



Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 21-Jul-2016 | Report No: PIDISDSC17379



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Guyana	Project ID P159519	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Guyana Education Sector Improvement Project (P159519)
Region LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	Estimated Appraisal Date Nov 07, 2016	Estimated Board Date Mar 16, 2017	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Lending Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Finance	Implementing Agency Ministry of Education	

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Financing (in USD Million)

Financing Source	Amount
International Development Association (IDA)	14.00
Total Project Cost	14.00

Environmental Assessment Category
B-Partial Assessment

Concept Review Decision

Track I-The review did authorize the preparation to continue

Other Decision (as needed)

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B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Guyana is located in the northern part of South America, bordering the Atlantic Ocean, with Suriname, Venezuela and Brazil as neighbors. Guyana has a population of approximately 800,000 people and has a per capita GDP of US\$4,053 (2014).

Guyana is well endowed with natural resources, fertile agricultural lands, bauxite, gold, and extensive tropical forests that cover 84 percent of the country. Although the country has experienced eight consecutive years of growth, it faces several challenges central to reducing poverty, increasing shared prosperity, and building sustainability in the medium to longer term. Underpinned by booming investment



activities and favorable terms of trade, the economy expanded by an annual average of 4.6 percent during 2008-13. However, its incidence of poverty is among the highest in the Western Hemisphere, at 43 percent of the population (2011), and with much higher rates in Hinterland regions (regions 1, 7, 8 and 9, about 10 percent of the total population) where most Amerindians live. In 2015, it ranked 124 out of 187 countries on United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Human Development Index, having declined from 118 in 2012. About 90 percent of the population lives on the coastal plain, in and near the capital of Georgetown. Low quality of education was listed among the major challenges identified in the recently approved CEN FY16-18.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

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Guyana accords very high priority to education as a means for creating a well-educated and skilled workforce, to promote development of a modern economy. The sector has made remarkable progress in the last fifteen years. Gross enrollment of Guyana's Early Childhood Education has reached over 94 percent in 2012, was one of the highest in the Caribbean¹. The country has also achieved Universal Primary Education (UPE) with a total enrollment similar to comparable countries in the Caribbean. Secondary education is also rapidly expanding, with an enrollment of about 67,400 in 2014/15. The recovery of the sector from the underfinancing in the 1970s through to the early 1990s has been maintained. Budgetary allocations as a percentage of GDP more than doubled from a low of 2.1 percent in 1991 to an average of 5 percent in the recent past. During the same period, education as a percentage of the national budget rose from a low of 4.4 percent to 15 percent in 2013. The largest share of this budget goes to secondary education, 28 percent, followed by primary education 26 percent.

In line with the "Vision 2020: The Good Life in a Green Economy" policy², the country's Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2014-18 set two priorities: (i) to increase learning outcomes for all levels of education and all sub-groups; and (ii) decrease the differences in learning outcomes between sub-groups, especially between students in coastal and hinterland schools. The Government has identified a number of binding strategies, which are critical for increase learning achievements at all levels. One of the core components is the curriculum reform that aims at benchmarking the Caribbean Region and international standards. Doing so, it would provide effective methods to help students achieve higher proficiency and to build a solid foundation of high quality education.

While the sector has recently made remarkable progress, by achieving Universal Primary Education and rapidly expanding secondary education, Guyana's education system is still facing the challenge of low quality of teaching and learning in all levels from pre-primary to tertiary education. In 2013, a diagnostic

¹ Countries used in this analysis are Belize, Suriname, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica and St. Lucia.

² The new Government is in the initial stages of preparing a medium-term strategic framework, entitled Vision 2020: The Good Life in a Green Economy. A cross-cutting theme in *Vision 2020* is poverty reduction, targeting the most vulnerable groups, such as Amerindian groups and those living in hinterland areas. Expansion of quality education to hinterland areas and the poor would make a significant contribution to poverty reduction.



assessment of entering Grade 1 students, found that more than 90 percent lacked emergent literacy skills. National Grade Six Examinations results show that students' performance is low, especially for Math, English and Science. In 2015, only about 32 percent or less of students scored 50 percent or more in English and Math. Disparities in Learning Achievement at the Primary Level is reflected in coastal students scoring 24 percentage points higher than hinterland students for Math and 18 and 19 percentage points higher for English and Science respectively in 2013. Low achievement in Secondary Education is indicated by only about 45 percent of Guyanese students scoring 50 percent or more in Math in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations in 2015. In 2013, 29 percent of boys scored 50 percent or more in Math, compared to 26 percent for girls. At the regional level, Coastal girls scored 20 and 23 percentage points higher than hinterland girls in math and English respectively, in 2013. Similarly, coastal boys scored 19 and 23 percentage points higher for Math and English in the same year. The disparities in primary and secondary education are attributable to poverty and limited school resources including good quality teachers, in hinterland areas.

The low learning quality results partly from inappropriate learning methodologies, relatively weak teacher capacity and paucity of learning materials, as well as the complexities posed by the diverse social and geographic conditions in the country. The key neglected area in primary and secondary education has been the curricula. The curricula is outdated, inefficient, grade inappropriate and is diverging from Caribbean regional/and international standards. The primary and secondary school curricula have not been subjected to systematic reform in the recent past. Over time, new subjects, ICT and distance education methodologies were added in an ad hoc manner. These initiatives did not fully succeed because of limited teachers and learning resources.

The only higher education institute in the country, University of Guyana (UG), has been constrained in producing required professionals due to inadequate teaching and learning facilities, inefficient management information system, and poor quality staff. The Bank's ongoing UG Science and Technology Support Project has been improving learning environment and facilities for the four Science Faculties. However, the Health Science Building and the Library cannot meet the demands of the current student and faculty population and the ever increasing academic load required to respond to national development needs. The UG current MIS platforms are slow, not user-friendly and unresponsive to the actual functions and work-progress/workflows. Improvement in these areas would significantly improve teaching and research capabilities among the university faculties, thus reinforcing education quality and students' achievement levels. Further, a more developed higher education will also support the diversification of the economy and to provide the required staff to develop and sustain the lower levels of the education system.

In an effort to start addressing education quality challenges, and build on the Guyana Government's growing attention to education, the World Bank as the major partner in education sector, is providing strategic and technical support focused on improving the quality of: (i) early childhood education; (ii) primary education, especially literacy and numeracy skills through improving the classroom environment; (iii) mathematics in secondary education; (iv) teacher education; and (v) higher education.



Relationship to CPF

The proposed project is consistent with the first principle of the **Country Engagement Note (CEN) FY 16–18** program: (a) highly selective focus on areas critical to Guyana’s development, where the Bank has a shared vision with the Government, on-going engagement, and a track record of delivering results. The project would support the shared vision of education quality improvement at all levels; a *sine qua non* for economic growth. The curriculum is the critical gap that constrains learning achievement and prevents the accrual of the full benefits of the substantial investments made over the last 15 years. Support for the health sciences faculty, library and integration of MIS would help produce better quality health and medical personnel, raise quality across the UG and increase efficiency in teaching and management. The project’s objective of quality improvement at all levels and the production of skilled labor force would help promote growth, social well-being and reduce poverty.

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The long and productive collaboration with the Government in the sector has provided the Bank with a solid knowledge base and experience on quality and university improvement in Guyana. Combined with its global knowledge in these areas, the Bank is well placed to support the proposed project.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Objectives of the Project are to (i) support the Government in improving the curricula at the pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels, (ii) improve teaching and learning environment at the University of Guyana (UG), and (iii) strengthen the management information system at UG.

Key Results (From PCN)

1. Quality of curricula improved at the pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels;
2. Enable the UG Faculty of Health Science to meet the accreditation standards for physical plant and infrastructure as prescribed by Caribbean Accreditation Authorization for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions (CAAM-HP);
3. A fully integrated management information system developed at UG.

The main beneficiaries of the Project will be the students of preprimary, primary, lower secondary and UG, who will receive better quality of education. Additionally, teachers, MOE officials, UG staff, the productive sector, employers, and the general public will benefit from the activities of the Project.

D. Concept Description

A critical aspect of improving education quality is through curriculum reform and capacity building. Curriculum reform is seen as central to creating the society to which everyone aspires and the vehicle for



achieving positive students’ outcome. It represents a central and coordinated approach to the development of 21st century skills. Curriculum is defined as the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school, for the learners’ continuous and willful growth in personal and social competence.

Improving the teaching and learning environment of UG Faculty of Health and Science (FHS) would increase the student enrollment in the FHS and ensure that the medical school attains and maintains full and continuous accreditation from CAAM-HP for all health sciences programs. Improving the library at UG would support a better learning and research environment and benefit digitization of academic publications by consortia around the region and globally. These interventions should promote improved teaching and learning practices and enhancement of the teaching and learning environment to increase learning outcomes.

Targeting interventions where poor underserved student populations are most numerous would reduce geographic inequity. The project would be financed by an Investment Credit. It incorporates lessons learned from the EFA-FTI Project and Improving Teacher Education Project which emphasized the need for project design to be simple and focused.

Table 1. Project Costs Financing

Component	IDA Credit Financing US\$
1. MoE: Integrated curriculum reform	5,980,000
2. UG: Strengthen the Factuality of Health and Science, the Library and MIS	6,900,000
3. Project Management and M&E	1,120,000
Total	14,000,000

Component 1: Integrated Curriculum Reform

Three sub-components would be supported:

1.1 Benchmarking the curriculum for preprimary, primary and lower secondary by grade and subject against regional and international standards. This would include several phases: (i) assessments of current curriculum, (ii) review of current Caribbean and international standards; (iii) stakeholder consultations for a national shared vision on curriculum reform. Revising the curricula in all subject areas will be based on the results of the current assessment/evaluation of the national and international curricula and stakeholder consultations.



1.2 Pilot testing of new curriculum and implementation. The new curriculum would be pilot tested in schools across the various regions. The pilot program would include monitoring mechanisms to inform the need for any required modifications. Training of trainers of in-service teachers, teacher educators, head teachers, regional officers on the new features of the revised curricula would be carried out. System-wide implementation of the curriculum will follow with the required monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure the impact and inform any required future planning. Both the revised curricula and training programs will include mechanisms for delivery to special education learners.

1.3 Realignment of student assessments with the revised curricula. This would include development of assessments for preprimary, primary, and lower secondary for all grade levels to be consistent with the variety of content and methodologies in the revised curricula. The design of the National Grade Six Examination would also need to be consistent with the new curricula approach. This will entail the necessary capacity building at the school, the education departments and the central Testing and Development Unit levels, to facilitate item writing and development of appropriate manuals to guide the assessment process at all levels in the system.

An analysis will be undertaken to determine how the current curriculum addresses issues of gender and disability with a view to identifying appropriate entry points for embedding gender and disability inclusion in the integrated curriculum reform.

Component 2: Improving teaching and learning environment at the UG.

Note: In discussion between the UG and the Bank team, the following three activities were identified, which are the priorities and critical for UG. The preliminary cost estimates show that the available funds will not be sufficient to support the following three sub-component activities fully. The UG management will consult with the University Council and the Ministry of Finance to prioritize activities and decisions will be made during the project preparation in July, 2016.

Three sub-components would be supported:

2.1 Improving teaching and learning environment of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Building. The proposed enlarged facility would include essential teaching-learning equipment, selective condition cooling, laboratory equipment, and essential classroom and office furniture and equipment. The new FHS building would be organized to respond to current and future teaching, research and services demands. Considering the limited resources and high cost of construction, rehabilitation of current Health Sciences Building may become another option. Both options, new building construction and current building rehabilitation, should provide a well-furnished building that meets the Regional or international standards.

2.2 Strengthen of the current Library. This sub-component as proposed would be a new, modern library, modeled in keeping with current and projected trends in education and include essential and generic library equipment. The proposed library would enhance teaching, learning and service to the students and staff of the UG, the community and general Guyanese public, as well as provide a higher standard and



greater volume of all levels/types of research and consultancy services that would contribute to Guyana's national development.

2.3 Strengthen the capacity of MIS at UG. This sub-component would support the development of a fully integrated management information system that integrates existing systems (SRMS, HRMIS, financial software and library software) to meet the needs of governance, internal communication, program development and reviews, teaching-learning, student management, HR., finance, procurement, asset management, maintenance, internal self-controls, safety and security, staff engagement and public relations; and (ii) converting all existing paper files (student, staff, financial, human resource management among others) into digital files, and store same for ready access and ease in retrieval.

Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring. This would support for monitoring and evaluation, the implementation of the project activities, and Project audits within the Ministry of Education.

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SAFEGUARDS

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

Component 1 of the project will be implemented at the national level including the Hinterland areas where the majority of the country's Indigenous Population resides. For Component 2, the location is the University of Guyana's main campus "Turkeyen Campus" which is located in Georgetown, the capital of the country, in the floodplain of the Demerara River, at about 1.5 kilometers inland from the coastline. The campus has a population of about 5,500 students. The UG is divided into several faculties such as: Agriculture and Forestry, School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, School of Education and Humanities, Health Sciences, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology. Each faculty is further subdivided into several departments.

The works of component 2 of this investment are located in the Faculty of Health Sciences and the library which are located inside the UG campus.

B. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The Ministry of Education (MoE) would be the implementing agency. The MoE and UG already have extensive experience implementing Bank financed projects, including projects which trigger the Indigenous Peoples Policy (OP4.10) and the experience gained from these recent projects will be invaluable. For Component 1, technical responsibilities for implementation would lie with the MoE's Curriculum Development Unit, Measurement and Evaluation Unit, National Center for Education Resource Development (NCERD), and UG. For Component 2, technical responsibilities for implementation would be by the relevant Faculties of UG.

At appraisal it will be assessed the staffing and training needs of the executing agencies for the adequate application of the safeguards policies.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team



M. Yaa Pokua Afriyie Oppong, Ximena Rosio Herbas Ramirez

D. Policies that might apply

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Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>The project is proposed to be Category B given that the environmental impacts of the civil works are moderate and connected with the construction of the Faculty of Health Science and the library. An Environmental Assessment (EA) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be prepared and disclosed. The EA will contain descriptions of the proposed works, the environmental conditions which may be affected, and a specific Environmental Management Plan with the mitigation measures and model contracting clauses addressing environmental protection during construction and operation. During project preparation, the roles of the respective agencies will be explored and clarified, and the responsibility for implementing the EMP will be clarified and defined within the Operations Manual.</p> <p>The borrower will carry out consultations on the EA and EMP with affected groups and stakeholders to inform them about the project, its characteristics, and the measures to manage them and to incorporate their relevant views and concerns.</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	This policy should not be triggered because the project does not consider any changes to natural habitats in the zone designated for new construction.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	This policy should not be triggered because the project does not consider any changes to forest management or any works in forest areas in the zones designated for new construction.
Pest Management OP 4.09	Yes	This policy is triggered given the potential for use of pesticides in small quantities for termite treatments or vector control during the operations of the UG. The EMP will have a procedure in place for pesticide that may be used for termite treatments of foundations and ceilings, or for vector control during the operations of the UG, specifying that only licensed, authorized pest control specialists may



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			provide these services.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No		This policy should not be triggered because it will not affect Physical Cultural Resources.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes		The Indigenous Peoples Policy (OP4.10) is triggered since Component 1 of the project will be implemented nationally including in the Hinterland Regions primarily inhabited by the Indigenous population. An Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), and its associated Social Assessment, will be prepared along with consultations on the most appropriate means of engaging the Indigenous populations in the planned national stakeholder consultations for a shared vision on curriculum reform. The expected impacts of the project on indigenous communities are anticipated to be positive given the project’s objective to reform the curricula at the preprimary, primary and secondary levels with an ultimate objective of improving education quality at all levels. Given risks to Indigenous culture and language that might result from curriculum reform, the stakeholder consultations are expected to help identify measures to mitigate these potential impacts and ensure that the reform can incorporate the shared vision of the Indigenous population. The IPP will be prepared and consulted prior to project appraisal.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No		The works for Component 2 of this investment will be located in the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Library which are located inside the UG campus. Therefore no involuntary resettlement or land acquisition is expected.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No		This policy should not be triggered given that the project will not support the construction or rehabilitation of dams nor will support other investments which rely on the services of existing dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No		This policy should not be triggered because the project will not affect international waterways as defined under the policy.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No		This policy should not be triggered because the proposed project will not affect disputed areas as defined under the policy.

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS



Oct 03, 2016

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

03-Oct-2016

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APPROVAL

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