of 20 percent with a 0 percent baseline, because the TEACH ECD measurement tool did not yet exist in Guyana. Once the tool was established and a



pilot was conducted in 101 schools, the baseline was formally set at 46.33 percent in October 2022. To maintain the project's original level of ambition, the end target was upwardly revised to 70 percent during the March 2024 restructuring.

Definition of "Meeting Standards": "Meeting standards" was defined as an observed teacher scoring 3 or higher (on a 5-point scale) in the "Guided Learning" area of the TEACH ECD tool. This area is a composite average of four specific pedagogical behaviors: Facilitation of Learning, Checks for Understanding, Feedback, and Critical Thinking. The tool was specifically adapted to the Guyanese context to provide an objective, evidence-based measure of instructional quality.

Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

Increase use of technology-assisted learning at the primary level in selected areas

Rationale

Theory of Change. The project's results chain postulated that providing information and communication technology (ICT) hardware, specifically tablets and smart classroom equipment, coupled with pedagogical and technical teacher training, would lead to increased student motivation and the adoption of personalized, self-paced learning. The logic was that technology-assisted learning would supplement traditional instruction, allowing teachers to focus on specific student groups while others used adaptive software to learn at their own level (ICR, p. 9). This approach was expected to be particularly effective in improving instructional quality in remote hinterland areas where the number of qualified teachers is limited.

Key assumptions underlying this theory included the availability of necessary school infrastructure (connectivity and power), teachers' willingness to integrate technology into their daily workload without becoming overwhelmed, and the effectiveness of the selected software to engage students in foundational math and literacy skills. Risks were identified regarding hardware breakage, connectivity issues in remote regions, and potential data privacy concerns. These were mitigated by setting school selection criteria based on existing digital readiness, procuring hardware to high-level specifications to minimize maintenance, and using secure cloud services for data storage (ICR, p. 10).

Outputs

- **Tablet Distribution:** The project provided 7,250 digital tablets equipped with learning software to Grade 4 students, exactly meeting the target of 7,250 students. The tablets were preloaded with the IXL software program to support mathematics and literacy learning. Implementation was, however, delayed by supply chain issues (Panama Canal delays) and a lengthy teachers' strike, meaning that tablets reached students later than planned.
- **Teacher Training (Tablets):** 370 teachers were trained in both the technical and pedagogical use of tablets, surpassing the target of 300 teachers.



- **Smart Classroom Establishment:** 10 pilot Grade 4 classrooms were fully equipped as Smart Classrooms, featuring smartboards, tablets, and projectors, meeting the target of 10 classrooms.
- **Teacher Training (Smart Classrooms):** 280 teachers received training on operating smart classroom equipment, far exceeding the original target of 30 teachers. Cost efficiencies in procurement allowed the project to train significantly more teachers than originally anticipated for smart classrooms.

Outcomes

The project measured achievement of Objective 2 through one PDO-level indicator:

- **PDO Indicator 2: Percentage of students using educational technology at the primary level.**
 - **Baseline:** 0 percent (April 2021).
 - **Achievement:** 58 percent (as of June 2025).
 - **Original/Final Target:** 60 percent.

The target remained consistent at 60 percent throughout the project. However, the March 2024 restructuring was used to clarify the definition of the indicator, which had been left open at appraisal. The project team defined "use" as students actively logging onto educational software for a minimum of four hours per week. This duration was determined to be a realistic standard for ensuring student familiarity and software impact within the constraints of existing school schedules.

The objective was substantially achieved, as the actual usage rate of 58 percent at project completion was nearly aligned with the 60 percent target. The project faced a critical bottleneck when supply chain issues and teacher strikes delayed the final receipt of tablets until late August 2024, which significantly limited the time available to observe and report on usage patterns during the project's formal implementation period. Despite this constraint, data collected shortly after project closure indicated that coverage and usage standards were effectively met for the vast majority of the targeted students.

Rating

Substantial

OBJECTIVE 3

Objective

Improve functionality of the education management information system nationally

Rationale

Theory of Change. The project's theory of change for this objective addressed an institutional challenge: the MoE's limited ability to collect, analyze, and use school-level data for planning and policymaking. The results chain postulated that by updating EMIS modules, procuring necessary hardware (specifically tablets for schools lacking computers), and providing technical training to teachers and administrators, the MoE could modernize its data management processes. These activities were logically expected to enable staff to collect and upload data into an integrated national platform, leading to the creation of real-time dashboards and statistical reports. The intended outcome was a functional system where decision-makers use data-driven insights to improve sector governance and efficiency. Key assumptions included the availability of internet



connectivity for data syncing and the willingness of users to adopt a data-driven culture. Risks related to remote connectivity were mitigated by designing the system with offline data collection and periodic syncing capabilities (ICR, p. 9).

Outputs

- **System Launch:** The national EMIS was officially launched in October 2023, fulfilling the core technical requirement for modernized data management. The number of schools that can upload data into the EMIS increased from 0 to 1006 schools, exceeding both the original target of 574 schools and the revised target of 1,000 schools.
- **Hardware Distribution:** To facilitate real-time data entry, the project distributed 1,148 tablets preloaded with EMIS software to schools. This exceeded the original plan to provide hardware to only a subset of schools, as US\$810,000 in savings from Component 2 were reallocated to purchase tablets for 426 additional schools during implementation.
- **Capacity Building:** The project provided training, manuals, and video tutorials to teachers and clerks from 1,348 schools to ensure standardized and accurate data entry.
- **Statistical Reports:** Three statistical reports, including nursery, primary, and secondary school data, were produced using the EMIS, meeting the target of three reports.
- **Student beneficiaries:** 28,487 students benefited from direct project interventions to enhance learning, out of which 17,389 were female (original target: 12,250 students, 6,125 female).
- **Satisfaction surveys:** Four satisfaction surveys were conducted: one to nursery teachers, one to parents of children enrolled in nursery, one to teachers in schools benefiting from the distribution of tablets to students or the establishment of smart classrooms, and one to teachers and administrators regarding the EMIS.

Outcomes

The project measured achievement of Objective 3 through one PDO-level indicator:

- **PDO Indicator 3: Number of visitors to EMIS monitoring dashboard.**
 - **Baseline:** 0 (April 2021).
 - **Achievement:** 1,520 unique visitors (February 2025).
 - **Original/Final Target:** 300 visitors.

The number of unique visitors to the monitoring dashboard increased from 0 in 2021 to 1,520 by early 2025, far exceeding the target of 300. This indicator was designed to measure "functionality" by verifying that the data collection and storage system was not only operational but was actively generating visualizations on a business intelligence platform that were accessible to and used by education practitioners. The significant traffic to the dashboard indicates that the system has successfully moved beyond data storage to become a recognized tool for system monitoring. Furthermore, the system's new capability to capture individualized data for both students and staff represents a major functional improvement over the previous aggregate-only statistics system.

Rating

Substantial



OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Overall efficacy is rated as Substantial, reflecting that the operation almost fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes). Given that two objectives were substantially achieved and the third highly achieved, providing strategic inputs crucial for national policy scale-up, the project's overall efficacy is characterized as Substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

The project's economic returns were favorable and implementation was generally cost-effective, despite certain administrative delays.

Economic Efficiency: The project's economic viability at completion was consistent with initial appraisal estimates. The cost-benefit analysis estimated the project's internal rate of return at 11 percent, slightly exceeding the appraisal estimate of 10 percent, with a net present value of US\$13.5 million (ICR, p. 9). The assumptions and methodology of the ICR's economic analysis were reasonable. The analysis covered 60 percent of project costs, as the costs associated with EMIS development were omitted due to challenges in assigning that activity an economic value (ICR, p. 9). The results were robust to variation in the percentage of teachers meeting standards in student-centered teaching practices and the percentage of primary-level students using educational technology.

Implementation Efficiency: Cost savings generated during implementation were strategically reallocated, for example, enabling the extension of teacher training to an additional 200 nursery teachers from private schools that were initially outside the project's scope. Similarly, cost efficiencies in the procurement of tablets allowed for the purchase and distribution of additional devices to support the national rollout of the EMIS. Project management costs remained consistent with the original plan, at 8 percent of the total project cost (ICR, p. 10).

Several moderate shortcomings related to implementation delays impacted the overall efficiency rating:

Delay in Hiring Key Project Staff. Although the project was declared effective on July 2, 2021, the Project Coordinator (PC) was not onboarded until April 6, 2022. This ten-month gap resulted in negligible implementation progress during the initial stage of the project's life (ICR, p. 12). The ICR (p. 15) notes that the time required to establish a fully functional PIU was underestimated at the appraisal stage, representing a minor shortcoming in project design.

Procurement and Staffing Bottlenecks. The project faced significant delays in preparing procurement documents during the early stages. These delays were primarily driven by the late receipt and validation of technical, environmental, and social safeguard inputs, resulting from staffing shortages within both the PIU and



the MoE. A small team was tasked with overseeing a large portfolio of both Bank- and non-Bank-financed operations, creating a bottleneck that slowed execution. These challenges led to procurement performance being downgraded twice during the project's life, reaching a rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory in June 2024 before corrective measures were implemented.

COVID-19. National school closures delayed the implementation of the TEACH ECD tool, which was necessary to establish the baseline for the PDO-level indicator under the first objective.

Supply Chain Challenges and Strikes. The rollout of technology-assisted learning was hampered by supply chain disruptions (specifically delays in the Panama Canal), a bid protest during tablet procurement, and a teachers' strike that lasted two academic terms. Because of these challenges, tablets reached students and teachers at the end of August 2024, which did not allow sufficient time during the formal implementation period to fully observe the expected increase in technology usage.

To compensate for these cumulative delays, a March 2024 restructuring extended the closing date by nine months to March 31, 2025, ensuring that project activities could be completed and results documented. This extension did not result in increased project management costs.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	10.00	60.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	11.00	60.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

The project successfully delivered on its core objectives, resulting in almost full achievement of its intended outcomes. Key achievements included strengthening the quality of early childhood education, where the project drove improvements in pedagogical practices, culminating in 74 percent of nursery teachers meeting established standards in student-centered teaching, surpassing the ambitious revised end target of 70 percent. Simultaneously, the project established and rolled out the EMIS nationally, achieving targets for institutional adoption, with 1,006 schools able to upload data, and significantly exceeding user adoption targets, with 1,520 unique visitors accessing the EMIS monitoring dashboard. Furthermore, interventions targeting technology-assisted learning at the primary level successfully implemented and tested pilot approaches that generated valuable lessons, which are intended to directly inform the MoE's forthcoming National Digital Education Plan



and EdTech policy. Overall implementation leveraged cost efficiencies that allowed for the expansion of activities beyond the original scope, despite requiring a nine-month extension to the original closing date.

The combination of High Relevance, Substantial Efficacy, and Substantial Efficiency yields an overall outcome rating of Satisfactory, indicating that there were only minor shortcomings in the project's preparation, implementation, and achievement.

a. Outcome Rating
Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The risk to development outcome is low, reflecting a high degree of confidence that the project's achievements will be maintained and leveraged for future sector enhancement (ICR, p. 15). The project was specifically designed to ensure sustainability by anchoring key initiatives directly within the government system, generating impetus for significant sector strengthening regarding policy, plans, practices, and instruments. Key risks moving forward are considered minimal due to strong financial and political commitments to the education sector, and also to the project's institutional strengthening elements (TEACH ECD trainings, capacity strengthening efforts with the MoE, and newly generated data from the EMIS) (ICR, p. 11). Financially, the risk that outcomes will not be sustained due to lack of funding is deemed unlikely, as Guyana's government expenditure on education has been steadily increasing, and the country benefits from continued support from the World Bank and other donors. Politically, the risk of achievements being compromised is also unlikely, as the incumbent party's 2025–2030 manifesto confirms a continued commitment to world-class education, with a particular emphasis on strengthening school management through the EMIS and promoting technology-assisted learning. Furthermore, technical sustainability for crucial investments, such as EMIS functionality and revised nursery curriculum, is being actively addressed (ICR, p. 15). The World Bank is collaborating with UNICEF, using GPE funding, to support the MoE in developing the National Digital Education Plan and implementing Whole-School Training for EMIS, ensuring that the progress achieved informs the future Education Sector Plan (2026-2030).

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

Project design demonstrated strong strategic relevance and technical soundness, ensuring that the project was well aligned with client priorities. The proposed interventions were technically sound and supported by evidence. The design incorporated good practices and included pilots, such as those for ICT-assisted learning at the primary level, intended to test new ideas and expand the knowledge frontier in the Guyanese context. Component 1 focused on evidence-based practices like teacher training coupled with follow-up (ICR, p. 7).

The project's design included one minor shortcoming: the time needed to fully establish the PIU was underestimated during appraisal, even though a sound PIU was a necessary precondition for smooth



implementation. The late hiring of the PC and slow procurement were factors that subsequently affected implementation. The government took a relatively long time to assign and hire a PC to this operation, mostly due to internal politics (TTL Interview). As explained in the ICR (pp. 11-12), for the ten months that the project lacked a full-fledged PIU, implementation progress was negligible (despite the Bank teams' efforts to work with MoE's team on preparatory activities, which was possible in the context of the other education sector projects ongoing at that time).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The Bank team proactively identified implementation risks and provided adequate, targeted inputs necessary to ensure the successful achievement of the PDOs. The Bank's supervision was characterized by sound and steady support, which was critical given initial implementation and fiduciary challenges. The Bank team enhanced its ability to provide close support by hiring a full-time, in-country education specialist during implementation, allowing the Bank to work closely with the client and resolve challenges expeditiously (ICR, p. 15). The team provided close and regular follow-up on procurement activities and contract management. To address weaknesses in the PIU's capacity, the Bank used Bank-funded Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support and deployed a procurement expert, which significantly improved the PIU's capacity and ensured the timely completion of crucial contracts (ICR, p. 14). The Bank organized a successful mid-term review strategically (following a lengthy teacher strike and key procurement activities), which informed a timely project restructuring to assess the necessary time extension and adjust targets, ensuring that implementation challenges were addressed and momentum was maintained.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The results framework was logically structured and provided a sound basis for assessing the achievement of the PDOs, despite including minor shortcomings in the initial articulation of some indicators.

Strengths in Design: The project's results framework was clear and logically structured, featuring three PDO-level Indicators that were directly aligned with the PDOs. The theory of change underlying the project's logic was explicitly referenced and well supported by evidence in literature (PAD, p. 13). The design successfully targeted three specific outcomes for measurement: improved pedagogical practices, increased use of tablet-based learning, and increased access to data via the EMIS. The appraisal team



proactively identified the need for new measurement tools since key outcomes could not be measured using existing tools at the time of appraisal. The design successfully integrated methodological approaches, such as adapting the TEACH ECD tool to measure pedagogical practices at the nursery level. The design team focused on the national rollout and data collection capacity of the EMIS to improve governance and accountability, recognizing that strengthening the EMIS was a strategic investment to overcome the absence of timely and reliable data.

Minor Shortcomings in Design: Project design initially left the definitions of all three PDO-level indicators open (i.e., not finalized) at the time of appraisal, intending for them to be determined during project implementation. While this was subsequently resolved, it represents an initial weakness in completeness.

Overall, the foundational quality of the design—including its clear links to the PDOs, its strategic approach to building new assessment tools (EMIS, TEACH), and the clarity of the underlying logic—was sufficient to adequately track implementation progress and assess PDO achievement.

b. M&E Implementation

The MoE's Planning Unit and the PIU successfully carried out monitoring and evaluation functions (ICR, p. 13). They regularly tracked progress toward targets, evidenced by the production of Quarterly and Annual Progress Reports, seven Implementation Status and Results Reports, and six interim Aide-Memoires throughout the project's lifecycle. Despite an initial absence at appraisal, the project team effectively developed and implemented key monitoring instruments. This included the national rollout and data collection capacity of the EMIS, which was launched in October 2023. Implementation also included the adaptation and institutionalization of the TEACH ECD tool, which generated in-country capacity within the MoE to continue monitoring and improving instructional practices nationwide beyond project closure.

The data gathered during the implementation phase were used to inform decisions and adjust interventions, demonstrating effective use of M&E findings. Specifically, findings and recommendations derived from the nursery curriculum pilot phase (gathered via the TEACH ECD tool, field visits, and surveys) were actively integrated to strengthen the national rollout of the teacher training program.

c. M&E Utilization

The project team used the findings and data generated by its monitoring systems to guide implementation decisions, inform restructuring, and lay the foundation for future national policy development. M&E data were primarily used to guide the implementation of the nursery teacher training program. The training on the revised curriculum was initially piloted in 100 nursery schools, enabling the MoE to gather valuable insights via classroom observations using the TEACH ECD tool, field visits, and teacher surveys (ICR, p. 13). The recommendations extracted from this pilot phase—such as defining optimal coaching sessions, identifying modules needing greater emphasis, and emphasizing the use of local materials—were actively integrated into the subsequent national rollout of the training program.

Data gathered by the Bank's supervision team and the PIU informed the strategic decision-making process. The Bank organized a successful mid-term review, which led to a timely project restructuring (ICR, p. 14). The need to assess a necessary time extension and revision of targets was strategically scheduled after key activities like technology-assisted learning procurement were completed. For



instance, the original target for the intermediate results indicator tracking the number of schools uploading data into the EMIS (originally 574 schools) was upwardly revised to 1,000 schools during the restructuring, reflecting the MoE's intent for national scale-up, a decision informed by the system's progress.

The project's investments in EMIS and technology pilots were explicitly designed to inform future national strategy. The lessons learned from the pilot programs using tablets and smart classrooms were intended to directly inform the MoE's National Digital Education Plan, including an overarching EdTech policy currently under development. Furthermore, the establishment of the EMIS enhances the MoE's capacity for evidence-based decision-making, which is expected to improve planning, monitoring, and resource allocation across the system, strengthening its governance and accountability.

While one minor shortcoming was noted where the software installed on the tablets could generate real-time data that *could have been used* to inform and adjust implementation of Subcomponent 2.1, there was insufficient time due to implementation delays to extract full lessons learned on tablet usage during the project period. However, the MoE committed to reviewing the learning software usage post-closure to inform necessary adjustments for the subsequent academic year.

M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project's environmental and social risks were classified as Moderate at appraisal, with six Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) determined to be relevant: ESS1 (Assessment and Management), ESS2 (Labor), ESS3 (Resource Efficiency), ESS4 (Community Health), ESS7 (Indigenous Peoples), and ESS10 (Stakeholder Engagement). To mitigate risks associated with e-waste generated by the distribution of tablets and smart classroom equipment, the project developed and disclosed e-waste management guidelines consistent with ESS3. Because project activities under Component 1 targeted Regions 1, 7, 8, and 9 where the presence of indigenous peoples is significant, the government prepared an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework to ensure that training and learning materials were culturally adapted to avoid the risk of social exclusion (PAD, p. 26). Additionally, the MoE prepared and disclosed an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ECSP), a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and Labor Management Procedures to manage organizational and community health risks.

According to the ICR (pp. 13–14), the project's overall environmental and social performance was rated Moderately Satisfactory. This rating was primarily because the PIU frequently submitted semi-annual monitoring reports with significant delays and incomplete information, which hindered the World Bank's ability to effectively monitor the implementation of the ESCP and the e-waste guidelines. The project was only partially compliant with its e-waste management guidelines because the PIU was unable to procure electronic devices from manufacturers with Extended Producer Responsibility policies, as no such providers were active in the Guyanese market. To ensure accessibility for project-affected persons, the MoE utilized its existing general grievance redress mechanism, and no complaints were filed throughout the project's



duration. Compliance oversight was managed by a part-time Environmental Officer and a Social Development Officer maintained within the PIU.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial management: The World Bank’s financial management specialists provided ongoing support, conducted assessments, and helped implement mitigation measures for identified risks. The project accountant also received regular training to manage fiduciary responsibilities. The financial management performance rating was Satisfactory throughout the project’s duration. The PIU submitted interim unaudited financial reports in accordance with established Bank procedures (ICR, p. 14). The required annual external audits were conducted by the Audit Office of Guyana and submitted with clean, unqualified opinions.

Procurement: The World Bank’s procurement specialists provided Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support (HEIS) to enhance the capacity of PIU staff in preparing bidding documents and evaluation reports. A Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) expert was also deployed to improve documentation adherence. The procurement performance rating was downgraded twice during the project’s life, reaching Moderately Unsatisfactory in June 2024 due to implementation delays and archiving weaknesses. There were 135 planned activities representing more than 80 percent of project funds at the time of the downgrade. The Bank team closely followed up all procurement activities and requested that the PIU urgently take action on activities marked as delayed in STEP. In a conversation with IEG, the Bank team noted that "the main reason for these delays were (i) the lack of regular updates of the STEP system by the PIU and (ii) the lack of a relevant electronic and hardcopy archiving procedure. The Bank provided extensive support to the PIU by (i) organizing regular follow-up meetings on the update process, (ii) nominating a STEP expert to provide targeted support to the PIU on the STEP system to speed up the update process, and (iii) financing general procurement support through the HEIS mechanism that supported the PIU in the preparation of the bidding documents for complex procurement cases" (TTL Interview). Procurement was rated Satisfactory at project closure following significant PIU efforts. Implementation was complicated by a bid protest during tablet procurement and the theft of 91 devices from the PIU office in July 2024; the latter remained under investigation at project completion (ICR, p. 14).

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None noted.

d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
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Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Quality of M&E	Substantial	Substantial
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial

12. Lessons

The ICR offers valuable lessons from the project's design and implementation. Two lessons presented here are drawn from the ICR's lessons and recommendations, and a third is derived by IEG from the project's design rationale and reinforced by its implementation findings:

- 1. Institutional Capacity and Project Launch:** Establishing a fully functional PIU requires significant dedicated time, even in countries with extensive Bank engagement and a continuous pipeline of supported projects. Delays in hiring key staff, such as the Project Coordinator, resulted in negligible implementation progress for nearly ten months after project effectiveness. The lesson is that to ensure a smooth and timely launch, the Terms of Reference for essential Project Implementation Unit staff and final implementation arrangements should be prepared and agreed upon during the appraisal phase.
- 2. Strategic Investment in Data Systems:** Supporting the development and national rollout of an integrated education management information system is a strategic investment that strengthens the overall governance of the education sector. This initiative overcomes the absence of timely and reliable data and enhances the Ministry of Education's capacity for evidence-based planning, monitoring, and resource allocation.
- 3. Sustaining Instructional Quality with Coaching:** To achieve genuine and sustained improvements in teacher pedagogical practices, capacity building must be structured beyond a one-off event, incorporating continuous follow-up and monitoring. The project's experience demonstrated that integrating coaching and mentoring, monitored objectively through tools like the TEACH Early Childhood Development tool, can lead to institutionalized changes in instruction and ensure effective implementation of a new curriculum across a national rollout.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR provides an evidence-based narrative that supports its ratings, despite minor shortcomings in data completeness and consistency.



- **Internal Consistency and Alignment:** The narrative, ratings (Outcome: Satisfactory, Bank Performance: Satisfactory, M&E: Substantial), and available evidence are consistently linked and generally aligned with the PDOs.
- **Results Focus and Triangulation:** The report focuses on results and makes attempts to triangulate data to reach conclusions. For example, the ICR reports on the utilization of data derived from the TEACH ECD tool to inform implementation decisions for strengthening the national rollout of teacher training. It also highlights the strategic investment in and successful institutionalization of the EMIS, addressing the data vacuum that existed at appraisal.
- **Candid Assessment of Implementation:** The report is candid about implementation challenges and shortcomings. It notes that the complexity of procurement and contract management, particularly concerning the deployment of tablets and smart classroom equipment, led to procurement performance being downgraded twice during the project's life, reaching Moderately Unsatisfactory before subsequent improvement efforts. It also openly discusses the delay in hiring the Project Coordinator, which contributed to early implementation delays.
- **Lesson Formulation:** The ICR presents lessons that are clear, useful, and based on the evidence outlined in the report, emphasizing the importance of strategic investment in data systems (EMIS) and the feasibility of remote appraisal when sector knowledge is strong.
- **Efficiency Analysis:** The report includes an economic efficiency analysis consistent with the estimates made at appraisal, recalculating the internal rate of return at 11 percent (from 10 percent at appraisal) and clearly stating that Component 3 (EMIS strengthening) was excluded from the financial calculations due to the difficulty of monetizing its benefits, providing a transparent lower bound for the overall economic benefits.

a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial