CONCEPT NOTE

Building Excellence: A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Strengthening Leadership in Guyana's Education System Through Technology, Data and Planning

Grant proposal for 1.00 million USD

GPE System Capacity Grant
UNICEF – WORLD BANK

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1. Context

The government of Guyana has demonstrated financial commitment to education, with significant increases in education spending in recent years. Public expenditure on education as a share of GDP increased from 4 percent in 2013 to 5.6 percent in 2024. This level of expenditure aligns with international norms and exceeds most regional peers. Education spending as a proportion of total public spending (excluding debt servicing) also shows a recent upward trend, increasing by 5 percentage points from 12.3 percent in 2013 to 17.8 percent in 2018. Per-student spending in nursery education is above the average in other small Caribbean states and approaches the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average. The largest share of the education budget goes to secondary education at 34 percent, followed by primary education at 31 percent and nursery at 15 percent.

Despite the overall increase in spending, learning outcomes have seen only minimal improvements. Although the 2025 National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA) demonstrated year-over-year improvements across most subjects, with mathematics pass rates increasing from 40% to 55%, science from 53 to 63 percent, and English from 66 to 69 percent, 30 percent of students at this education level still fail to meet academic standards. Similarly, less than 50% of students nationally achieved passing grades in English and Mathematics at the National Grade Two and Grade Four Assessments in 2019. These results align with the Human Capital Index, which revealed that the average Guyanese student is expected to complete 12.2 years of schooling equivalent to only 6.8 years of learning, as expressed in Learning-Adjusted Years of School (LAYS). Nationally, 86 percent of teachers across all levels (pre-primary to upper secondary) have been trained.

- Although upper secondary enrollment reached 86 percent in 2024 (GER), notable gender disparities were revealed—with females at 91 percent and males at 84 percent. The secondary completion rate of 81 percent in 2024 is above the regional average of 65.7 percent. Among the 180,000 students in the education system, 15 percent attend nursery/pre-primary programs, 48 percent attend primary schools, and 35 percent attend general secondary education. In addition, despite efforts to narrow the gap between hinterland and coastland communities, disparities still persist, resulting in students in disadvantaged areas continuing to perform significantly below national averages. System efficiency presents additional concerns, with retention rates varying significantly across regions and education levels. While primary retention reaches 98 percent nationally, certain regions report rates as low as 73-87 percent. Survival to the final grade of secondary school has improved significantly to 72 percent overall, although gender disparities between males (67 percent) and females (70 percent) are still present. Infrastructure and resources have also improved with 79 percent of schools reporting being in fair or good condition in 2022.
- Guyana has initiated several promising reforms that signal a commitment to educational transformation. The government has prioritized training and professional development programs for teachers, recognizing that a knowledgeable and competent teaching workforce is fundamental to improving student outcomes. Additionally, curricula are being adapted to promote relevance, and learning content has been aligned with teacher training. The introduction of technology to enhance teaching methodologies represents another significant step forward, with efforts to integrate technology into classrooms and implement digital learning tools in schools across the nation. While these initiatives demonstrate positive momentum, there remains substantial room for improvement in the system, particularly in digital integration, enhancement of teacher quality and relevance, and strengthened management practices, all of which are essential for achieving meaningful improvements in learning outcomes.

2. Summary of Guyana's COMPACT Process

The Guyana Partnership Compact represents a strategic collaboration between the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Local Education Group, and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), designed to transform Guyana's education system through comprehensive reform. The Compact identifies "Strengthening Instructional Leadership at District and School levels" as its priority reform, focusing on promoting equitable learning through culturally responsive and effective instructional leadership while improving accountability at district and school levels. This reform directly addresses critical systemic challenges including insufficient training for educational leaders, performance gaps in leadership promotion practices, inadequate monitoring and support mechanisms, excessive workloads due to staff shortages, limited data availability and utilization capacity, inequitable resource distribution particularly affecting riverine and hinterland regions, insufficient prioritization of vulnerable populations, and limited engagement of parents and communities.

The Compact also addresses gender equality challenges by targeting the documented underperformance of boys in assessments and higher dropout rates compared to girls. It aims to build capacity among school and district leaders to identify and address gender inequality through improved access to sex-disaggregated data and specialized training on gender-responsive planning and implementation. Therefore, leaders must be sensitized to diversity issues and trained to create supportive learning environments that encourage girls in STEM and TVET while addressing boys' specific educational needs through multi-sectoral collaborations with partners including UNICEF and the University of Guyana's Institute for Gender Studies.

Central to the Compact's approach is its Theory of Change, which proposes a multi-sectoral and comprehensive strategy for strengthening school leadership to achieve improved quality and equitable participation in basic education. The framework encompasses five main outcomes: equipping district and school leaders for transformation, establishing accountability mechanisms, enabling data-driven decision-making, providing coordinated support from central and regional levels, and ensuring inclusive and culturally responsive educational environments. The theory recognizes leadership as an umbrella concept that extends beyond traditional administrative roles to include instructional leadership, planning and management capabilities, and culturally responsive practices that acknowledge Guyana's diverse population, including various ethnic groups.

The Partnership Compact identifies System Capacity Grant activities as foundational investments that create the enabling conditions for successful system transformation. The proposed grant activities directly respond to Ministry's prioritized focus areas: (i) strengthening data infrastructure and analytical capacity to support instructional leadership, (ii) enhancing strategic planning capabilities, and (iii) building institutional capacity for digital transformation. These priorities directly align with GPE's support framework—Window 1 activities will support gender-responsive planning and policy development through comprehensive system diagnostics and education sector analyses, while Window 3 activities will strengthen the Ministry's capacity to implement reforms. The Ministry views these investments in data systems, digital education, and strategic planning as essential prerequisites for achieving the ambitious education transformation goals outlined in the Partnership Compact.

3. Overview

Category	Description
Allocation Ceiling	US$1.5 million
Grant amount requested under the allocation	US$1 million
Implementation costs	US$100,000
Amounts	1.1 Development of the Education Strategic Plan: USD $200,000 1.2 Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation: USD $250,000 1.3 Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy: USD $200,000 3.1 EMIS Capacity Building and System Enhancement: USD $250,000
Key dates	1.1 Development of the Education Strategic Plan: **Start date:** January 2026 **End date:** June 2027 1.2 National Digital Education Plan Rollout: ***Study Tour:*** March 2026 ***Capacity Building Activities*** **Start date:** March 2026 **End date:** March 2028 1.3 Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy: **Start date:** January 2026 **End date:** December 2027 3.1 EMIS Capacity Building and System **Start date:** January 2026 **End date:** December 2028

4. Activities under three financing windows

Window 1 - Strengthen gender responsive planning and policy development for system wide impact

This window focuses on enhancing Guyana's education system through inclusive, evidence-based planning and policy development. It aims to strengthen institutional capacity for strategic planning, ensure gender responsiveness, and promote equity across all levels of education. Activities under this window include developing the Education Sector Plan (ESP) and the National Digital Education Plan. The development of the ESP includes revising and updating the existing education budget diagnostic to reflect current expenditure patterns, policy priorities, and sector developments. The ESP development process will promote stakeholder participation, integrate data and evidence systematically, and align national education goals with international standards, including SDG 4 and GPE guidelines. The Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation is aimed at facilitating access to innovative and quality learning through the use of technology.

Activity Group B: Gender-responsive sector planning, including operational planning

- ***Activity 1.1: Development of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2026–2030***[1]

- ***Activity 1.2: Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation***
  - ***Sub activity 1.2.1*** **Study Tour: Knowledge exchange**
  - ***Sub activity 1.2.2*** **Capacity Building for Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation**

Activity Group C: Supporting policies and plans to identify and address multiple forms of exclusion and strengthen system resilience, including planning for children with disabilities and inclusion of displaced children

- ***Activity 1.3 Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy***

  - ***Sub activity 1.3.1*** **Develop an Implementation Plan and monitoring framework for the Anti-bullying Policy**
  - ***Sub activity 1.3.2*** **Conduct curriculum mapping and design to identify areas for enhanced instruction that address student behaviors**
  - ***Sub activity 1.3.3*** **Build the capacity of MoE staff, school leaders, counselors, and teachers to implement the Anti-bullying policy**
  - ***Sub activity 1.3.4*** **Strengthen Systems for Monitoring, Reporting, and Data Use**
  - ***Sub activity 1.3.5*** **Strengthen Community Engagement and Social Norms Change**

Window 3 - Strengthen capacity, adapt, and learn, to implement and drive results at scale

The proposed EMIS activities directly support Financing Window 3's objective to "strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale" by addressing gaps in data and evidence generation and building system-wide capacity for evidence-based decision-making.

Activity group I: Strengthening data systems
Activity group K: assessment of monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity
Activity group J*:* Training, capacity building and support for government staff at central and decentralized levels, including on the gathering and use of data and evidence.

- ***Activity 3.1 EMIS Capacity Building and System Enhancement***

[1] Final duration to be confirmed by the new Minister of Education, the Honourable Sonia Parag.

- ***Sub activity 3.1.2*** **Whole School Training for EMIS**
- ***Sub activity 3.1.3*** **Central-Level Leadership Training**

5. Linking activities with the partnership compact

The System Capacity Grant activities directly align with priorities identified in the Partnership Compact as essential for Guyana's education system transformation, particularly strengthening instructional leadership at district and school levels.

The Education Strategic Plan development will address the need for strategic policy frameworks that provide medium- and long-term vision for the education system. These activities support the Compact's emphasis on strategic initiatives to improve alignment between regional and central policies and budgets and ensure careful expenditure planning to mitigate financial leakage risks that could impact long-term system performance**.** The analysis will provide the data-driven foundation necessary for targeted investments, which directly supports Compact's emphasis on strengthening public financial management and ensuring data-driven decision making. Further, the plan will place a strong emphasis on strengthening instructional leadership at district and school levels, ensuring leaders are equipped to support transformative educational practices and drive continuous improvement.

The Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation activity aligns with the Communication Technology in Education Policy Master Plan identified in the compact as essential for transforming education quality. The development of a digital strategy further aligns with Guyana's national ICT in Education Policy and Professional Development Strategy, building upon ongoing efforts to improve digital literacy and bridge the digital divide nationwide. The Digital Strategy ensures that ICT investments translate into measurable educational improvements through strategic resource allocation.

The Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy directly addresses Partnership Compact needs by strengthening gender-responsive planning and fostering inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments. It supports the Compact's Priority Reform—Strengthening Instructional Leadership—specifically Outcome #5: inclusive and culturally responsive districts and schools. The policy will build capacity among school and district leaders to create supportive environments, address gender inequality, and guide teachers in inclusive pedagogies. Additionally, it leverages the Compact's emphasis on data utilization—providing sex-disaggregated data and training leaders to identify inequalities affecting gender and vulnerable groups—which is essential for addressing safety and inclusion issues.

EMIS training activities respond to the Compact's identification of insufficient professional development for district and school leaders as a root cause of systemic challenges. These activities strengthen instructional leadership by improving leaders' skills to use database information for effective decision-making, building their capacity to identify and address gender inequality, and equipping them with technology and data analysis capabilities for developing culturally responsive educational plans.

6. Program proposal

A. How the proposed actions will address capacity gaps identified within the enabling factors

The following table maps the capacity gaps identified in the enabling factors analysis directly to the corresponding activities and sub-activities under the system capacity grant. This alignment demonstrates how the proposed interventions strategically address each identified gap, ensuring that grant resources are targeted toward the most critical capacity deficits within the system.

Financing Window	Enabling Factor	Capacity gaps in the enabling factors analysis	Activity Group	Activity under the SCG to resolve capacity gaps	Sub-activity under the SCG to resolve capacity gaps
Financing window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for systemwide impact	Gender-Responsive Planning, Policy, and Monitoring	◦ Policy and planning gaps: While the Education Sector Plan (ESP) includes gender-responsiveness strategies, no improvements have been observed for several years. There is insufficient attention to gender equality, specifically male underachievement in learning outcomes and completion rates, and a lack of sufficient organizational and budgetary support for gender issues. ◦ Limited analysis and studies: There is a need for in-depth studies that analyze EMIS data, learning assessments, and MTR findings to identify causes of low-quality indicators and inform evidence-based planning and interventions. ◦ There is insufficient attention to gender equality, specifically male underachievement in learning outcomes and completion rates, and male inequities need to be explicitly addressed. For example, boys consistently show lower results than girls in Grade 2 and 4 assessments and primary leaving exams and have significantly higher dropout rates. ◦Insufficient Planning and Absorptive Capacity for Increased Funding and ensure equitable resource distribution: critical challenge in managing increases in education funding from oil revenues. The education system currently lacks adequate	B	**Development of the Education Strategic plan (ESP) 2026–2031**	• Deploy technical assistance to the MoE Planning Unit to co-lead the ESP development process. • Draft the ESP document, including a situation analysis, a robust monitoring framework and costed implementation plan, ensuring alignment of the ESP with GPE guidelines, SDG 4, and national education goals and which considers a comprehensive gender analysis. • Conduct a national validation workshop, secure LEG endorsement and ensure broad stakeholder engagement and dissemination to secure ownership and commitment to implementation that reflects the diverse needs of Guyana's education system. The process will incorporate lessons learned and best practices to create an operationalizable costed framework that addresses systemic gaps, promotes inclusive education practices, and establishes clear mechanisms for monitoring progress and maintaining accountability in the education sector.

		plans for implementing programs and policies under this funding surge, and the rapid budget expansion threatens to exceed the absorptive capacity of both central and regional education authorities. Without proper forward planning to address these gaps, there is significant risk of inefficient spending and financial leakage that could undermine the potential benefits of increased investment.			
		◦ Operational planning and monitoring limitations: There is a lack of alignment among regional and central policies, plans, and monitoring mechanisms, as well as between plans and budgets. Strategies lack clearly defined outputs and outcomes, hindering efficient implementation.			
		◦ Limited Technology Access and Infrastructure: District and school leaders, particularly in riverine and hinterland areas, face inadequate access to internet, devices, and technology infrastructure. This creates heavy workloads and requires improved planning and budgetary allocations for technology in schools. ◦ Insufficient Integration of Technology in Teaching: There is a gap in adopting and effectively integrating technology with pedagogical content for instructional purposes, indicating limited widespread use of technology tools for teaching and learning. ◦ Inadequate Technology Training: Schools require comprehensive training in technology use, devices, and internet connectivity, while district and school leaders need skills to guide teachers in planning instruction using inclusive, gender and culturally-responsive pedagogies that	B	**Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation**	• Study Tour to bring relevant stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of EdTech policies and strategies in Guyana to participate in a knowledge exchange in Montevideo, Uruguay. Participants will learn about the experience of Plan Ceibal, Uruguay's education innovation center, in using advanced technologies to enhance teaching quality and learning outcomes, as well as concrete approaches to facilitate digital transformation. The insights gained will be used to ensure that proposed digital education solutions are tailored to Guyana's context to inform and strengthen the digital education initiatives in the country. • Capacity Building for Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation. The activity will support strategic planning and institutional development across three key dimensions: (i) integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning practices; (ii) platform development and enhancement, and (iii) operational sustainability.

		incorporate modern technology approaches.			
		◦ Limited training to ensure leaders are prepared to create inclusive schooling environments for students and families from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds and to develop cultural competency. ◦ Limited capacity in culturally responsive pedagogy and practices that promote safe and gender-neutral classrooms ◦ Limited instructional leadership and accountability to hold district and school leaders responsible for ensuring safe, supportive learning environments ◦ Constraints in data availability and use	C	**Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy**	• Develop an Implementation Plan and monitoring framework for the Anti-bullying Policy. • Conduct curriculum mapping and design to identify areas for enhanced instruction that addresses student behavior. • Build the capacity of MoE staff, school leaders, counselors, and teachers to implement the policy on bullying prevention. • Strengthen Systems for Monitoring, Reporting, and Data Use
Window 3: Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale		◦ Need for Data Systems Integration	I	**EMIS Capacity Building and**	•Integrating the EMIS with Existing Information Systems
		◦ Insufficient information exists to determine whether currently collected data is sufficient for indicator generation, coupled with the need to enhance dashboard usability for effective decision-making.			**Dashboard Assessment and Enhancement** •Conduct comprehensive data assessments to determine whether existing data sources are sufficient to generate comprehensive performance indicators for analytical dashboards. •Enhance and optimize existing dashboard functionalities to improve usability and analytical capabilities.

	Data and Evidence	◦ Insufficient training in system functionality, data entry protocols, and data management procedures and reporting		**System Enhancement**	•School-Level Capacity Development: Whole-school training to implement a national training model for school-level users, encompassing: 1st phase - System functionality training: data entry, management, and reporting procedures.
					•Central-Level Leadership Training: Provide specialized training for staff at the Ministry of Education and other relevant government agencies on EMIS functionalities, data analysis and interpretation techniques, and effective utilization of dashboards.
		◦Data Analysis and Utilization Culture: There is insufficient purposeful use of collected data for policy and planning decisions	J		•School-Level Capacity Development: Whole-school training to implement a national training model for school-level users, encompassing 2nd phase - Data literacy development: data analysis and interpretation for informed decision-making at the school level.
					•Central-Level Leadership Training: Provide specialized training for staff at the Ministry of Education and other relevant government agencies on data literacy
		◦ Absence of standardized M&E protocols for EMIS performance measurement	K		Establishing a Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework •Develop a monitoring framework to establish performance targets and determine training capacity requirements. •Implement systematic feedback mechanisms and conduct user surveys to assess EMIS effectiveness and identify areas for continuous improvement.

Note on the EMIS: The enabling factors analysis initially identified several capacity gaps within the data and evidence domain. However, due to sustained government efforts in recent years, many of these original gaps have been addressed while new institutional challenges have emerged reflecting the current development stage of the education system. The government has successfully resolved three key areas previously identified as critical capacity gaps. First, the MoE has developed an integrated Education Management Information System (EMIS), eliminating the previous reliance on multiple disconnected data sources. Second, burdensome questionnaire approaches have been discontinued in favor of more efficient data collection methods. Third, comprehensive data coverage gaps have been substantially addressed through improved data collection protocols.

Despite the progress, two capacity gaps remain highly relevant and require immediate attention. The first concerns insufficient training in system functionality, data entry protocols, and data management procedures and reporting at the school level. While the technical infrastructure now exists, users still need the necessary competencies to effectively operate these systems. The second gap encompasses low institutional capacity for data-driven decision making, as some stakeholders continue to lack the skills and organizational culture needed to transform available data into actionable insights for educational improvement and policy development. The proposed actions directly target these persistent capacity gaps by providing comprehensive training programs to build technical competencies in system operation and fostering a data-driven decision-making culture through targeted capacity building initiatives for educational leaders at all levels.

B. How the proposed actions will reinforce or contribute to strengthening overall system capacity

Scope of the work, activities, timeline and expected results

Window 1: Strengthen gender responsive planning and policy development for system wide impact

Activity 1.1 Development of the Education Strategic plan (ESP) 2026–2030

Objective of the activity: Provide support to the MoE to develop a strategic, inclusive, results-oriented ESP 2026–2030 that will create a forward-looking roadmap for Guyana's education sector from pre-school to higher education, including TVET. The strategic planning process will be grounded in evidence and national data source and will establish a comprehensive, evidence-based strategic framework that addresses the current strengths, weaknesses, and challenges within the education system while prioritizing initiatives that enhance learning outcomes, accountability, and equity across all levels of education for children and youth in Guyana. The ESP will be based on several analyses, including the recently developed diagnosis.

Key Sub-activities

1.1.1 Deploy technical assistance to the MoE Planning Unit to co-lead the ESP development process: The objective is to provide targeted technical assistance to the MOE that will ensure the ESP is evidence-based, gender responsive and aligned to national and global key priorities. Technical assistance will strengthen the Ministry's capacity for strategic planning, facilitate coordination across departments, and ensure equity, efficiency and accountability considerations throughout the planning process.

Provider Profile: Expertise in national education sector planning and working with development partners, strong facilitation and coordination skills to support multi-sector engagement.

Teams Involved: MoE Planning Unit, LEG, GPE Secretariat, World Bank and UNICEF Technical Teams

1.1.2 Draft the ESP document: The ESP will include a context analysis of key themes with impact on education, and will be conducted using existing data sources, including the MTR findings, and the UNESCO country diagnosis of gender disparities in education, among others. The ESP will also include a robust monitoring framework and cost implementation

plan, ensuring alignment of the GPE's Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation, SDG 4 and the national education goals. The ESP content is outlined below:

1. Education sector analysis

a. Contextual analysis of key themes, including:

- Macro-economic context: general economic data, public resources, and their distribution across sectors
- Demographic context: population growth rate, gender-disaggregated population data, under-15 cohort population, rural–urban migration
- Sociocultural contexts: homogeneity and heterogeneity of the population, the existence of marginalized groups, multiple languages, etc.
- Politico-institutional context: political (in)stability, effectiveness of the public administration
- Vulnerability analysis: analysis of risks, such as conflict, disaster, and economic crisis, and their potential impact on the education sector

b. Analysis of existing policies and activities to identify effective practices, including:

- Development policies, such as poverty reduction strategies, administrative reforms, and decentralization initiatives
- International commitments made by the government, including the Sustainable Development Goals and their alignment with the ESP
- Education sector policies and frameworks
- Large-scale partner-supported programs and interventions
- Standards and norms for education service delivery

c. Analysis of cost and finance: The analysis will encompass a comprehensive public expenditure review designed to assess multiple dimensions of education financing and will draw upon existing documentation and data sources, including the most recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on education financing in Guyana, national budget documentation, and the Inter-American Development Bank report titled "Improving Equity and Efficiency in Education Funding and Teacher Allocation in Guyana," along with other relevant technical materials. The analysis will examine:

- Public investment in education and its temporal trends
- Distribution of expenditure across sub-sectors and education levels
- Average per-student spending with comparative analysis across levels
- Aggregate expenditure and unit costs
- Equity and efficiency considerations in resource allocation
- Proportional contributions of government, households, and other stakeholders to total education spending

d. Analysis of education system performance. The analysis will be evidence-based and will examine the circumstances of particular groups (e.g., boys and girls) and different geographic areas. The following key topics will be analyzed:

- Access, coverage, and enrollment trends
- Equity, Gender Equality, and Inclusion
- Internal and external efficiency learning quality and content relevance with labour market needs

e. Analysis on the effectiveness of education administration at both central and local levels, as well as the capacity of other relevant stakeholders. The analysis will include:

- Organizational aspects - functioning of the education system at central, district, and school levels, and the roles and responsibilities of management at each level
- Public financial management

• Accountability mechanism
• Policy design and implementation capacity
• Competencies and qualifications of staff in key departments
• Capacity to prepare for, prevent, and respond to crises
• Capacity to examine and address questions of gender, across all levels and among all groups, and other sensitive issues such as school-related gender-based violence
- Integration of digitals skills and AI
- Availability and quality of data for system management
• Identification of all stakeholders in the sector, including the private sector, civil society, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multilateral and bilateral agencies, as well as their respective strengths and experience

2. Policy formulation: setting policy priorities and key strategies

The policy section will be based on the challenges identified in the sector analysis. The identification of appropriate responses will be based on:

• A logical progression from identifying issues and their root causes, to exploring possible actions, to selecting final policies.
• Discussions among the working groups to discuss policies
• A dialogue between decision-makers and technical staff to establish priorities, determine strategies, and set targets to measure sector performance, ensuring consistency with demographic and economic projections.
• Simulation models to have an indication of the financial feasibility of achieving the targets

3. Program design

The ESP will be structured by sub-sector (pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational, adult, and tertiary education), with challenges in each subsector categorized into thematic areas such as access and quality. The overall architecture of the ESP will comprise three levels: (i) the goal and linked outcomes, (ii) the programs that address the causes of each challenge, and (iii) the main activities. An analysis will be conducted of the estimated costs of each program and the availability of financial resources. The coherence between objectives, programs, and activities will also be analyzed as well as the feasibility of the strategies.

The ESP will be organized by sub-sector (pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational, adult, and tertiary education), with challenges in each sub-sector grouped into themes like access and quality. The plan will have three levels: goals and linked outcomes, programs that address the root causes of each challenge, and main activities. It will also analyze the estimated costs for each program and available funding, how well objectives, programs, and activities align, and whether the strategies are feasible.

4. Plan costing and financing

The ESP costing and financing process will test the financial sustainability of policy options and targets through iterative financial projections and simulation modeling. The simulation will incorporate calculations of human and physical resource requirements, estimations of sector-wide costs, and assessment of available domestic resources through a macroeconomic framework to establish an optimal and financially sustainable reference scenario.

5. Implementation Plan

The action plan will outline detailed activities for a specific period, including timing, roles, responsibilities, and costs. It will be consistent with the ESP's policy priorities and programs and will be developed within a medium-term expenditure framework linked to the national budget process to inform annual budget preparation and oversight. For each activity included in the plan, the following information will be provided: time period, required financial/human/material inputs, outputs, overall costs, sources of funding, responsible implementing entity, and output indicators.

6. Implementation arrangements and capacities

The ESP will establish clear implementation arrangements with defined roles, responsibilities, and accountability structures aligned with existing ministry organization. The plan will include a capacity analysis examining public sector management, educational administration effectiveness, staff competencies, and aid effectiveness principles. Based on this assessment, the ESP will identify capacity constraints and incorporate targeted capacity-development strategies, adjusting plan objectives as necessary to ensure realistic and sustainable implementation at both central and decentralized levels.

Provider profile: Expertise in education planning, data analysis, policy research, gender transformative programming in Education, results-based management and education simulation models/forecasting and public finance.

Teams Involved: MOE Planning and Statistics Units, Ministry of Finance, LEG, Cross-sector Technical Group (Amerindian Affairs, Social Services, Local Government, Health, Youth and Culture), World Bank and UNICEF Technical Teams.

Design and facilitate national and regional consultations for the plan: The objective of the activity is to ensure inclusive stakeholder engagement in the ESP development process, particularly vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, out of school youth and children with disabilities.

Provider Profile: Expertise in participatory planning, stakeholder engagement and inclusive education.

Teams Involved: MOE Planning and Communications Units, Regional Education Departments, NGOS, community leaders, representatives from youth, disability and indigenous groups, Teachers' Union.

1.1.4 Conduct a national validation workshop: The objective is to present the draft ESP to stakeholders and secure LEG endorsement and ensure broad stakeholder engagement and dissemination to secure ownership and commitment to implementation that reflects the diverse needs of Guyana's education system. This step ensures transparency, accountability and alignment with national and global commitments. The process will incorporate lessons learned and best practices to create an operationalizable costed framework that addresses systemic gaps, promotes inclusive education practices, and establishes clear mechanisms for monitoring progress and maintaining accountability in the education sector.

Provider Profile: Expertise in high-level policy workshops, consensus-building, documentation and event coordination.

Teams Involved: MoE Planning and Communications, LEG, UNICEF and World Bank, stakeholder representatives (civil society, parents, teachers, youth, disability).

Activity 1.2: Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation

Objective of the Activity: To support the implementation of the National Digital Education Strategy through comprehensive institutional and capacity-building activities.

Key Sub-activities

1.2.1 Study Tour: This activity will bring relevant stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of EdTech policies and strategies in Guyana to participate in a knowledge exchange in Montevideo, Uruguay. Participants will learn about the experience of Plan Ceibal, Uruguay's education innovation center, in using advanced technologies to enhance teaching quality and learning outcomes, as well as concrete approaches to facilitate digital transformation. The insights gained will be used to ensure that proposed digital education solutions are tailored to Guyana's context to inform and strengthen the digital education initiatives in the country.

The content of the study tour includes the following insights into the practices of Uruguay's implementation of a large-scale digital education transformation strategy:

- Connectivity and devise procurement and management

- Governance structures, funding mechanisms, ICT policies, and the evolution from device distribution to a comprehensive digital ecosystem.
- The role of the public sector, innovation agencies, and the private sector in the implementation of AI in education
- Integration of digital technology and teaching and learning - pedagogical strategies for technology integration Teacher training, including development of teachers' digital skills
- Leadership development
- Digital platform development/enhancements
- Development of maintenance centers
- Evidence-based EdTech programs
- Computational thinking and bilingual education through Ceibal in English
- The foundations for implementing educational policy in AI and examples of innovation initiatives such as AI, robotics, coding, STEAM programs, maker spaces, and strategic partnerships
- School visits to conduct direct observation of device use, teaching practices, student engagement, and infrastructure supporting innovation.

Teams participating in the study tour: Ministry of Education staff leading the design and implementation of the National Digital Strategy, as well as district and school-level stakeholders and other relevant parties, to ensure inclusive participation in the study tour team.

Teams engaged in the preparation of the study tour: Ministry of Education staff leading the design and implementation of the National Digital Strategy, the GPE Secretariat, and the World Bank team.

1.2.2 Capacity Building for Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation: Building on the lessons learned from the study tour, this activity aims to strengthen the education system's capacity to develop and implement a National Digital Education Plan. The activity will support strategic planning and institutional development across three key dimensions: (i) pedagogical integration, by enhancing educators' and leaders' capacity to effectively integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning practices; (ii) platform development/enhancement and software development that enable technology integration at the classroom level, facilitate data-driven decision-making, and ensure standardized implementation across the national education system; and (iii) operational sustainability, by building institutional capacity to establish procurement protocols, connectivity solutions, and maintenance systems that ensure the long-term viability of technology investments. This approach ensures equitable access to quality digital learning resources while fostering systematic capacity development across all levels of the education system—from classroom practitioners to national policymakers—thereby maximizing the educational impact and sustainability of the Plan.

Service providers: The activity will require a combination of technical service providers specializing in educational technology platforms and connectivity solutions, experienced capacity-building organizations with expertise in teacher professional development and leadership training, and international or regional education institutions with proven track records in supporting digital education transformation in developing country contexts.

Teams involved: Ministry of Education staff leading the design and implementation of the National Digital Strategy.

Activity 1.3 Operational Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy

Key Sub-activities

Activity 1.3.1: ***Develop an Implementation Plan and monitoring framework for the Anti-bullying Policy***

Objective: Support the Ministry of Education in translating the policy into functional systems, tools, and capacities necessary for effective implementation at national, regional, district, and school levels.

Sub-activities:
1.3.1.1 Develop Implementation Guidelines and Operational Tools

- Develop standardized operational guidelines that translate policy provisions into practical procedures for school staff, administrators, and education authorities
- Create/Review implementation toolkits including templates for incident reporting forms, case management protocols, referral pathways documentation, and school-level action planning guides
- Develop context-appropriate communication for different audiences (students, parents, teachers, school management committees) explaining the policy, reporting mechanisms, and available support services
- Design monitoring tools and checklists for school staff and regional education staff to assess policy compliance and implementation quality

Provider Profile: Expertise in operationalizing education policies, developing implementation frameworks, experience with school-based child protection systems, strong technical writing skills for creating accessible guidance materials

Teams Involved: MoE Planning Unit, School Support Services, World Bank and UNICEF Technical Teams

1.3.1.2 Establish Violence Prevention and Response Coordination Structures

- Support the establishment of a national coordination mechanism within MoE to oversee policy implementation, bringing together relevant departments (Planning, School Support Services, Curriculum, School Inspectorate)
- Facilitate the development of multi-sectoral coordination protocols linking MoE with other ministries for integrated case management.

Provider Profile: Experience in establishing multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms, knowledge of child protection systems, facilitation and coordination expertise

Teams Involved: MoE Planning Unit, School Support Services, MOE School Health program, Ministry of Human Services, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, UNICEF and World Bank Teams

Activity 1.3.2: Conduct curriculum mapping and design to identify areas for enhanced instruction that addresses student behaviors

Objective: Support schools to implement evidence-based bullying prevention strategies embedded in the curriculum and school culture.

Sub-activities:

1.3.2.1 Curriculum Integration Support

- Review existing curriculum at primary and secondary levels to identify entry points for violence prevention content
- Adapt evidence-based social-emotional learning programs appropriate for Guyana context
- Develop lesson plans and teaching resources on: conflict resolution, empathy building, digital citizenship and cyberbullying prevention, recognizing and reporting abuse, gender equality and respectful relationships
- Integrate positive discipline approaches and trauma-informed teaching practices across subject areas
- Provide training and ongoing mentoring to teachers on delivering violence prevention curriculum
- Develop age-appropriate student materials and resources

1.3.2.2 Whole-School Approach Pilots

- Conduct baseline assessment of current violence prevention and response capacities across sample of schools
- Select pilot schools across different regions and contexts for intensive support implementing evidence-based anti-bullying program(s) appropriate for Guyanese context through a whole-school approach.
- Support pilot schools to conduct participatory safety assessments with students identifying violence hotspots and unsafe areas

- Guide schools in developing comprehensive school action plans addressing: policy and procedures, physical environment improvements, curriculum integration, student participation mechanisms, parent and community engagement
- Document implementation process, challenges, and promising practices for learning and scale-up

Provider Profile: Expertise in curriculum development, evidence-based violence prevention programs, whole-school approaches, participatory methods with children and youth, program evaluation

Teams Involved: MoE Curriculum Development Unit, UNICEF Technical Team

Activity 1.3.3: Build the capacity of MoE staff, school leaders, counselors, and teachers to implement the policy on bullying prevention.

Objective: Ensure that MoE staff, school leaders, teachers, counsellors, and support personnel have the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to implement the policy effectively.

Sub-activities:

1.3.3.1 Training Program for Education Personnel

Develop and implement a comprehensive, tiered training program aligned with the Safe to Learn Framework competencies:

Tier 1: National and Regional Leadership (MoE officials, regional education officers, inspectors)

- Policy provisions, implementation framework, and monitoring systems
- Leadership for creating safe school environments
- Oversight, accountability, and quality assurance mechanisms
- Budget planning and resource allocation for violence prevention
- Data use for decision-making and continuous improvement

Tier 2: Regional and School Leadership (regional education officers, head teachers)

- Whole-school approach to bullying prevention
- School-level action planning and budgeting
- Supervision and support of teachers and counselors
- Managing disclosure and response to incidents
- Engaging school management committees and parent-teacher associations
- Creating safe and inclusive school climates

Tier 3: Teachers, Counselors, and Support Staff

- Recognizing different forms of violence and bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Positive discipline and classroom management techniques
- Social-emotional learning integration in teaching practice
- Identifying signs of violence and psychological distress
- Responding appropriately to disclosures with trauma-informed approaches
- Case management and referral pathway navigation
- Documentation and referral procedures
- Digital literacy and online safety education
- Confidentiality and ethical considerations

Training Methodology: Interactive sessions combining knowledge transfer, skills practice through role-plays and case studies, collaborative planning, and follow-up coaching/mentoring support. Include development of school-level action plans as practical outputs.

Provider Profile: Expertise in teacher training and adult learning methodologies, child protection and safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, positive discipline, social-emotional learning, experience with cascade training models

Teams Involved: MoE Planning Unit, UNICEF Technical Team

Activity 1.3.4: Strengthen Systems for Monitoring, Reporting, and Data Use

Objective: Establish functional systems for tracking incidents, monitoring implementation progress, and using data to improve bullying prevention and response efforts.

Sub-activities:

1.3.4.1 Integrate Violence-Related Indicators into EMIS

- Work with MoE Planning Unit to design violence-related indicators for integration into the Education Management Information System
- Develop data collection instruments and reporting templates disaggregated by age, sex, disability status, geographic location, and type of violence
- Create data protection protocols ensuring confidentiality and ethical handling of sensitive information
- Build capacity of EMIS staff and data focal points at regional levels on data collection, quality assurance, and analysis
- Establish regular reporting cycles and feedback mechanisms

Revised Activity 1.3.5: Strengthen Community Engagement and Social Norms Change

Objective: Engage parents, communities, and broader society in creating safe school environments and shifting norms that perpetuate violence.

Sub-activities:

1.3.5.1 Parent and Community Awareness and Engagement

- Develop communication materials and campaigns raising awareness about the policy, child rights, impacts of violence, and positive parenting/discipline for parents and community leaders.

1.3.5.2 Design Behavior Change Interventions for Children

- Design multi-channel communication campaign (radio, social media, print, community events) promoting key messages about school safety, reporting violence, and bystander action
- Engage young people as campaign ambassadors and content creators
- Develop age-appropriate student awareness materials and conduct school-based awareness sessions

Provider Profile: Expertise in communication for development, behavior change communication, community mobilization, youth engagement, media and campaign design

Teams Involved: MoE Communications Unit, School Support Services Unit, Civil Society Organizations, Youth Groups, Media Partners, UNICEF Technical Team

Window 3. Strengthen Capacity, Adapt, and Learn, to Implement and Drive Results at Scale

Activity 3.1 - EMIS Capacity Building and System Enhancement

Objective of the Activity

To strengthen Guyana's existing EMIS infrastructure and enhance the country's capacity for evidence-based decision making across all levels of the education system, from policymakers and district officials to school leaders. Building upon the established EMIS platform, the activity focuses mainly on system optimization and also includes capacity building through training at school and central level. The training is aimed at ensuring that stakeholders at all levels can effectively access, interpret, and utilize educational data for strategic planning, resource allocation, monitoring progress, and improving learning outcomes throughout Guyana's education sector.
Key Sub-activities

3.1.1 EMIS Functionality and Usability Enhancement: The objective of the activity is to assess and upgrade the EMIS infrastructure to improve system functionality, data quality, and user experience, while ensuring the platform is accessible, sustainable, and capable of supporting evidence-based decision-making at district and national levels.

- Address technical issues to ensure stable, uninterrupted system performance
- Integrate EMIS with existing platforms to create synergies and streamline data flows
- Review of current dashboard features and gathering structured user feedback on usability challenges
- Upgrade data visualization tools to incorporate advanced analytics capabilities, including trend analysis, comparative analysis, and predictive indicators
- Ensure intuitive navigation, clearer data interpretation, and improved accessibility for users with varying levels of technical expertise
- Ensuring dashboards are accessible across different devices and user levels
- Identify critical data gaps affecting the completeness of educational analytics
- Assess data quality, coverage, and timeliness across all data collection points

Monitoring Framework

- Design feedback tools (surveys - digital feedback forms) to capture user experiences with EMIS to assess EMIS effectiveness and identify areas for continuous improvement
- Roll out periodic user surveys/feedback tools (online and in-person where necessary)
- Collect and analyze feedback to assess usability, efficiency, and challenges
- Produce reports and recommendations for system refinement and policy decisions

Delivery Team: Consulting firm

Teams Involved: Ministry of Education, EMIS Unit/Statistical & Monitoring group

3.1.2 Whole School Training for EMIS

Phase 1 - Training for School Personnel on System Functionality

Tasks:

- Enable easy data collection and maintenance of school statistics, including enrollment, staff information, classroom sizes and other critical information such as students' behaviors to monitor violence and bullying and report cards.
- Improve the staff ability to generate, customize, and analyze reports on various aspects of educational operations. This feature plays a critical role in informing decision-making, monitoring progress, and accountability across all levels of the education system

Phase 2 - Training for School Personnel on Data Literacy Development

Data analysis and interpretation for informed decision-making at the school level. This phase enhances the value of EMIS training by embedding a dedicated section on data literacy within standard sessions. Rather than focusing only on system

usage, participants will also learn how to analyze and interpret school-level data for planning and informed decision-making. The training includes session on:

- Validating and understanding data in EMIS
- Identifying trends in attendance, behavior, and performance
- Applying insights to support school improvement and interventions
- Strengthening reporting and communication of results

Delivery Method: In-person sessions, where participants work with their own school data in practical, scenario-based exercises. This ensures immediate application and relevance. Virtual refreshers may also be used to reinforce skills. Embedding data literacy into existing training sessions avoids duplication, reduces training fatigue, and ensures sustainability.

Training Delivery Team: The Ministry of Education's Statistical and Monitoring Unit

Target Participants and Stakeholder Engagement:

- Primary Audience: school personnel (teachers, administrators, clerks) responsible for collecting data and using EMIS
- Secondary Audience: Central Ministry officials and Regional Education personnel responsible for interpreting and utilizing EMIS data to monitor educational outcomes, provide institutional support, and implement reinforcement strategies at both school and regional levels
- Stakeholders to Engage: School leadership, Regional Education Departments, EMIS Officers, and Ministry officials to ensure smooth adoption and sustained use of EMIS

3.1.3. Central-Level Leadership Training for EMIS: Provide specialized training for staff at the Ministry of Education and other relevant government agencies on EMIS functionalities, data analysis and interpretation techniques, and effective utilization of dashboards. The training will include session on:

- Introduction to EMIS functionalities relevant to central management
- Data literacy: analyzing and interpreting national and regional data
- Use of EMIS dashboards for real-time monitoring and reporting
- Applying EMIS data in policy discussions, sector planning, and resource allocation

Delivery Method: Training will primarily be conducted in-person, in a workshop format that allows for interactive use of dashboards and hands-on analysis of national datasets. Hybrid or virtual sessions may be offered as refreshers or follow-ups to reinforce skills and introduce system updates. This format provides flexibility while keeping costs manageable.

Provider Profile/Training Delivery Team: Expert on EMIS and with experience in education sector planning and policy.

Target Participants and Stakeholder Engagement: Senior staff at the Ministry of Education (e.g., Directors, Heads of Units, Planners) who rely on EMIS for policy, planning, and monitoring.

Deliverables and timeline

Window	Activity	Deliverable	Timeline (tentative)
		• Deploy technical assistance to the MoE Planning Unit to co-lead the ESP development process	January 2026–June 2027

Window 1. Strengthen gender responsive planning and policy development for system wide impact.	Activity 1.1 Development of the Education Strategic plan (ESP) 2026–2030	• Draft the ESP document	January-August 2026
		• Design and facilitate national and regional consultations for the plan	Sep-October - 2026
		• Conduct a national validation workshop	January-February, 2027
	Activity 1.2 Institutional Strengthening for National Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation	• Study Tour: Knowledge exchange	March 2026
		• Capacity Building for Digital Education Plan Development and Implementation	Start date: March 2026 End date: March 2028
	Activity 1.3 Develop an Implementation Plan and monitoring framework for the Anti-bullying Policy	• Implementation Plan and monitoring framework	January 2026 – July 2027
		• Curriculum mapping and enhancement	January 2026 - July 2027
		• Systems for Monitoring, Reporting, and Data Use	January 2026- December 2027
		• Build the capacity of MoE staff, school leaders, counsellors and teachers to implement the policy	August 2027- December 2027
		• Strengthen Community Engagement and Social Norms Change	January 2027- December 2027
Window 3. Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale	Activity 3.1 Whole School Training for EMIS	• EMIS Functionality and Usability Enhancement	January 2026-June 2028
		• Whole School and Central-Level Training for EMIS	July – Sept 2028
		• Central-Level Leadership Training for EMIS	October-Dec 2028