

Early Childhood Education Project Terms of Reference for

Component 1 Development of Training Courses and Training of Trainers for Improved Instruction and Learning at Nursery and Primary Grade 1

I. Background

The Government of Guyana and the Global Partnership for Education, in collaboration with the World Bank, have agreed to support an Early Childhood Education Project (ECEP). This project will focus on improving emergent literacy and numeracy outcomes at the nursery level and primary Grade 1 in hinterland regions and targeted remote riverine areas. It will be implemented from 2015-2017, and will include four components: (i) capacity building for nursery and Grade 1 teachers; (ii) provision of ECE Resource Kits; (iii) Parental/Caregiver Education; and (iv) Implementation Support, M&E. The total cost of the project is US\$1.7 million.

These terms of reference pertain to the first component, which aims to improve the quality of instruction and learning at nursery and Grade 1 levels, by strengthening teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy, particularly for the implementation of new strategies to improve emergent literacy and numeracy skills. As part of this effort, the services of a highly qualified and experienced developer of teacher training courses in early childhood education, specifically with respect to development of literacy and numeracy skills, are required.

The sections below describe: (a) the teacher training component in more detail, to provide the context for this consultancy; and (b) the specific responsibilities, deliverables, required qualifications and level of expected effort for the successful consultant.

II. Description of the ECD Teacher Capacity Building Component

Approximately 440 nursery and Grade 1 teachers would be trained in:

- (i) instructional strategies for the emergent literacy and numeracy programs, using the locally-developed Roraima Reader series, large picture books (so-called "Big Books"), and individual student workbooks, in addition to play-based learning activities and experiential approaches;
- (ii) effective utilization of the MOE's emergent literacy and numeracy benchmarks and standards, to measure student progress through the curriculum;
- (iii) procedures for proper administration and usage of the Nursery Diagnostic Assessment, to identify and respond to different learning needs and styles;
- (iv) cross-curricular planning and differentiated instruction;
- (v) how to work with parents to promote emergent literacy and numeracy;
- (vi) the use of the ECE resource kits to be provided under Component 2, which provide student-centered materials to develop literacy and numeracy skills through play-based activities, as well as fine motor skills and social skills.

This in-service teacher training program will be developed as a collaborative effort between the MOE's nursery and primary education departments, MOE's training center - the National Center

for Education Research and Development (NCERD), the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) and the University of Guyana (UG), in addition to the technical assistance procured through these TORs. Because few if any teachers have received this type of training before, differentiated training (e.g. by topic or grade level) is not required. A wide range of ECD stakeholders will be invited to review the draft training design (in terms of both content and methodology), after which it will be revised and rolled-out to nursery and Grade 1 teachers.

The actual training will be provided by MoE through NCERD ECE specialists, ECE Master Trainers, Nursery Field Officers and other experienced ECE trainers. Training¹ will be for an equivalent of 5 days each year. Training will either occur during July and August (summer vacation), or after Nursery classes end at noon during the school year. All, or about 440 nursery and Grade 1 teachers should participate in 15 days of professional development over the three-year period of the Project.

Following this training, teachers would be visited up to twice per school term in their classrooms in order to observe and support the implementation of instructional methods and student-centered learning activities acquired during the training. Classroom observations would be carried out by the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Development (MERD) Unit of the MOE, Nursery and Infant Field Officers (NFOs and IFOs), retired and active Head Teachers, and retired NFOs, all of whom would receive training from the MOE on how to conduct classroom observations. Again, differentiation in training will not be provided, since none of the observers have received this training before.

Observers would use a standardized classroom observation instrument (already developed by NCERD) to assess the classroom environment, teachers' instructional strategies and planning, and various measures of student engagement and learning activities. This would not involve examination of records or administrative tasks, but would be solely aimed at providing instructional support. The project would support the transportation costs of the observers and in a few cases the temporary recruitment of additional Field Officers to visit the most remote schools.

III. Responsibilities, Deliverables, Required Qualifications and Level of Effort for this Consultancy

a. Responsibilities

The consultant will be responsible for leading the design, development and training of trainers for this activity, in close collaboration with the Assistant CEOs for Nursery Education and Primary Education, and with NCERD's ECE specialists.

Initially, the consultant will closely analyze the results of the Nursery Diagnostic Assessment, which is now administered at the beginning of the academic year to all nursery students, to identify specific literacy and numeracy learning gaps and/or instructional weaknesses. Particular attention will be paid to student learning outcomes in Hinterland regions and Riverine areas. In addition, the consultant will visit a range of nursery and Grade

¹ The class size for teacher training could range between 30 and 40 participants, depending on the region.

1 classes, in order to have a clear view of the reality of nursery and Grade 1 classrooms. A series of structured consultations with key MOE and NCERD personnel will also be undertaken to gather a range of views regarding teachers' capacity-building needs. Following this, draft training courses will be developed.

By "training course" it is understood to include the preparation of modular, competency-based training activities, articulation of learning objectives and lesson plans for each module, aggregation of appropriate teaching and learning materials, linkage of training methodologies and activities to specific learning objectives, audio-visual aids (e.g. Powerpoint presentations, demonstration videos, websites), assignments/tasks for teachers to complete, and formal assessment.

Training courses would focus on teachers' ability to develop children's numeracy and literacy skills. What matters is whether and how nursery and Grade 1 teachers are able to use their knowledge and expertise to ensure students master the basic elements of literacy and numeracy; which means the focus, will be on changing teachers' classroom practices and behavior to improve student learning results.

The training courses would be designed with assessment in mind, so that teachers' acquisition of new knowledge and skills can be measured by a standardized test at the end of the course, and instructional/pedagogical skills assessed through simulated lessons and model lesson plans. To ensure coherence between the training content and assessment, the ECE team would provide guidance and assistance to the training materials developer at the beginning of the consultancy.

For each of the three years of project implementation, new courses will be designed, developed and administered. Course design in Year 2 will incorporate the results and feedback of classroom observations of teacher behavior following the first year's training, and will respond to additional learning gaps identified through the previous year's Nursery Diagnostic Assessment.

After review of the draft training course design and its revision, the consultant will assist in the Training of Trainers program. Trainers will be drawn from NCERD, CPCE, Nursery Field Officers and other experienced ECD instructors. If need be, feedback from the Trainers regarding course content and methodology will be incorporated into a final version of the training materials to be used with nursery and Grade 1 teachers at regional training sites.

b. Deliverables

- 1) In the first three months of the consultancy, the consultant would deliver, working in collaboration with relevant MOE and NCERD ECD specialists, a draft modular, competency-based, 5-day equivalent training course. The course will include: learning objectives, materials, activities, audio-visual aids, assignments, assessment instruments, etc. The course materials would be adapted for uploading to the MOE's website so they can be easily accessed by other teachers. Similar courses covering additional ECE topics will be developed for Year 2 and 3 by the end of Year 1.

- 2) The consultant would lead the Training of Trainers Workshop, after which a short report would be submitted to the MOE, providing an assessment of the draft training courses (what was effective and what was not), a summary of feedback received from the participants, and a proposed plan of revision.
- 3) Subsequently, the consultant would revise and finalize the training course, which incorporate the recommendations and lessons learned from the piloting process, and all related materials would be submitted to the MOE.

c. Required Qualifications and Experience

The successful candidate would have high academic qualifications and extensive experience in the design and delivery of teacher training workshops in the area of early childhood development, particularly focused on development of literacy and numeracy skills.

- 1) Specifically, the consultant should possess a post-graduate degree (minimum Masters, preferably Ph.D.) in a relevant discipline (e.g. early childhood education, psycho-social child development, instructional design, etc.) and specific graduate-level academic training in instruction of literacy and numeracy.
- 2) The consultant should be able to provide evidence of at least 5 years of practical experience in designing and delivering teacher training workshops in the area of early childhood education.
- 3) Demonstrated ability and experience in teaching literacy and numeracy skills in an activity-based manner, through submission of a portfolio of previously prepared lesson plans and training materials would also be required.
- 4) Willing and able to travel to remote Hinterland regions and Riverine areas.
- 5) Strong English-language (written and spoken) and communication skills (presentational skills, listening skills, etc.), along with basic mastery of productivity software are a must; as well as demonstrated ability to work productively in teams.
- 6) Familiarity with Caribbean early childhood education systems would be a plus, but is not absolutely necessary.
- 7) At least three people who can be contacted by the Guyanese MOE as references should be submitted along with the candidate's curriculum vitae.

d. Level of Effort

It is anticipated that the consultant would be required for an estimated 120 days, over the three years of the Project with the bulk of that time in Year 1. This may be adjusted according to the needs of the Ministry of Education and available budget resources. This would be for training workshop design, piloting of training materials, training of trainers, and revision/finalization of training courses.