

Formative Evaluation of the From Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme: Improving Enrolment, Learning and Transition from Frontal to Differential Learning

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|------------|--|
| AY | Academic Year |
| CARICOM | CARICOM-Caribbean Community |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CPD | Country Programme Document |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| CRPD | Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee |
| SOEBGS | Education Foundation of the Moravian Church |
| EMIS | Education Management Information System |
| ERB | Ethical Review Board |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| GDI | Gender Development Index |
| GII | Gender Inequality Index |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GER | Gross Enrolment Rate |
| GEROS | Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System |
| GoS | Government of Suriname |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| ICESC | International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| IDB | Inter-American Development Bank |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| MICS | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey |
| MICS-EAGLE | Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity |
| MINOWC | Ministry of Education, Science and Culture |
| NER | National Enrolment Rate |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| SCO | Suriname Country Office |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SRD | Suriname Dollar |
| TaRL | Teaching at the Right Level |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| USA | United States of America |
| USD | United States Dollar |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **purpose** of this formative evaluation is to assess to what extent the programme entitled, 'Improving enrolment and learning: Transition from frontal teaching to differentiated learning (hereinafter referred to as the Programme) was successful in improving the performance of the Education Foundation of the Moravian Church (SOEBGS) schools in Suriname. This evaluation is also focused on learning more about enabling factors, bottlenecks and challenges, as inputs for learning and future actions for improving and scaling up the Programme.

The **goal** of the Programme was to strengthen teacher training to build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching methods in the classroom, which would improve student learning, outcomes and academic performance. Trained teachers should be able to effectively integrate these innovative teaching methods into the classroom in a more holistic manner, and use different teaching styles and approaches to teach students with different learning styles and abilities.¹ The Programme was implemented in 56 SOEBGS primary schools across Suriname, including in coastal zones and the sparsely inhabited interior.

The Programme aimed to create an integrated capacity development programme for teachers, which includes teacher training, specifically training coaches and support staff (counsellor) who are available to support teachers to use more innovative and differentiate teaching methods in the classroom. More specifically, the objectives of the Programme were that:

- Teachers are able to encourage students' creative thinking by asking questions in a different way (e.g., Socratic questioning).
- With differentiated teaching approaches, teachers' are able to respond in a more dynamic manner to students learning differences and talents, and classroom dynamics.
- Teachers are better able to identify and assess the learning needs of students and adapt their teaching approaches accordingly.

- Teachers are better able to understand and work with diverse groups of students in the classroom, and to support students who underperform or have learning delays or difficulties, and do so by increasing students' learning opportunities.
- Through efforts of the Activating Didactic Instruction (ADI) Model students are provided the opportunity to participate and take a more active role in their lessons and to participate in the learning process.
- Teachers are more aware of the language goals and are better equipped or capacitated to support language stimulation and production among students.
- Teachers are capacitated to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, to increase their understanding and solution-oriented thinking.

The Programme was supported by UNICEF with civil society organization (CSO) partner contributions (i.e., SOEBGS). The Programme was funded by UNICEF as a thematic initiative versus with external donor monies; thus, programme-related documents were limited in number, as there were no specific external donor reporting requirements. Programme-related documents that were available were reviewed and used to design the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, and draft the Inception and Final Evaluation Reports.

The Programme was initially planned to be implemented from 1 August 2018 to 31 December 2020, but it was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic which began in March 2020.² To date, the Programme continues to be implemented by the 56 SOEBGS primary schools.

The **intended use** of this evaluation is to inform ongoing implementation of the Programme in SOEBGS primary schools. Thus, this evaluation offers evidence-based recommendations for further improvement of the Programme and the potential for

¹ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

² On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic. Subsequently, on 13 March 2020, Suriname announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 and closed its borders. On 16 March 2020, all schools were closed to prevent a further spread of COVID-19. The closure of schools had a notable negative impact on the ability of

schools and teachers to ensure all children have access to distance education and remote learning. Although the COVID-19 pandemic continued throughout 2020 and into 2022, schools in Suriname were able to open in October 2020 with protective measures, yet temporary closures did occur as needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Thus, the spread of COVID-19 continued to interrupt the delivery of education and student learning.

scaling it up to other grades and schools, and to inform national teacher training programmes. This evaluation offers strategic guidance to UNICEF on how to sharpen its focus areas of support to SOEBGS and MINOWC for mainstreaming differentiated teaching and learning approaches in education, and the overall approach to quality education.

The **target audience**, including primary expected users of this evaluation, include UNICEF SCO, SOEBGS and MINOWC. This evaluation will also be of interest to partner UN agencies and international financial institutions/donors that contribute to UNICEF results and wider UN system commitments, intended outcomes and efforts on the realization of children's rights and wider human rights commitments, including equitable access to quality education and improvement to learning skills and outcomes.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

To ensure the evaluation approach was as thorough and reliable as possible, a ***mixed methods evaluation*** approach was developed to ensure systematic collection of data and information related to each of the evaluation questions and evidence as it relates to the evaluation criteria of ***relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as equity, gender equality and human rights-based***. The mixed method evaluation approach included:

- Desk review
- Sample and site visits for 9 SOEBGS primary schools
- Key informant interviews with UNICEF, implementing partners and SOEBGS school staff
- Focus group discussions with SOEBGS primary school teachers
- Review of administrative data

The evaluation approach developed for this evaluation were guided by the Terms of Reference (TOR) and a desk review, with inputs from UNICEF SCO. The evaluation approach allowed for a comprehensive, fair and unbiased evaluation of the Programme and its implementation in SOEBGS primary schools.

Participatory approaches were used throughout this evaluation. This included mainstreaming a gender lens, applying human rights approaches and recognizing key stakeholders and beneficiaries as 'rights-holders', and the responsibility of the State and other actors to act as 'duty-bearers' to support the realization of children's rights to equitable, inclusive and relevant education services.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The three-year Implementation plan for the Programme (2018-2020) was interrupted and impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Training of SOEBGS counsellors, school heads and coaches occurred in 2018-2019, as initially planned. In 2019, coaches began to train other teachers in their schools to implement the Programme; however, activities planned for 2020 were interrupted in March 2020 by the pandemic. Because of the pandemic, SOEBGS management and NGO SAGA Foundation were unable to perform school visits and provide refresher trainings that were initially envisioned. During the pandemic, SOEBGS management and school staff shifted their focus to delivering education to students remotely, largely via television and radio; as a result, teachers had limited contact with students and were unable to assess their learning or use differentiated teaching approaches. When students returned to the classroom, school heads and teachers were focused on reintegrating children into the classroom, delivering curriculum and limiting contact between children to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools. At the time of this evaluation, Programme activities implemented under the aegis of the Programme Cooperation Agreement had ended, although they were not fully implemented due to the pandemic, yet schools were still implementing the Programme to varying degrees.

In 2020, during the pandemic, the MINOWC enacted the Automatic Promotion Policy in primary education, a practice of allowing students to progress from one class/grade to the next higher class/grade at the end of the school year regardless of academic performance or educational attainment. The Automatic Promotion Policy has had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the Programme. The challenge is that teachers perceive students as being less motivated to learn; in turn, teachers are less motivated to expend more time and energy to help to address students learning gaps and needs. Both teachers and students are well aware that students will be promoted to the next grade at the end of the year, regardless of their learning outcome and academic achievements, or lack thereof.

The key findings present a picture of the strengths and limitations of the Programme as it relates to the Programme's goal and objectives, and its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Relevance

The Programme was designed and implemented to support SOEBGS to implement differentiated education in their 56 primary schools in an effort to

tailoring instruction to students' learning needs. SOEBGS recognized that the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that has long been at the centre of the country's primary education model was not effective for all students, as many students were having to repeat primary school grades and were not transitioning from primary to secondary education. Given the high rates of grade repetition and school dropout, SOEBGS envisioned that a student-centred pedagogy that relies upon differentiated teaching approaches as a way to meet the learning needs of all students, regardless of differences in their abilities. It was envisioned that the Programme would help to reduce grade repetition and improve academic performance. The Programme was also aligned with educational reforms that MINOWC had been discussing.

The Programme's objectives, strategies and activities were relevant to the national context and primary education. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.3 on a 10-point scale (1=not relevant to 10=very relevant) as being relevant to the national context and primary education. This included strengthening teacher trainings and building teachers' knowledge and skills to apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom to teach all students, and to give additional attention to students who struggled to learn. The aim of the Programme was also to improve student learning and academic performance in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The Programme was also recognized as important at preparing teachers to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.8 on a 10-point scale of importance (1=not important to 10=very important).

Effectiveness

The Programme was evidence-based and modelled after a similar programme introduced in SOEBGS special schools, in cooperation with NGO SAGA Foundation. To support the Programme, NGO SAGA Foundation developed a Programme manual and workbook for teachers; then trained school head and two teachers (coaches) from each of the 56 primary schools. The coaches were expected to return to their schools and deliver trainings on the Programme to their colleagues, as well as to coach their colleagues to properly develop daily lesson plans, apply a three-star system of categorizing students and use differentiated teaching approaches in the classrooms. Not all coaches followed through with these responsibilities for a variety of reasons, including: lack of commitment or buy-in to use differentiated education in the classroom; lack of understanding of differentiated education based

upon the trainings received; lack of capacities and/or time to train and coach their colleagues; resistance from their colleagues; and lack of support from school heads.

There were several advantage and disadvantages to the Programme's teacher trainings. Advantages included: The Programme's teacher training reinforces good differentiated education and teaching that school heads and teachers recognize benefit students and help them to move from one grade to the next, particularly before the pandemic; teachers who were trained to be coaches were provided with a Programme manual and workbook; Programme's teacher training, if delivered properly and in its entirety, can capacitate teacher to understand and apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom; and the Programme's teacher training succeeded at capacitating teachers to develop daily lesson plans, to varying degrees (paragraphs 208-213 and 221-229).

In comparison, disadvantages included: SOEBGS counsellors were not fully capacitated or committed to support schools to implement the Programme; there was no clear criteria or guidance provided to school heads for selecting teachers to be trained as coaches to support the implementation of the Programme, and teachers who were selected to be coaches were not clearly informed as to what would be their roles and responsibilities as coaches in their schools; school heads should have received the same trainings that coaches received so that they full understood all components of the Programme, as well as additional trainings on how to manage the Programme's implementation and support teachers education in the classroom; and to varying degree, teachers were capacitated to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom, but they were not capacitated on how to use differentiated testing; and the cascade training approach was wrought with challenges (paragraphs 214-220 and 221-229).

The Programme helped to improve teacher performance and abilities to address the different needs of students, and to mad teaching and learning more inclusive, but to varying degrees. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not at all to 10=very much) at contributing to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiate teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning. Some respondents pointed out that before the pandemic many more teachers were more actively applying the Programme, but now there are new teachers who have never heard of the Programme; thus, they called for more trainings on differentiated education. Some schools have

expanded the Programme beyond grades 3-6, as originally planned, and are now trying to implement the Programme in pre-school and the upper grades. At the same time, however, not all teachers are implementing the Programme in the classroom and teachers complain that developing daily lesson plans is a lot of writing and time consuming. As a result, teachers from many of the schools reported that they have reverted back to using traditional teaching-centred pedagogy (paragraphs 235-243).

The Programme was 'somewhat effective' at achieving its objectives, including: preparing teacher to identify and assess the learning needs of students; adapting teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities; and preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 5.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not effective to 10=very effective) at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students, and ranked the Programme as a 5.3 on 10-point effectiveness scale at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities. Teachers were more likely to rank the Programme at 'not so effective' at accomplishing these the first objectives, due largely to the fact that the cascade training approach was not so effective. As it relates to preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in a more playful and interactive way, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.2 on a 10-point scale of effectiveness. Teachers complained, however, that schools lack the resources and materials that teachers need to create their own visual teaching materials (paragraphs 247-267).

On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.5 on a 10-point scale (1=not effective to 10=very effective) at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lesson plans. Coaches recognized that spending more time on developing lesson plans improves the way teachers teach and their relations with students; however, not all teachers are developing daily lesson plans or understand the importance of the lesson plans. Many teachers tend to see the lesson plans as time consuming and not very useful. Teachers also complained that they have to pay to photocopy the lesson plan forms and the costs can be high for teachers, particularly those teachers who teach math and language (paragraphs 268-273).

This evaluation found that nearly all respondents identified the need more training and training materials (90 percent), as well as educational and teaching materials (90 percent). The majority of respondents also identified the need for better collaboration, coordination and cooperation (72 percent), improvements to the classroom environment (70 percent) and more resources (56 percent). Fewer respondents also identified the need for improvements to the school environment (20 percent), improved Programme management (18 percent) and more Programme monitoring and monitoring tools (9 percent) (paragraphs 277-292).

Efficiency

This Programme was implemented with no donor funding; it was funded predominately by UNICEF.³ The total cost of the Programme was USD 89,728 (SRD 663,989), of which USD 81,355 (SRD 602,032) was UNICEF's contribution and USD 8,373 (SRD 61,957) was a CSO contribution (i.e., SOEBGS).

UNICEF and SOEBGS learned that two years was not enough time to implement the Programme to the extent that it was able to change the culture of schools and reform education in primary schools to include differentiated education. Nor was there enough time to really assess the Programme's effectiveness and impacts, or to ensure sustainability. Schools need a longer period of time to be capacitated to possess the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effectively implement the Programme as a whole school approach. SOEBGS schools would benefit from an additional training and technical assistance to implement the Programme, and additional resources to ensure that schools have the training and teaching materials needed to fully implement the Programme in all 56 primary schools.

Given the lost learning time and learning losses experienced by children during the pandemic, additional resources are needed to support programming, such as the Differentiated Education Programme, that aim to help students recover from learning losses and to catch-up from unfinished learning. Ultimately, there is much work to be done, yet the challenges for educators, students and parents are considerable and will require educational reforms and interventions that include a focus on differentiated education and tailored or remedial instruction that focuses on helping teachers to deal with students who are not prepared for the

³ Conducting a costing analysis was beyond the scope of this evaluation and the evaluator was not able to conduct cost comparisons. The evaluator was provided with

summary expenditures data presented by implementation phase and result/activity.

classroom and the materials and at very different levels of understanding (paragraphs 297-298).

Sustainability

This evaluation found limited evidence that the Programme will be sustainable after only two-years of implementation; more time is needed for implementation. On average, in terms of sustainability, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not sustainable to 10=very sustainable). : There were challenge and barriers to Programme implementation that need to be addressed for the Programme to be sustainable. To ensure sustainability, school heads and teachers need additional training on how to implement the Programme, including training on how to develop lessons plans and how to teach using differentiated teaching approaches and testing. They also need educational and teaching materials, and differentiated tests that are aligned with teaching based upon the three-star system. Respondents also recognized that there needs to be better cooperation among teachers in schools and support from school heads to implement the Programme; this is because there is a lot of resistance to the Programme.

On average, respondents thought it 'somewhat likely' that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.9 on a 10-point scale (1=not likely to 10=very likely) that it has the potential for scaling up and mainstreaming. Schools, however, need to be provided with the resources and educational and teaching materials for the Programme to be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. Additional invests also need to be made to ensure that the Programme is implemented in schools in the interior, to ensure that teachers in the interior are properly capacitated and provided with the technical assistance they need, coupled with the resources and educational and teaching materials (paragraphs 308-312).

Any effort to ensure sustainability of the Programme requires continued external inputs, including financial support and technical assistance to support a review and revisions to the Programme manual and workbook based upon lessons learned from this evaluation, and the development of improved capacity building trainings and training materials for continued trainings of counsellors, school heads and teachers. This includes financial support to ensure that Programme-related manuals, workbooks and teaching materials are readily available to all teachers in all SOEBGS schools. External inputs are also needed to ensure that schools and teachers have the resources and materials they need to practice

differentiated education in the classroom. This includes reusable educational and teaching aids, such as visual teaching materials, blocks and furniture to create reading and math corners in schools and classrooms.

LESSONS LEARNED

There were several lessons learned to consider if there are plans going forward to continue to support the Programme's implementation, and could be relevant to MINOWC and other faith-based school systems in Suriname that plan to implement differentiated education. Lessons learned include:

- In Suriname, educational institutions and educators are slow to change, including to transition from teacher-centred pedagogy to student-centred differentiated education and teaching pedagogy. Thus, efforts to 'win the hearts and minds' of school heads and teachers to implement the Programme on a daily basis in the classroom requires significant capacity building and technical assistance, as well as a demonstration of results and proper allocations of resources.
- Counsellors, school heads and teachers all need to be properly capacitated and mentored to implement the Programme and to work together as a team to implement the Programme, as a whole school approach. A whole school approach will increase the responsibility and engagement of all teachers in the Programme. EBGs primary schools need school heads and teachers who are willing to champion the Programme.
- EBGs counsellors need to be agents of change and champions of the Programme, and they need to be fully capacitated and certified to train school heads and teachers on all components of the Programme, and to assess its implementation in the classroom.
- School heads need to be committed to the Programme and capacitated to support a whole school approach for Programme implementation. In keeping, school heads need to serve as role models to teachers and regularly communicate and demonstrate their commitment to the Programme, and ensure that all teachers are capacitated to implement the Programme.
- There should be clear criteria and guidance for school heads to recruit and select teachers to be

coaches, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for coaches.

- All teachers should receive the same training that the coaches received, and should provide refresher trainings on an annual basis. More specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education should also be developed and made available to teachers and school heads.
- All teachers should be capacitated to develop lesson plans using differentiated teaching approaches, and to align their lesson plans with required learning outcomes as per the subject and grade. These do not necessarily need to be daily lesson plans, which is time consuming for teachers, but could be weekly lesson plans.
- All school heads and teachers should be provided with a hard and/or digital copy of the Programme manual and workbook, and a copy of these documents should be made readily available in each school library, so that teachers can easily access and/or sign out them for a few days at time.
- EBGS needs to invest more resources in the Programme and identify a cadre of change agents and champions of the Programme and imbed them in schools across the country.
- EBGS needs qualified/certified personnel who can provide trainings and technical assistance to schools heads and teachers on all components of the Programme and how to properly implement the Programme in schools and classrooms.
- The Programme's trainings and tools should include differentiated testing and tests that teachers can use in the classroom at each grade level. This will help to create more consistency across classes and primary schools as to which students belong in star 1, 2 and 3 groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented below aim to support the process of strengthening the implementation of the Programme, particularly given the fact that it was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations also aim to support scaling up and mainstreaming the Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools to

encourage the Programme's sustainability. Following the recommendations is a prioritization and classification of each recommendation based upon urgency, impact and difficulty (**Table 7.1**).

Strengthen Differentiated Education Programme-Related Materials

Recommendation 1: SOEBGS should review and revise all of the Differentiated Education Programme-related materials, including training manuals and materials, and workbooks for teachers.

Recommendation 2: SOEBGS should develop standardized differentiated testing for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade-level to support the Differentiated Education Programme.

Recommendation 3: SOEBGS needs to establish an annual budget for and invest in purchasing materials that schools and teachers need in the classroom to teach using differentiated education and teaching strategies.

Strengthen Differentiated Education Programme Implementation and Monitoring

Recommendation 4: SOEBGS should establish a Differentiate Education Programme Unit to strengthen Programme implementation and monitoring.

Recommendation 5: SOEBGS should expand the Differentiated Education Programme to include Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL)⁴, which is a form of differentiated instruction that would help students who have fallen behind in learning due to the pandemic to catch-up, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Strengthen Capacity Building Trainings for the Differentiated Education Programme

Recommendation 6: SOEBGS should roll out Differentiated Education Programme-related trainings to all SOEBGS school heads and teachers over a two-year period.

Recommendation 7: SOEBGS should develop an induction or orientation training on the Differentiated Education Programme for new school heads and teachers.

Recommendation 8: SOEBGS should consider developing a full-package of content and 'how-to

⁴ Retrieved on 2 April 2023 from: [The TaRL Approach - Teaching at the Right Level](#)

videos’ for school staff that will capacitate them on how to roll-out all components of the Programme.

Recommendation 9: SOEBGS should develop a schedule for delivering refresher trainings related to the Differentiated Education Programme on an annual basis, as well as for more specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education for counsellors, school heads and teachers.

Recommendation 10: To improve the Programme, all teachers should be provided with a copy of Programme-related materials, including the manual and workbook for teachers, and a copy of these documents should be made readily available in each school library.

Secure External Support for the Differentiated Education Programme

Recommendation 11: UNICEF and SOEBGS should continue to partner in an effort to strengthen and support ongoing rollout and implementation of the Differentiated Education Programme.

Recommendation 12: SOEBGS should develop a ‘community of practice’ for the Programme where counsellors, school heads and teachers can learn from each other, share good practices and lessons learned, and discuss and solve challenges related to Programme implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

This evaluation report presents findings from the **UNICEF Suriname Formative Evaluation of the From Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme: Improving Enrolment, Learning and Transition from Frontal to Differential Learning (2018–2022)** that was conducted by the author of this report, Dr. Robin Haarr (PhD), Professor and UNICEF Senior Consultant. This evaluation was commissioned and managed by the UNICEF Suriname Country Office (CO), in close coordination with the UNICEF Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO). This evaluation was conducted between December 2022 and June 2023.

The purpose of this formative evaluation is to assess to what extent the programme entitled, ‘Improving enrolment and learning: Transition from frontal teaching to differentiated learning (hereinafter referred to as the Differentiated Education Programme) was successful in improving the performance of the Education Foundation of the Moravian Church (SOEBGS) schools in Suriname. The Programme was developed to strengthen teacher training programmes to build teachers’ knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching methods in the classroom, which would improve student learning, outcomes and academic performance. Trained teachers should be able to effectively integrate these innovative teaching methods into the classroom in a more holistic manner, and use different teaching styles and approaches to teach students with different learning styles and abilities.⁵ This evaluation is also focused on learning more about enabling factors, bottlenecks and challenges, as inputs for learning and future actions for improving and scaling up the Programme.

The Programme was funded by UNICEF with civil society organization (CSO) partner contributions (i.e., SOEBGS). The Programme cost a total of USD 89,728, of which UNICEF contributed a total of USD 81,356 and the CSO contribution was USD 8,373.⁶ Because the Programme was funded by UNICEF as a thematic initiative versus by external donor monies, programme-related documents were limited in number, as there were no specific external donor reporting requirements. Nevertheless, programme-related documents that were available were reviewed and used to design the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, and draft this Inception and Final Evaluation Reports.

The Programme was initially planned to be implemented from 1 August 2018 to 31 December 2020, but it was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic which began in March 2020.⁷ To date, the Programme continues to be implemented by the 56 SOEBGS primary schools.

The intended uses of this evaluation is to inform ongoing implementation of the Programme in SOEBGS primary schools. Thus, this evaluation offers evidence-based recommendations for further improvement of the Programme and the potential for scaling it up to other grades and schools, and to inform national teacher training programmes. This evaluation offers strategic guidance to UNICEF on how to sharpen its focus areas of support to SOEBGS and MINOWC for mainstreaming differentiated teaching and learning approaches in education, and the overall approach to quality education.

The target audience, including **primary expected users of this evaluation** is UNICEF SCO, SOEBGS and MINOWC. This evaluation will also be of interest to partner UN agencies and international financial institutions/donors that contribute to UNICEF results and wider UN system commitments, intended outcomes and efforts on the realization of children’s rights and wider human rights commitments, including equitable access to quality education and improvement to learning skills and outcomes.

⁵ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

⁶ Ibid, 2018.

⁷ On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic. Subsequently, on 13 March 2020, Suriname announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 and closed its borders. On 16 March 2020, all schools were closed to prevent a further spread of COVID-19. The closure of schools had a notable negative impact on the ability of schools and teachers to ensure all children have access to distance education and remote learning. Although the COVID-19 pandemic continued throughout 2020 and into 2022, schools in Suriname were able to open in October 2020 with protective measures, yet temporary closures did occur as needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Thus, the spread of COVID-19 continued to interrupt the delivery of education and student learning.

Design of this evaluation was guided by the Terms of Reference (TOR) and programme documents, and the *Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF*⁸, *Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)*⁹, *UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards and Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*¹⁰ and *UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards*.¹¹

1.1. Structure of the Report

The report includes multiple sections. The evaluation begins with an **overview of the country context and the educational system**. This is followed by an overview of the **UNICEF-supported From Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme**. The next section offers a description of the **evaluation methodology**. This section describes the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, evaluation criteria and questions, data collection methods and tools, ethical considerations and protocols, data management and analysis, and reporting and validation of findings and recommendations laid out in this report.

The next section presents the **evaluation findings** related to each of the four Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) criteria¹² – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability – and cross-cutting issues of equity, gender equality and human rights. This section offers an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected in the field during this evaluation, and uses this data to answer each of the evaluation questions related to the evaluation criteria.

This evaluation report ends with a section focused on **conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations** from this evaluation. This section presents conclusions that are derived from the findings and present a picture of the strengths and limitations of the Programme as it relates to the Programme's goal, objective and aims, and the Programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The conclusions are followed by evidence-based lessons learned and recommendations which are forward-looking and offer short-, medium- and long-term opportunities to strengthen and scale-up the Programme to the next phase. The conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations are grounded in the evaluation findings and based upon good practices for implementing similar programmes in educational systems.

⁸ UNICEF (2018). *Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF*. UNICEF: New York, NY, USA. Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [Revised Policy 2018 \(Interactive\).pdf \(unicef.org\)](#)

⁹ UNICEF (2016). *Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group*. UNEG: New York, NY, USA. Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [UNEG Norms Standards for Evaluation WEB.pdf \(betterevaluation.org\)](#)

¹⁰ UNICEF (2021). *UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*. UNICEF: New York, NY USA. Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [Branded Procedure Template \(unicef.org\)](#)

¹¹ UNICEF (2017). *UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards*. UNICEF: New York, NY, USA. Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards | UNICEF Evaluation in UNICEF](#)

¹² Retrieved on 9 June 2023 from: [oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm](#)

2. OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY CONTEXT AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



The Republic of Suriname lies on the north-eastern Atlantic coast of South America, bordered by French Guiana to the east, Brazil to the south and Guyana to the west. Suriname is one of the smallest countries in South America with an area of 163,820 km. Suriname is considered a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). Despite being located on the mainland, as a low-lying coastal country, Suriname faces development challenges similar to small island nations, such as limited resources, environmental fragility, high costs of transportation and energy, and vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters.¹³

Suriname is also recognized as the most forested country in the world. In 2020, 97 percent¹⁴ of land was reported to be forest area, of which 93 percent of the territory is covered by the Amazon rainforest. This creates distinctive differences between the sparsely populated interior and the more populated coastal areas of the country.¹⁵

Suriname is a small, upper middle-income country with an estimated population of 612,985 in 2021; an estimated 35 percent of the population were children aged 0-19 years.¹⁶ Suriname is one of the most ethnically diverse national and multilingual societies in Latin America and the Caribbean with population groups originating from African, Amerindian, Indian, Javanese, Chinese, European and multiracial backgrounds. The largest ethnic groups are East Indians¹⁷ (37 percent), Creole¹⁸ (31 percent) and Javanese¹⁹ (15 percent).²⁰ Suriname is also home to four distinct indigenous groups which comprise up to five percent of the population, and six tribal communities, known as Maroons, which comprise up to 10 percent of the population.²¹

¹³ *Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Suriname 2020-2030*, p. 6.

¹⁴ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [Forest area \(% of land area\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](https://data.worldbank.org/Forest-area-%28of-land-area%29-Suriname)

¹⁵ *UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme Document, 2017-2021*, p. 2.

¹⁶ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [Specific country data | Human Development Reports \(undp.org\)](https://data.worldbank.org/Specific-country-data-Human-Development-Reports-undp.org)

¹⁷ East Indians are descendants from 19th century workers who arrived from India.

¹⁸ Suriname Creoles are mixed descendants of West African slaves and primarily Dutch Europeans.

¹⁹ Javanese are descended from workers from the Dutch East Indies on Java, Indonesia.

²⁰ Retrieved from World Population Review on 31 December 2022: [Suriname Population 2020 \(Demographics, Maps, Graphs\) \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](https://worldpopulationreview.com/suriname-population-2020-demographics-maps-graphs/)

²¹ Surinamese Maroons are descended from escaped West African slaves and are divided into five groups (Ndyuka, Kwinti, Matawai, Saramaccans and Paramaccans), see *Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Suriname 2020-2030*, p. 5.

Most of the population is concentrated along the northern coastal zone areas; whereas the interior is sparsely inhabited.²² An estimated 65 percent of the population live in urban areas with more than half the population living in and around Paramaribo, the capital city. Thirty-five percent of the population lives in rural areas, including the interior.

2.1. Economic Growth and Human Development

Suriname is a member of the CARICOM-Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a regional intergovernmental organization that promotes and supports a unified Caribbean Community that is inclusive, resilient and competitive.²³ According to the World Bank, Suriname is an upper-middle income country²⁴ with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD of 2.98 billion in 2021, down from a GDP of 4.02 billion in 2019 (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic).²⁵ In 2020, due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, Suriname experienced a 16.0 percent annual decrease in GDP from 2019, which saw a 1.2 percent annual increase in GDP.²⁶ In 2021, Suriname's economy recovered somewhat from the global pandemic, but still faced a 2.7 percent annual decrease in GDP.²⁷ In 2022, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected a 1.3 percent annual increase in GDP.²⁸

The *Human Development Report 2021/2022*²⁹ presents Human Development Index (HDI) values³⁰ for 191 countries and territories with the most recent data for 2021. The HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development, including: the ability to lead a long and healthy life, measured by life expectancy at birth; the ability to acquire knowledge, measured by mean years of schooling for adults 25 years of age and older, and expected years of school; and the ability to achieve a decent standard of living, measured by gross national income per capita. The scores for the three HDI dimension indices are aggregated into a composite index using a geometric mean and a ranking provided.³¹

Table 2.1 shows 2021 HDI values³² for Suriname.³³ Scores for the three HDI dimension indices are aggregated into a composite index using a geometric mean and a ranking provided.³⁴ In 2021, Suriname was classified as 'high' on the HDI, positioning at 99 out of 191 countries and territories. For comparison purposes, similar data are presented for Latin America and the Caribbean and High HDI countries.

²² The population estimate for 2020 is based on UN Population Projections; *Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Suriname 2020-2030*, 2019, p. 5.

²³ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [CARICOM-Caribbean Community - CARICOM](#)

²⁴ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [WDI - The World by Income and Region \(worldbank.org\)](#)

²⁵ GDP was obtained from the World Bank on 31 December 2022 from: [GDP \(current US\\$\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

²⁶ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [GDP growth \(annual %\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Retrieved on 31 December 2022 from: [Suriname and the IMF](#)

²⁹ UNDP (2022). *Human Development Report 2021/2022 – Uncertain Times, Uncertain Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World*. UNDP: New York, NY, USA. Retrieved 31 December 2022 from: [Human Development Report 2021-22 | Human Development Reports \(undp.org\)](#)

³⁰ The HDI is a composite index focused on three basic dimensions of human development: the ability to lead a long and healthy life, measured by life expectancy at birth; the ability to acquire knowledge, measured by mean year of schooling and expected years of school; and the ability to achieve a decent standard of living, measured by gross national income per capita. The scores for the three HDI dimension indices are aggregated into a composite index using a geometric mean and a ranking provided; see UNDP (2022). *Human Development Report 2021/2022 – Uncertain Times, Uncertain Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World*. UNDP: New York, NY, USA.

³¹ Ibid, 2022.

³² The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.

³³ The Human Development Report Office uses data from international data agencies with the mandate, resources and expertise to collect national data on specific indicators. For a list of international data providers; see UNDP (2022). *Human Development Report 2021/2022 – Uncertain Times, Uncertain Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World*. UNDP: New York, NY, USA.

³⁴ Ibid, 2022.

Table 2.1. Suriname Human Development Index Indicators, 2021

| Human Development Index | Suriname | Latin America and the Caribbean | High HDI countries |
|---|----------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| HDI Value | 0.730 | 0.754 | 0.754 |
| Rank | 99 | --- | --- |
| Life expectancy at birth (SDG 3) | 70.3 | 72.1 | 74.7 |
| Expected years of schooling (SDG 4.3) | 13.0 | 14.8 | 14.2 |
| Mean years of schooling (SDG 4.6) | 9.8 | 9.0 | 8.3 |
| National income per capita (2011 PPP\$) (SDG 8.5) | 12,672 | 14,521 | 15,167 |

Source: UNDP (2022). *Human Development Report 2021/2022 – Uncertain Times, Uncertain Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World*. UNDP: New York, NY, USA.

To measure human development more comprehensively, the *Human Development Report 2021/2022* presents the Gender Development Index (GDI), which compares female and male achievements on HDI values, and the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which highlights women's empowerment as it relates to reproductive health, education, political representation and the labour market.³⁵ The GDI is calculated for 167 countries. Globally, disadvantages facing females are a major source of gender inequality and one of the greatest barriers to human development progress.

In 2021, the female HDI value for Suriname was 0.728, in contrast to 0.727 for males, resulting in a GDI value of 1.001, placing the country into Group 1 of countries with high equality in GDI achievements. In addition, Suriname has a GII value of 0.427, ranking it 105 out of 191 countries on the GII.³⁶

In 2016-2017, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), in cooperation with the Central Bank of Suriname and Suriname's Energy Company, implemented the Suriname Survey of Living Conditions³⁷ and established poverty lines (in SRD per adult person) for Paramaribo, the coastal area and rural interior. Based upon these different poverty lines, it was estimated that 1.7 percent of the population lives in extreme poverty or indigence, 26.2 percent live in overall poverty (may be interpreted as living in survival mode) and 47.9 percent of people living in the rural interior are poor.³⁸ **Chart 2.1** shows that poverty and indigence rates vary significantly across districts. Poverty rates are highest in Sipaliwini, (51.7 percent), Para (44.0 percent), Marowjine (40.2 percent) and Saramacca (38.3 percent); whereas indigence rates are highest in Brokopondo (25.9 percent), Sipaliwini (15.8 percent) and Marowjine (11.8 percent).³⁹

³⁵ UNDP (2022). *Human Development Report 2021/2022 – Uncertain Times, Uncertain Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World*. UNDP: New York, NY, USA.

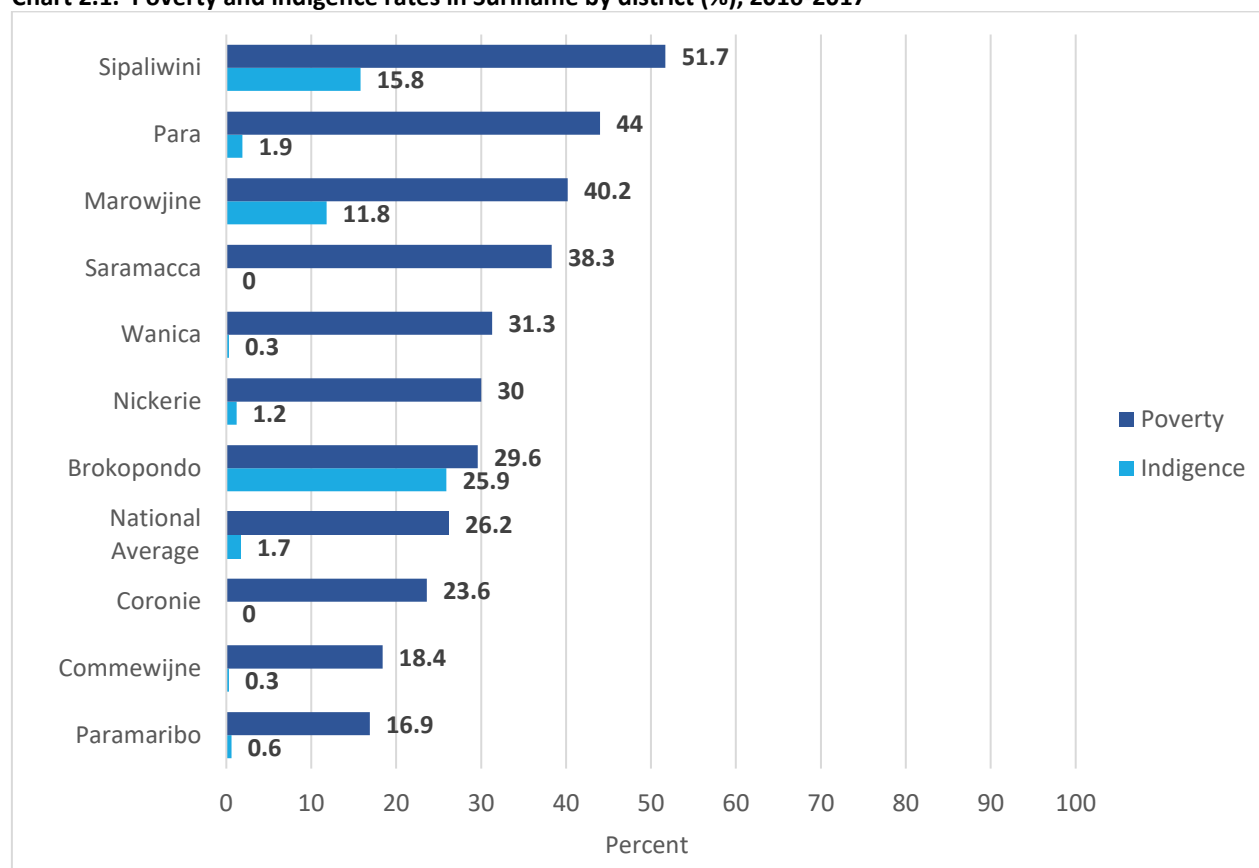
³⁶ As it relates to the GII dimension indices, only 29.4 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women in Suriname (SDG 5.5). In addition, 69.9 percent of adult women aged 25 years and older had reached at least a secondary level of education, compared to 70.7 percent of adult males (SDG 4.4). Also, the female labour force participation (aged 15 years and older) was 43.4 percent, compared to 65.1 percent for males aged 15 years and older. Also, in 2017, for every 100,000 live births, 120 women die from pregnancy-related causes (SDG 3.1), and the adolescent birth rate is 56.1 births per 1,000 women of aged 15-19 (SDG 3.7); Ibid, 2022.

³⁷ The Survey of Living Conditions was a nationally representative survey covering 2,100 households in 10 districts.

³⁸ UN (2020). *Republic of Suriname Common Country Analysis: Final Report*. UN Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname, pp. 25-26.

³⁹ Beuermann, D.W (2018). *Main Findings Suriname Survey of Living Conditions 2016-2017*. IDB: Washington, DC, USA.

Chart 2.1. Poverty and indigence rates in Suriname by district (%), 2016-2017



Source: Suriname Survey of Living Conditions, 2016-2017.

More recently, the *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022*⁴⁰, based upon 2018 survey data, it was estimated that 6.7 percent of population was in multidimensional poverty and 4.0 percent were vulnerable to multidimensional poverty. Contributions of deprivation to overall multidimensional poverty included education (43.8 percent), standard of living (35.8 percent) and health (20.4 percent).

Poverty is clearly a problem in Suriname, even though the country has reached a level of development that should allow a significant proportion of the poor to escape poverty. A considerable amount of poverty derives from inequalities. Poverty is also at the heart of vulnerability, social discrimination and exclusion, including limited access to education, health care and other basic and essential services. Households with inadequate incomes are more vulnerable to changing economic and social circumstances and to reduced income-earning potential.

Child poverty is a problem which national experts have given much attention to because it threatens the future of national economic and social development objectives. In 2013, 41 percent of children in Suriname were multidimensionally poor.⁴¹ Poverty and living in Amazon's interior are aggravating factors for other social problems, including early marriage and pregnancy among girls. In recent years, UNICEF supported an analysis of multidimensional child poverty in Suriname.⁴² Although findings from this analysis were not available at the time of this evaluation, the analysis of multidimensional child poverty has since been completed and is due to be published in the near future.

It is well documented that children often bear the burden of poverty and poor children are frequently left behind when it comes to fulfilling their rights. Child poverty limits children's access to vital resources, including nutrition, clean water, sanitation, health care, early childhood education and social services; preventing children from

⁴⁰ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & Oxford Poverty & Health Development Initiative (OPHI) (2022). *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty*. UNDP & OPHI: New York, NY, USA.

⁴¹ UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme Document, 2017-2021, p. 2; see also, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Social Panorama of Latin America, 2013.

⁴² Retrieved on 1 January 2023 from: [Multidimensional Child Poverty Analysis Workshop in Suriname - SPRI Global](#)

achieving their full potential. In addition, families living below the poverty line are not provided with adequate safety nets and services to ensure that their children have the same opportunities as wealthier children. The CRC entitles children to an adequate standard of living, reiterating that growing up poor violates their rights, and highlights multiple dimensions of well-being related to survival, development, protection and participation.

Given the importance of children to the future of Suriname, it is essential that policymakers address poverty, particularly if they do not want children living in conditions of poverty to be compromised by poor health, limited education and reduced employment opportunities, and to ensure that these patterns are not replicated for future generations of children.⁴³

2.2. National Commitments to Development and Human Rights

Suriname has ratified core international human rights conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC), as well as the Millennium Declaration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a signatory, the Government of Suriname has prioritized improving access to and the quality of health, education, child protection and social services for children and families in need, including social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Since ratifying the CRC in 1993, Suriname has made significant progress in ensuring compliance of its legal and policy frameworks to ensure children's access to education and to improve the quality of education. In 2018, UNICEF launched the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity (MICS-EAGLE) Initiative with the objective of supporting governments to improve learning outcomes and equity issues in education by addressing two critical education data problems – gaps in key education indicators and lack of effective data utilization by the Government and education stakeholders. Thus, the MICS-EAGLE was designed to support an education sector situation analysis and sector plan development by building national capacity, and leveraging education data collected by MICS. The MICS-EAGLE builds on the global foundation provided by MICS to yield insights at the national, regional and global levels about ways to ensure that each child can reach his/her full potential by reducing barriers to opportunity.

Data generated from the MICS-EAGLE Initiative has increased knowledge generation as to the nature, extent and dynamics of education and learning outcomes in Suriname, as well as equity issues and child protection in education. Knowledge and information generated from the MICS-EAGLES in Suriname contributed to the development of the Programme, and challenges faced and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic informed modifications to the Programme, as school had to shift to distance education and learning.

UNICEF MICS-EAGLE assisted UNICEF SCO to engage in policy dialogue and programme planning with the Government of Suriname (GoS) to ensure that all children, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, enjoy their rights of a quality education and the opportunity develop to their full potential in an equitable, inclusive and protective society. This agenda is in line with **Suriname's national priorities** and **UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme Documents for 2017-2021 and 2022-2016**, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and indicators in the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.⁴⁴

2.3. Educational System

In Suriname, the Government and the Roman Catholic and Moravian Churches provide education for kindergarten through secondary school. It is notable that nearly 50 percent of the schools are faith-based, yet subsidized by MINOWC and managed by the several religious organizations. In the interior of Suriname, the SOEBGS owns and manages the majority of primary schools.

The educational system consists of pre-school, primary school, junior and senior secondary schools, and vocational and tertiary education. Pre-school is a two-year programme for children ages four and five, and is usually housed in a primary school. Currently pre-school is not compulsory. Compulsory primary school consists of Grades 1 to 6 for children ages 6-12. Completion of primary school is determined by examinations conducted nationwide at the end

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Retrieved on 15 January 2023 from: [The Sustainable Development Agenda - United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

of Grade 6. The national examinations are used for placement at secondary school, and monitoring and identification of students who may be 'at risk' of not achieving educational outcomes. Children enter lower secondary school at 12 years of age and upper secondary education starts at 16 years of age; neither lower nor upper secondary education are compulsory. Lower secondary school grades are referred to as Grade 1 to Grade 4, and upper secondary school also includes Grade 1 to Grade 4.⁴⁵

Suriname's basic educational curriculum is partly out of date; however, MINOWC aims to reform the education system and related legislation which dates back to the 1960s when Suriname was a Dutch colony. Reforms aims to increase compulsory schooling for children aged 4-16, and increase compulsory education up to Grade 10.⁴⁶

In the educational system, there is an ad hoc system of strengthening teaching skills and training teachers. In general, however, the teaching methods can be categorized as being ineffective given the high repetition rates.⁴⁷ In fact, in the Caribbean region, Suriname has the highest number of repeaters (e.g., 20 percent of students in grade 1 of the primary school are repeaters); thus, teacher training courses have yet to lead to a significant improvement in school performance. Moreover, teachers are insufficiently trained to provide a differentiated approach to learning, which responds to class dynamics and the situation, talents and learning differences of students. By sticking to a rigidly prescribed lesson plan, teachers are not sufficiently responsive to differences among students; thus, not all students have an equal opportunity to excel in school and everyday life.⁴⁸

In the sections that follow, data related to access to education, and learning and skills development are presented and described to provide a context in which the Programme being evaluated was implemented. It was not clear from Programme documents that these data were utilized to inform the development of the Programme, however, they are relevant to the context in which the Programme was implemented.

2.3.1. Access to Education

Access to quality education is one of the most effective interventions to empower children and adolescents with the skills to function in and contribute to society. Access to education has broad effects on children and adolescents' development and well-being, including physical and mental health, social development and civic engagement. Access to quality education is a vital prerequisite for combating poverty, and protection from hazardous and exploitative practices.⁴⁹

With the adoption of the SDGs, the GoS has committed to achieving universal completion of primary and secondary education by 2030, and a greater focus on inclusiveness in education, including gender parity. It is notable that the primary education completion rate in Suriname is comparable with the average primary education completion rate for Caribbean Small States, yet lower than the average for Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries. Bear in mind, however, that Suriname does not have an automatic system of promotion from one grade to another.

2.3.2. School Enrolment

Chart 2.2 shows the primary school gross enrolment rate (GER) for children of primary school age from 2016-2020. The GER has declined from 116 percent in 2016 to 101 percent in 2020, with little variation by gender. A GER can exceed 100 percent in situations where many children enter school late or repeat a grade. In addition, **Chart 2.3** shows the adjusted primary school net enrolment rate (NER)⁵⁰ for 2016-2018. In 2018, 86 percent of children of primary school age were enrolled in primary schools. The NER varied little by gender, although there was a three-percentage point difference in favour of girls in 2018. Since the NER excludes overage and underage students, it more accurately captures the education's system coverage and internal efficiency than the GER; however, it is useful to see differences between the GER and NER.

⁴⁵ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 2021.

⁴⁷ Terms of Reference

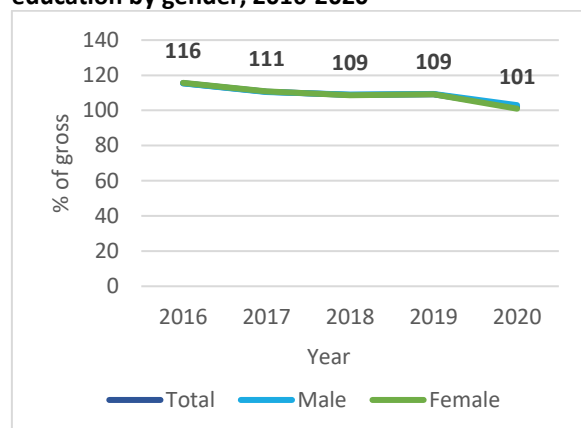
⁴⁸ Terms of Reference.

⁴⁹ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname.

⁵⁰ NER is the number of children in the official school-age group for a given level of education who are enrolled in any level of education, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population; see [Total net enrolment rate | UNESCO UIS](#).

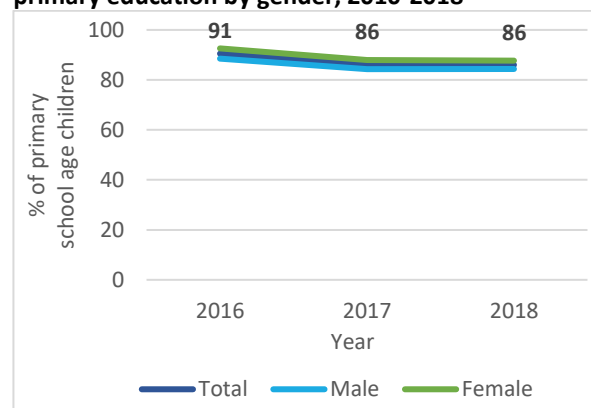
In 2018, MICS data found that children in urban (97 percent) and rural coastal areas (96 percent) were slightly more likely to attend primary school, compared to children in the rural interior (94 percent). In addition, children in the richest (98 percent) and middle (99 percent) wealth quintiles were more likely to attend primary school than children in the poorest households (93 percent).

Chart 2.2. Gross enrolment rate (GER) for primary education by gender, 2016-2020



Source: Retrieved from 1 January 2023 from: [School enrollment, primary, female \(% gross\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

Chart 2.3. Adjusted net enrolment rate (NER) for primary education by gender, 2010-2018



Source: Retrieved from 1 January 2023 from: [Adjusted net enrollment rate, primary, female \(% of primary school age children\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

Upon completion of primary school, some students join the work force, while others continue their education at a secondary institution. Secondary education is divided into four years of lower secondary education and two to four years of upper secondary education. In 2021, 71 percent of children of secondary school-age were enrolled in secondary schools, down from 82 percent in 2018. In 2021, the GER varied by gender, with a 14-percentage point difference in favour of girls (78 percent) over boys (64 percent).

In 2018, MICS data found that 62 percent of children aged 12-15 years attended lower secondary schools. Females (69 percent) were more likely than males (56 percent) to attend lower secondary schools (**Table 2.2**).

It is also notable that children in urban (68 percent) and rural coastal areas (64 percent) were more likely to attend lower secondary school, compared to children in the rural interior (29 percent). Only one in four children in the rural interior attended lower secondary schools.

Children in the richest (88 percent) were most likely to attend lower secondary school, whereas children in the poorest wealth quintile (37 percent) were least likely to attend lower secondary schools.

| Table 2.2. Lower secondary NER (adjusted), 2018 | |
|---|-------------|
| | Percent (%) |
| Total | 62 |
| Sex | |
| Male | 56 |
| Female | 69 |
| Area | |
| Urban | 68 |
| Rural Coastal | 64 |
| Rural Interior | 29 |
| Wealth Quintile | |
| Poorest | 37 |
| Middle | 69 |
| Richest | 88 |

Source: Suriname MICS, 2018

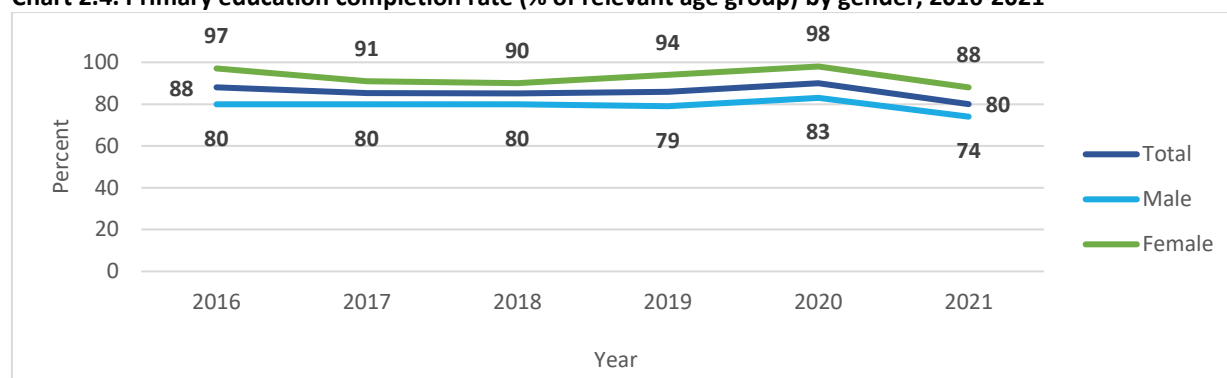
2.3.3. Completion Rates

Ensuring that all girls and boys complete primary and secondary education is a target of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **Charts 2.4** and **2.5** shows the completion rates⁵¹ for primary and lower secondary levels of education for 2016-2020. Chart 2.4 reveals that the primary education completion rate declined from 88 percent in 2016 to 80 percent in 2021. Over time, the primary education completion rate has been consistently higher for females than males (i.e., 14-percentage points higher in 2021). The decline in completion rates in 2021 is most likely

⁵¹ UNESCO defines the completion rate as the percentage of a cohort of children or young people ages three to five years above the intended age for the last grade of each level of education who completed that grade

due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children’s education, including school closures and learning modality changes, and challenges faced by teachers and students with teaching and learning during the pandemic.

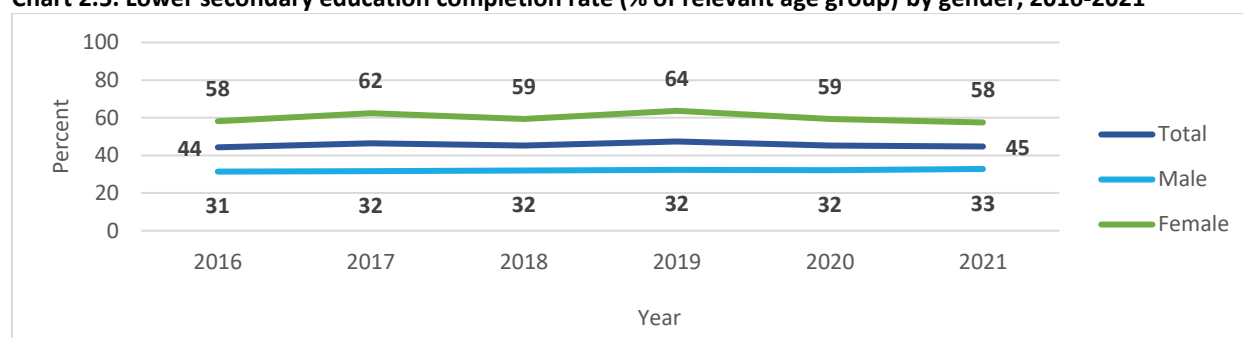
Chart 2.4. Primary education completion rate (% of relevant age group) by gender, 2016-2021



Source: Retrieved on 1 January 2023 from: [Primary completion rate, total \(% of relevant age group\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

Chart 2.5 shows that from 2016 to 2021 the lower secondary education completion rate remained unchanged. from 44 percent in 2016 to 45 percent in 2021, a 10-percentage point increase over time. Over time, however, the lower education completion rate has been consistently higher for females than males (i.e., 25-percentage points higher in 2021).

Chart 2.5. Lower secondary education completion rate (% of relevant age group) by gender, 2016-2021



Source: Retrieved on 1 January 2023 from: [Lower secondary completion rate, total \(% of relevant age group\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

In 2018, the MICS measured completion rates by level of education.⁵² MICS data revealed, on average, that 85 percent of children completed a primary education. Completion rates declined steeply at higher levels of education, with only 49 percent of all children completing lower secondary education and 23 percent completing upper secondary education. This implies that compared to primary education, lower and upper secondary education has higher rates of dropout, grade repetition or delayed conclusion which results in lower completion rates.⁵³

MICS data found serious area disparities in education completion rates. Completion rates for primary education were much higher in urban (89 percent) and rural coastal (86 percent) areas, and lowest in the rural interior (62 percent). Similarly, completion rates for lower secondary education were highest in urban areas (53 percent) and lowest in the rural interior (15 percent). In terms of upper secondary education, completion rates were highest in urban (23 percent) and rural coastal areas (19 percent), but non-existent in the rural interior. Across all levels of education, the rural interior has the lowest education completion rates; this, in part, is because there no upper secondary schools in rural interiors areas.⁵⁴ Areas in and around Paramaribo have the highest education completion rates at all levels of education; even higher than the national average.⁵⁵

⁵² Similar to UNESCO, the MICS defines the completion rate as the percentage of a cohort of children or young people ages three to five years above the intended age for the last grade of each level of education who completed that grade.

⁵³ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; see also, UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname, pp. 6-8.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 6-8.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 6-8.

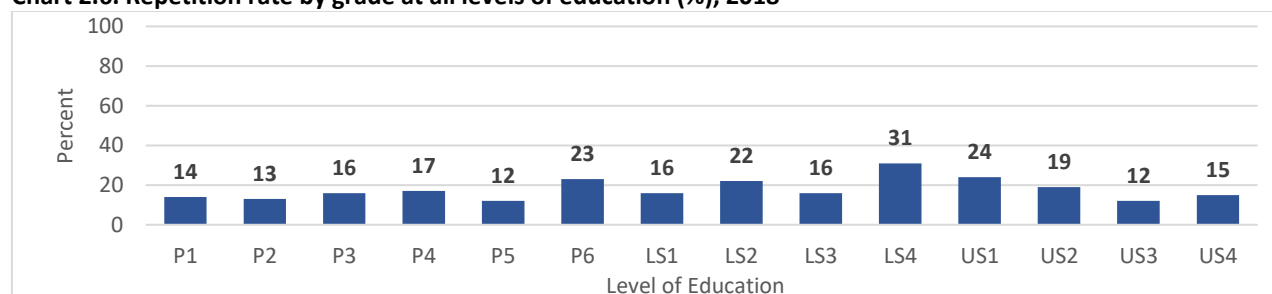
In 2081, across all three levels of education – primary, lower and upper secondary – females have higher completion rates than males and the national average. There is a notable decline in completion rates for both males (39-percentage point decline) and females (32-percentage point declined) from primary to lower secondary education.⁵⁶ Socio-economic disparities influence education completion rates. Across all levels of education, completion rates are highest among children in the richest households and lowest among children in the poorest households; to the extent that children in the richest households were three times more likely to complete a lower secondary education than children in the poorest households.⁵⁷

Children who do not complete school at primary and secondary levels are most likely to be Maroon; Maroons comprise 10 percent of the population. The 2018 MICS found that 56 percent of children who do not complete primary school were Maroon. Maroon were 14 times more likely not to complete primary school compared to Javanese (4 percent), nine times more likely to not complete primary school compared to Indigenous/Amerindians (6 percent), and four times more likely to not complete primary school compared to Hindustani (15 percent) and Creole (14 percent). Similarly, Maroons were most likely not to complete lower secondary education (33 percent) and upper secondary education (28 percent).⁵⁸ These patterns can be explained in large part by the fact that Maroons tend to live in the rural interior, where they face poverty and infrastructure challenges, such as lack of electricity, internet and schools. Children from the rural interior who aim to attend lower secondary school typically need to move to another village/city and travel long distances by boat to reach lower secondary schools; there are no upper secondary schools in the rural interior.⁵⁹

2.3.4. Grade Repetition

Grade repetition rates represent the proportion of pupils who remain in the same grade in the following school year. Repeating a grade reflects the internal efficiency of educational systems. Repetition is one of the key indicators for analysing and projecting pupil flows from grade-to-grade within educational systems. In Suriname, repetition rates vary widely from each grade of primary (P1-P6), lower secondary (LS1-LS4) and upper secondary (US1-US4) education. **Chart 2.6** shows that at the primary level, the repetition rate is highest at Grade 6 (23 percent), and at the lower secondary level, the repetition rate is highest at Grade 4 (31 percent). Grade repetition continues at the upper secondary level, with repetition rates highest in Grade 1 (24 percent) and 2 (19 percent).⁶⁰

Chart 2.6. Repetition rate by grade at all levels of education (%), 2018



Source: Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data. UNICEF, 2019.

In 2018, MICS data revealed that males (56 percent) were more likely to repeat grades than females (44 percent). Grade repeaters were also more likely to be in urban areas (69 percent), compared to rural coastal (16 percent) and rural interior areas (15 percent) of the country. Grade repeaters were also more likely to be in the poorest household (28 percent), although a significant proportion of grade repeaters were also in the richest households (14 percent).⁶¹ Grade repeaters were most likely to be Maroon (39 percent), followed by Creole (18 percent), Hindustani (17 percent), mixed ethnicities (12 percent), Javanese (8 percent) and Indigenous/Amerindian (5 percent).⁶²

⁵⁶ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; see also, UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname

⁵⁷ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019

⁶⁰ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26

⁶¹ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

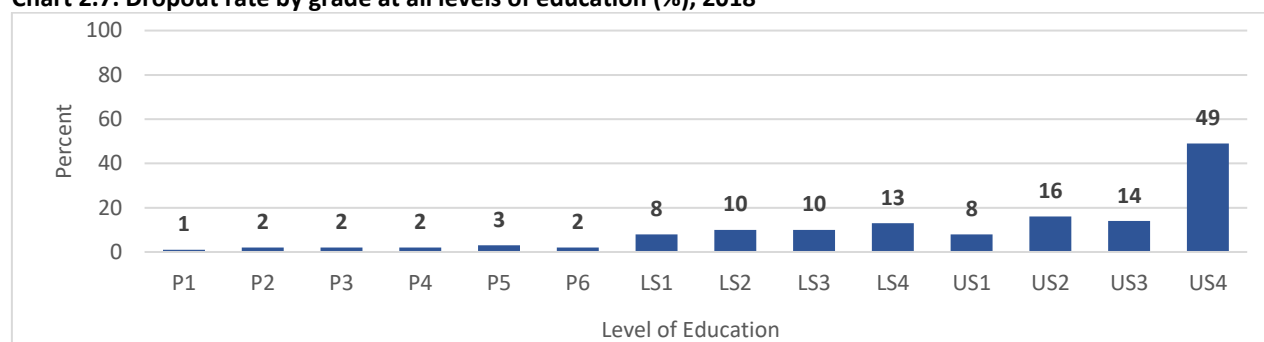
⁶² Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

2.3.5. School Dropout

School dropout rates reflect the proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who are no longer enrolled in the following school year. Premature exiting measures the phenomenon of pupils from a cohort leaving school without completion, and its effect on the internal efficiency of educational systems. School dropout is a key indicator for analysing and projecting pupil flows from grade-to-grade within the educational cycle.⁶³

Dropout rates vary at the primary (P1-P6), lower secondary (LS1-LS4) and upper secondary (US1-US4) levels. In contrast with repetition rates, dropout rates are all at or below 3 percent at the primary level, but show a clearer pattern increasing consistently at each grade in lower and upper secondary education (**Chart 2.7**). At the lower secondary level, dropout rates ranged from 8 to 13 percent depending upon grade, and was highest at Grade 4 (LS4). At the upper secondary level, dropout rates increased even more, reaching 49 percent of students at Grade 4 (US4). Students who dropout at Grade 4 (US4) do not move on to tertiary education.⁶⁴ Most dropouts abandon school after attending a grade in lower secondary education (51 percent).⁶⁵

Chart 2.7. Dropout rate by grade at all levels of education (%), 2018



Source: Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data. UNICEF, 2019.

In 2018, MICS data revealed that males (48 percent) and females (52 percent) were nearly equally likely to dropout. Dropouts were more likely to be in urban areas (75 percent), compared to rural coastal (16 percent) and rural interior areas (9 percent); this is most likely because dropout rates are higher at the lower and upper secondary levels and most secondary schools are in urban areas. Dropouts were also more likely to be in the poorest household (22 percent), although a significant proportion of dropouts were also in the richest households (17 percent).⁶⁶ Dropouts were highest among Maroons (33 percent) and Hindustani (22 percent).⁶⁷

2.3.6. Equitable Access to Education

In Suriname, special needs education is provided for students whose needs cannot be met in mainstream schools. This does not include exceptional or gifted students who may also have special educational needs. There are 36 schools for children with disabilities, including 24 at the primary school level (20 in urban areas, three in rural coastal areas and one in the rural interior) and 12 at the secondary school level (nine in urban areas and three in rural coastal areas).⁶⁸

⁶³ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; see also, UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname, pp. 24-26.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, pp. 24-26.

⁶⁸ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname.

Children with disabilities who get high enough marks can transfer to mainstream secondary school, for further education or vocational training. The challenge, however, is that teachers at secondary schools do not typically have the skills needed to integrate children with disabilities into their classrooms and to accommodate their special needs. As a result, many parents end up removing their children from the mainstream schools and bring them back to the special schools for children with disabilities. Unfortunately, mainstream schools do not do a good job of preparing teachers or students to welcome children with disabilities into their classrooms and to understand their needs; as a result, children with disabilities are at increased risk of experiencing bullying and discrimination in mainstream schools.⁶⁹

Another challenge facing special schools for children with disabilities is that the teacher training colleges do not prepare teachers to specialize in special education for children with disabilities. Nearly two decades ago the teacher training colleges did offer a specialization in special education; however, that programme has since been eliminated. Thus, finding teachers with an interest and expertise in teaching children with disabilities is a challenge for special schools for children with disabilities. Thus, many teachers hired to teach in special schools for children with disabilities end up receiving on the job training, on how to effectively communicate and teach children with disabilities, and how to cope with and support them in their social and emotional learning. Some teachers must also learn sign language on the job.⁷⁰

In Suriname, only 14 percent of children ages 5–17 have at least one functional difficulty (i.e., a difficulty in any of the following functional domains: sensory, movement, cognitive or emotional/behavioural). Children with functional difficulties are over-represented among children not learning and out-of-school at both primary and lower secondary school levels.⁷¹ At the upper secondary school level, only six percent of out-of-school children had a functional difficulty. These patterns can likely be explained by the fact that children with functional difficulties stay in school longer (more years), but not necessarily attending the right level of education in relation to their age.⁷²

The prevalence of functional difficulties is similar for boys (15 percent) and girls (12 percent), and among children ages 5-14 (14 percent) and 15-17 years (11 percent). There is an apparent relationship between area and socio-economic status and functional difficulties. Most notable, children ages 5-17 living in the rural interior (20 percent) were more likely to have functional difficulties, compared to children living in rural coastal (15 percent) and urban areas (12 percent). In addition, children in the poorest household (18 percent) are more likely to have functional difficulties than children in the richest households (8 percent). The most common functional difficulties in Suriname are emotional/ behavioural, including anxiety (4 percent), controlling behaviours (4 percent) and accepting change (3 percent).⁷³

Children with functional difficulties attend school at very similar rates as children without functional difficulties. There are, however, some gaps in attendance one-year prior to the start primary education (83 percent) and in primary education (94 percent), compared to children without functional difficulties (96 percent). Similarly, there are some gaps in attendance at the lower secondary level (53 percent and 62 percent, respectively).⁷⁴

There are no notable differences in repetition rates between children with and without functional difficulties. At the primary level, 17 percent of children with functional difficulties repeated their last grade of primary school, compared to 10 percent of children without functional difficulties. At the lower secondary level, 26 percent of children with functional difficulties repeated a grade, compared to 20 percent of children without functional disabilities.⁷⁵

In terms of learning, school environments seem less prepared to accommodate children with functional difficulties, who still do not fare as well as their peers. Only 34 percent of children with functional difficulties have foundational reading skills, compare to 49 percent of children without functional difficulties. The gap in foundational numeracy

⁶⁹ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 2021.

⁷¹ Ibid, 2021; UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname, pp. 27-28.

⁷² Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, p. 28.

⁷³ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, p. 28.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, p. 28.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019, p. 28.

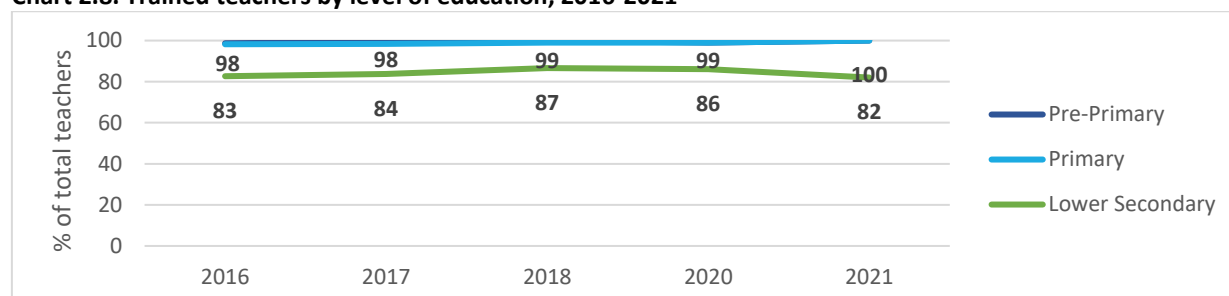
is even larger. Children without functional difficulties (26 percent) were more likely to have numeracy skills than children with functional difficulties (18 percent).⁷⁶

2.3.7. Trained Teachers

A trained teacher is one who has received at least the minimum organized pedagogical teacher training pre-service and in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in Suriname. Training of teachers can have a great impact on student learning outcome; yet this only happens when the teachers apply new knowledge and skills in their classroom.⁷⁷

Chart 2.8 shows that the proportion of trained teachers has remained high at the pre-primary and primary school levels from 2016-2021; however, at the lower secondary level, only 82 percent of teachers were trained in 2021. At the upper secondary level, the proportion of trained teachers was even lower at 50 percent in 2015; data are not available for 2016-2021.⁷⁸ There are far fewer trained teachers at the secondary level because there is a lack of college faculty who can teach specialized subjects to college students and there is a lack of teachers trained on specialized subjects; these two issues are coupled and there has been no education policy develop to resolve this issue or gap.⁷⁹

Chart 2.8. Trained teachers by level of education, 2016-2021



Source: Retrieved on 3 January 2023 from: [Trained teachers in pre-primary education \(% of total teachers\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#); [Trained teachers in primary education \(% of total teachers\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#); [Trained teachers in lower secondary education \(% of total teachers\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

2.3.8. Skills and Learning Outcomes

In 2018, on average, only 47 percent of children ages 7-14 had the expected reading skills and 25 percent had the expected numeracy skills for their grade. **Chart 2.9** shows that the share of children with foundational reading and numeracy skills has increased by grade; however, a significant proportion of children in each grade did not have the foundational skills expected for their grade.⁸⁰ For instance, in Grade 1, only 21 percent of children had foundational reading skills and four percent had numeracy skills expected for that grade. By Grade 3, only 35 percent of children had reading skills and 20 percent had numeracy skills expected for that grade. By Grade 6, only 63 percent of children had foundational reading skills and 42 percent had numeracy skills expected for that grade. These patterns are likely tied to the fact that grade repetition is highest at Grade 6. Skills of out-of-school children were even lower, with only 11 percent having foundational reading skills and six percent having numeracy skills.

⁷⁶ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; see also, UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname, p. 28.

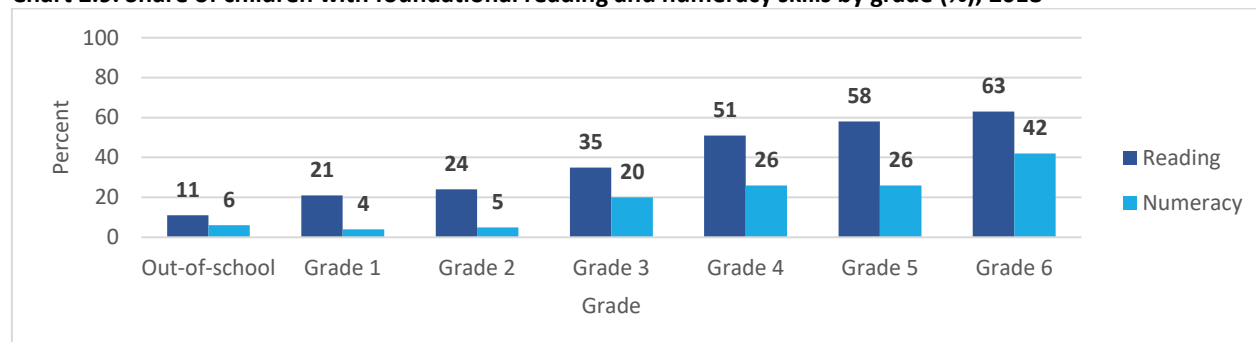
⁷⁷ Ibid, 2021.

⁷⁸ Retrieved on 3 January 2023 from: [Trained teachers in upper secondary education \(% of total teachers\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

⁷⁹ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 2021; UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname.

Chart 2.9. Share of children with foundational reading and numeracy skills by grade (%), 2018



Source: Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data. UNICEF, 2019.

Table 2.3 shows that the proportion of children with foundational reading and numeracy skills are highest in urban areas, among the richest households and among Creole, Hindustani and Javanese; there were no notable differences gender differences.⁸¹

Children ages 7-14 who did not have foundational skills in **numeracy** are more likely to be male (53 percent), urban (67 percent), poorest (29 percent), Maroon (34 percent) and Hindustani (20 percent). Whereas, children aged 7-14 who do not have foundational skills in **reading** are more likely to be male (53 percent), urban (64 percent), poorest (33 percent), Maroon (39 percent) and Hindustani (23 percent).

In Suriname, language education has long been a challenge because the official language is Dutch, but in rural areas and the interior Dutch is not the primary language and Dutch is a difficult language to learn. Thus, enacting policy that will allow teachers to teach in the language that is predominant within the region will help to improve literacy skills and reduce language barriers in learn; however, this requires legislative reform.⁸²

Table 2.3. Children (ages 7-14) with foundational reading and numeracy skills, 2018

| | Literacy Skills (%) | Numeracy skills (%) |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 47 | 25 |
| Female | 47 | 26 |
| Area | | |
| Urban | 51 | 28 |
| Rural Coastal | 43 | 21 |
| Rural Interior | 29 | 15 |
| Wealth Index Quintile | | |
| Poorest | 32 | 16 |
| Middle | 52 | 23 |
| Richest | 65 | 38 |
| Ethnicity | | |
| Indigenous/Amerindian | 40 | 19 |
| Maroon | 33 | 18 |
| Creole | 56 | 31 |
| Hindustani | 55 | 29 |
| Javanese | 56 | 31 |
| Mixed ethnicity | 49 | 24 |

Source: Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data. UNICEF, 2019.

2.3.9. Impact of COVID-19 on Education

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted learning for millions of children and young people as it resulted in temporary school closures.⁸³ In Suriname, education was interrupted and more than 139,912 children were out-of-school between March and September 2020, of which approximately 48 percent were primary school students.⁸⁴ Although local schools instituted distance-learning initiatives, inequalities regarding access to computers/laptops and other electronic devices, and the internet exacerbated inequalities in education. As MINOWC took adaptive measures to start classes via television, the situation in villages was quite different and schools in the rural interior could not always follow suit.⁸⁵ Significant losses with respect to learning and human capital development are likely to deepen already existing inequalities over the long-term.

⁸¹ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; UNICEF (2019). *Suriname Education Fact Sheets, 2019. Analysis for learning and equity using MICS data*. UNICEF: Paramaribo, Suriname.

⁸² Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2019.

⁸³ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; UN (2021). *Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and Response Plan for COVID-19 in Suriname*. UN Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname, p. 71.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2021, p. 71.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 2021; Ibid, 2021, p. 71; see also, Amazon Conservation Team Suriname – Situation Analysis (May 2020): Retrieved on 12 January 2023 from: [COVID-19 situation analysis ACT-S by Vishaal - Flipsnack](#).

The closure of schools put gains made in access to education and learning outcomes at-risk, especially for the poorest and most marginalized children and young people. In March 2020, UNICEF, together with the, released operational guidance on protecting children and schools from COVID-19. As a result, a total of 44,989 children in Suriname, including 56 percent girls and 44 percent boys, gained access to school through distance learning with direct UNICEF support. The pandemic highlighted the fact that there is an urgent need to invest in education systems, so that they are better prepared to prevent and address disrupted learning including through online and distance learning for every child and young person.⁸⁶

The pandemic also highlighted that Suriname needs to invest more in the professional development of teacher. Most teachers were not prepared and lacked the skills needed to shift from in-person to online teaching. One survey found that 50 percent of teachers could not use a computer/laptop or electronic device. The pandemic highlighted the fact that MINOWC needs to invest in lifelong learning and training for teachers.

A key educational reform that occurred in 2020, during the pandemic, was the enactment of the Automatic Promotion Policy by the MINOWC. Automatic promotion is a practice of allowing students to progress from one class/grade to the next higher class/grade at the end of the school year regardless of academic performance or educational attainment. Automatic promotion has polarized educational development stakeholders along the line of those in support and those against.⁸⁷ The origin of the policy has been traced back to the 1930s, during which time it was adopted and implemented in the perceived interest of students social and psychological well-being. Arguments in support of automatic promotion fall into three broad categories – enhancing education quality, improving internal efficiency of education and personal development of students/learners.⁸⁸ Opponents of automatic promotion maintain that the practice negatively affects the overall quality of education since it eliminates competition and de-motivates students and teachers, which lowers teaching and learning outcomes.⁸⁹ Arguments for and against automatic promotion have centred on its credibility as a viable alternative to grade retention in the search for efficiency and better learning outcomes.⁹⁰ Empirical and non-empirical studies have been conducted in both developed and developing countries to estimate the impact of automatic promotion policies and grade retention policies on students' learning achievements. These studies have shown mixed and inconclusive results.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname; UN (2021). *Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and Response Plan for COVID-19 in Suriname*. UN Suriname: Paramaribo, Suriname, p. 72.

⁸⁷ Navola, E.M. (2016). Teachers Perception and Practice of Automatic Promotion in English Speaking Primary Schools in Cameroon. *British Journal of Education*, Vol. 4, No. 11, pp. 11-23. Retrieved on 24 March 2023 from: [Teachers-Perception-and-Practice-of-Automatic-Promotion-in-English-Speaking-Primary-Schools-in-Cameroon.pdf \(ejournals.org\)](#); Okurut, J.M. (2015). Examining the Effect of Automatic Promotion on Students' Learning Achievement in Uganda Primary Education. *World Journal of Education*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 85-100. Retrieved on 24 March 2023 from: [Microsoft Word - wje-v5n5-neiye \(ed.gov\)](#)

⁸⁸ Okurut, J.M. (2015). Examining the Effect of Automatic Promotion on Students' Learning Achievement in Uganda Primary Education. *World Journal of Education*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 85-100.

⁸⁹ Navola, E.M. (2016). Teachers Perception and Practice of Automatic Promotion in English Speaking Primary Schools in Cameroon. *British Journal of Education*, Vol. 4, No. 11, pp. 11-23.

⁹⁰ Okurut, J.M. (2015). Examining the Effect of Automatic Promotion on Students' Learning Achievement in Uganda Primary Education. *World Journal of Education*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 85-100.

⁹¹ Ibid, 2015.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE UNICEF-SUPPORTED FROM CLASSROOM TO DIFFERENTIATED EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In Suriname, multiple bottlenecks have been identified that account for the inequality and poor quality of primary and secondary education, including: an outdated curriculum; a limited number of programmes for inclusive education; unqualified teachers, especially at the secondary level; and language barrier for indigenous and Maroon children, who must adapt to learning in the national language.⁹² In Suriname, there are notable disparities between the coastal areas and the interior in terms of secondary-school attendance rates.

Teachers in Suriname have been trained to use traditional teacher-centred pedagogical approaches that use rigidly prescribed lessons plans, where students put all of their focus on the teacher and students are supposed to passively listen. During assignment or activities, students work alone and collaboration is discouraged. Teacher-centred pedagogical approaches limit teachers' abilities to identify students with different learning styles and capabilities and meet their learning needs using different teaching methods and approaches that are responsive to students' differences. As a result, a notable proportion of students tend to fall behind in academic performance and have a to repeat grades, and transition and completion rates at the secondary level are low and dropout rates are high. One of the causes of this are that teachers have not been sufficiently trained to use different teaching approaches to support differential learning styles of students, or to assess class dynamics, including students' skills and learning differences, and to adapt their teaching styles accordingly.⁹³

In recent years, MINOWC and SOEBGS had made some progress at developing the capacities of teachers via trainings; however, a structured approach or policy for ensuring quality teacher training and capacity building had yet been developed. Instead, solutions were ad hoc, such as offering refresher trainings to teachers. These ad hoc solutions had proven ineffective, especially in interior areas and other areas where students do not benefit from a 'one size fits all solution' because they come from different ethnic backgrounds and have different needs and language skills. This has put a lot of pressure on educational processes.⁹⁴

Although classroom assessments are included in teacher instruction manuals and training, most teachers are ill-prepared to conduct such classroom assessment in a structured manner. As a result, teachers are ill-prepared to identify students with different learning capabilities (e.g., distinguishing between fast and slow learners) and learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic and reading/writing learners). Teachers are also ill-prepared to provide slower learners with remedial learning, to help them catch-up, or to identify students with developmental and/or learning delays or difficulties. At the same time, teachers are ill-prepared to offer enrichment learning activities for students who learn at a faster pace, to keep them engaged. Rather, teachers tend to treat all students the same and make minimal adaptations to their teaching approaches.⁹⁵

In light of the abovementioned challenges, in 2018, the Programme was developed by SOEBGS, in partnership with NGO SAGA Foundation. **The Programme was developed to strengthen teacher training to build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching methods in the classroom, which would improve student learning, outcomes and academic performance.** Trained teachers should be able to effectively integrate these innovative teaching methods into the classroom in a more holistic manner, and use different teaching styles and approaches to teach students with different learning styles and abilities.⁹⁶

The Programme was envisaged as a joint effort between SOEBGS and NGO SAGA Foundation, with financial support from UNICEF Suriname. The Programme was funded as a thematic initiative by UNICEF with contributions from SOEBGS). The Programme cost a total of USD 89,728, of which UNICEF contributed a total of USD 81,356 and the CSO contribution was USD 8,373 (for a summary of the budget see Chapter 6, Section 6.3, Efficiency).⁹⁷ Because the Programme was funded by UNICEF as a thematic initiative, versus funded with external donor monies, programme-related documents were limited in number, as there were no specific external donor reporting

⁹² UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme Document, 2017-2021.

⁹³ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 2018.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 2018.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 2018.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 2018.

requirements. Nevertheless, programme-related documents that were available were reviewed and used in the inception phase to design the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, and to draft this Inception Report.

The Programme was initially planned to be implemented from 1 August 2018 to 31 December 2020, but was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, the Programme continues to be implemented by the 56 SOEBGS primary schools. The evaluation covers the period of August 2018 to December 2022 because schools needed more time for implementation and to see results.

3.1. Programme Goal and Scope

The **goal** of the Programme was to strengthen teacher training to build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching methods in the classroom which would improve student learning, outcomes and academic performance. Trained teachers should be able to effectively integrate these innovative teaching methods into the classroom in a more holistic manner, and to use different teaching styles and approaches to teach students with different learning styles and abilities.⁹⁸

The Programme was implemented in 56 SOEBGS primary schools across Suriname, including in coastal zone areas and the sparsely inhabited interior. The 56 SOEBGS primary schools employ an estimated 900 teachers and enroll an estimated 13,000 primary school students.

3.2. Programme Objective and Aims

The objective of the Programme was to create an integrated capacity development programme for teachers, which includes teacher training, specifically training coaches and support staff (e.g., counselors) who are available to support teachers to more innovative differentiated teaching methods in the classroom. The role of coaches and support staff were important because teachers are often confronted with challenges when transitioning away from traditional teacher-centred pedagogical approaches to differentiated teaching approaches that are student-centred.⁹⁹

The Programme aims to achieve the following effects at the students level:¹⁰⁰

- By another ways of asking questions (Socratic questioning) by the teacher, pupils creative thinking will be activated.
- By differentiated teaching the teacher responds dynamically to the class situation, talents and learning differences of pupils.
- By means of group overview the teachers get a good picture of the learning needs of the pupils and adapt their approach (interpersonal, professional-pedagogical, didactic and organization), accordingly.
- Through better understanding of and working with flexible grouping there is more room for the teacher to pay attention to the weak students and by doing so increase their opportunities.
- Through efforts of the Activating Didactic Instruction (ADI) Model and the active approach the pupils get an active role in the lesson and their participation increases.
- By becoming more aware of the language goals and teachers skills for the benefit of language stimulation, language production of the pupils is enlarged .
- By the use of visual materials during lessons pupils can exercise their specific skills in a playful way; this will increase their understanding and solution-oriented thinking.

3.3. Programme Outcome and Outputs

The Programme was aligned with the UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021.¹⁰¹ In keeping, the **Programme's outcome** was defined as strengthened organization capacity of key

⁹⁸ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 2018.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 2018.

¹⁰¹ In the UNICEF Guyana and Suriname CPD 2017-2022, the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme was aligned with Output 2.3, i.e., strengthened organization capacity of key stakeholder to design and deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services, transitioning strategies and protective learning in emergencies, for all children and adolescents within rights-based educational frameworks and principles by 2021.

stakeholder to design and deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services, transitioning strategies and protective learning in emergencies, for all children and adolescents within rights-based educational frameworks and principles by 2021. The **CPD key progress indicators** related to this output were:

- **Percentage of students who are overage for grade in primary education by gender** (Baseline: 18 percent for girls and 22 percent for boys / Target: 10 percent decreased for girls and boys).
- **Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination or abuse** (Baseline: Bullying: 26 percent of girls and boys / Target: 10 percent decrease for girls and boys).

More specifically, the Programme included **four outputs** (see Annex B: Terms of Reference, Annex Table B1: Results Framework):

- **Output 1** – Training programme (materials) for teachers on differentiated learning in basic education are designed
- **Output 2** – Participants have been trained on an integrated training programme for coaching teachers in differentiate learning, and project leaders have been coached in managing the Programme
- **Output 3** – On-the-job coaching of basic education teachers on differentiated learning/instruction are completed in 56 schools of basic education.
- **Output 4** – Baseline and effect measurement completed. Project management, monitoring and evaluation for the correct adjustment aimed at achieving results.

The Programme was in line with **Suriname’s national priorities** and the **UNICEF Suriname Country Programme Documents for 2017-2021 and 2022-2016**, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

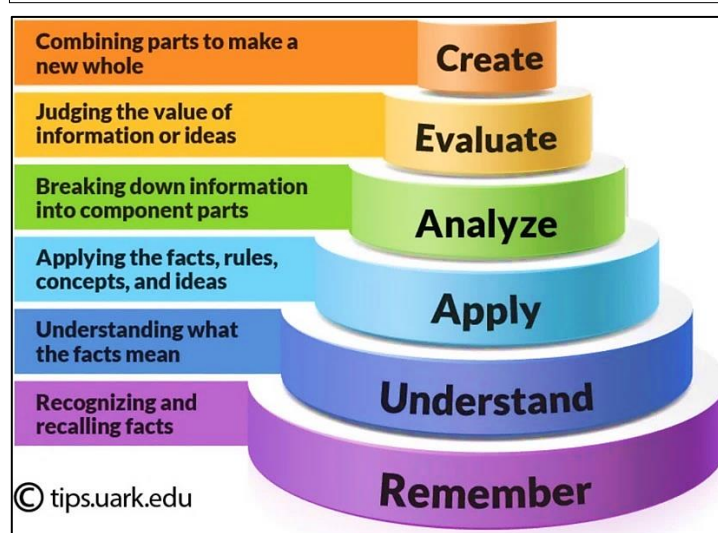
3.4. Programme Implementation

According to the Programme Document, the Programme was initially planned to be implemented from 1 August 2018 to 31 December 2020 in 56 schools.¹⁰² Because the COVID-19 pandemic was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, primary schools required more time for implementation. At the time of this evaluation, Programme activities implemented under the aegis of the Programme Cooperation Agreement had ended, although they were not fully implemented due to the pandemic, yet schools were still implementing the Programme to varying degrees. Thus, this evaluation covers the period of **August 2018 to December 2022**.

The **Programme’s first phase was a preparation phase** that occurred between August to November 2018, during which time detailed programme planning occurred and an integrated training programme was developed to support the Programme.

The **Programme’s second phase was an implementation phase**, which included the training phase and the on-the-job coaching phase. The training phase occurred between November 2018 and July 2019. In this phase, the goal was to train 119 education staff, including 112 trained coaches (teachers) in the basic education SOEBGS¹⁰³, 5 SOEBGS education consultants and 2 project leaders. These education staff were divided into five groups, each of which received the same 13-day training, which included five modules. The modules that were developed were grounded in Bloom’s Taxonomy that simulates higher

Figure 3.1. Bloom’s Taxonomy



Source: Retrieved on 12 January 2023 from: [Using Bloom’s Taxonomy to Write Effective Learning Outcomes | Teaching Innovation and Pedagogical Support \(uark.edu\)](#)

¹⁰² Some analysis of the available data from the SOEBGS GLO schools

¹⁰³ Two teachers were trained to be coaches in each of the 56 primary schools.

thinking, which teachers have already been trained to understand. In general, Bloom's Taxonomy¹⁰⁴ is a classification of different learning outcomes and skills that educators set for their students (**Figure 2.1**). The five different 13-day trainings were delivered over 65 days. The training phase also included capacitating or coaching two project leaders in SOEBGS management.

The **on-the-job coaching phase** was planned to occur from November 2018 and August 2020; however, this phase was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdown measures that led to periodic, temporary school closures and shifts to distance learning. Education in Suriname was interrupted from March 2020 and into the academic year (AY) 2021-2022. More specifically, from March to September 2020, 139,912 children had been out-of-school, of which approximately 48 percent were primary school students.¹⁰⁵ These children had their learning interrupted due to the spread of COVID-19, although they did receive some benefits from other school-based support mechanisms, such as protection and health. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on programme implementation, the on-the-job coaching phase was extended to August 2022.

The on-the-job coaching phase entailed simultaneously implementing the Programme in 56 primary SOEBGSs through peer-to-peer coaching. During the implementation phase (2018-2020), each teacher was expected to receive three class consultations with 90 minutes each from the coach. Across the 56 primary SOEBGSs, the plan was that coaches would guide every two teachers in their schools. After coaching of these teachers, knowledge would be further extended to other teachers in the schools. When choosing the first group of teachers, the focus was on teachers who were able to quickly absorb knowledge and information and transfer it to others.¹⁰⁶

For a rapid dissemination of knowledge, coaches were expected to be a buddy for the teachers who had not yet been coached. With new teachers, the coaching can take place by both the coach and the buddy. In this way, it is expected that knowledge is spread faster, can be used faster and remains widely available within the school. Coaches were expected to continue to monitor the deployment of the training program within their schools.

The goal was to peer coach 224 primary SOEBGS teachers and to conduct 672 class consultations. Class consultations entailed coaches observing teachers while teaching and offering feedback on their teaching style and lessons, and to come to agreements for making improvements. Teachers were expected to have an assignment folder with assignments from the different training components that need to be carried out, and coaches are expected to monitor and give feedback on assignment.

Table 3.1 shows that the Programme was implemented in a total of 56 SOEBGS primary schools, including 43 primary schools in coastal areas (i.e., 10 schools in Paramaribo Centrum District, 10 schools in Para-Wanica, Coronie and Nickerie Districts, 9 schools in Saramacca District, 8 schools in South West Paramaribo, and 6 schools in Saramacca and Marowijne Districts) and 13 interior area schools (i.e., 7 schools in Upper Suriname and 6 schools in Brokopondo District). **Map 3.1** highlights those districts where the Programme was implemented.

Map 2.1. Map of Suriname and Programme areas



¹⁰⁴ The taxonomy was proposed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist at the University of Chicago, and originally included six levels – remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating – that could be used to structure learning outcomes, lessons and assessment. Like other taxonomies, Bloom's is hierarchical, meaning that learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at the lower levels; thus, Bloom's Taxonomy is often displaced as a pyramid to demonstrate this hierarchy. Retrieved on 12 January 2023 from: [Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Write Effective Learning Outcomes | Teaching Innovation and Pedagogical Support \(uark.edu\)](https://www.uark.edu/using-bloom-taxonomy-to-write-effective-learning-outcomes-teaching-innovation-and-pedagogical-support).

¹⁰⁵ Haarr, R. (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname, p. 71.

¹⁰⁶ Annex C-PCA Programme Design.

| Table 3.1. Number of SOEBGS schools, school staff and students in the Programme by region | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | Coastal Areas | | | | | Interior Areas | | Total |
| | Cluster Upper Sarammaca & Marowijne Districts | Cluster Commewijne District | Cluster Para-Wanica, Coronie and Nickerie Districts | Cluster Paramaribo Centrum District | Cluster Paramaribo (South West) | Cluster Brokopondo District | Cluster Upper Suriname | |
| | n | N | n | n | N | n | n | |
| SOEBGS primary schools | 6 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 56 |
| SOEBGS counsellors and project leaders (located in the central office, but assigned to the cluster) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Coaches (teachers) trained | 10 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 18 | 12 | 14 | 110 |
| Teachers targeted via peer coaching | 11 | 38 | 59 | 57 | 14 | 22 | 33 | 234 |
| Students of targeted grades 3-6 | 519 | 1,072 | 1,702 | 1,536 | 2,372 | 829 | 1,468 | 9,498 |

3.5. Programme Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The Programme was a joint effort of SOEBGS and NGO SAGA Foundation, which was contracted to develop and deliver Programme-related trainings to 110 SOEBGS primary school teachers who would serve as coaches in the 56 primary schools (2 coaches per school). In SOEBGS, the division responsible for teacher trainings is the Board of Management of the Moravian Foundation. Other stakeholders include the 56 SOEBGS primary schools where the Programme was implemented. The stakeholder analysis identifies the *duty-bearers* as UNICEF Suriname, MINOWC and SOEBGS. *Rights-holders* (beneficiaries) include intended and unintended beneficiaries of the Programme, which includes SOEBGS primary school teachers, primary school students and parents/guardians of primary school students (see Annex C: Stakeholder Analysis).

Teachers are considered rights-holders because they lack the knowledge, capacities and skills needed to apply more innovative teaching methods in the classroom, and to use differentiated teaching styles and approaches to teach students with different learning styles and abilities, which would improve student learning, outcomes and academic performance; thus, teachers were direct beneficiaries of the Programme.

Other interest groups who are not directly participating in the intervention but have strategic technical inputs into the intervention, include: MINOWC, particularly the division responsible for teacher trainings (i.e., CENASU) and the Inspection Department; and other denominations that operate primary schools.

3.6. Programme Management and Monitoring

Programme planning also included a focus on effective programme management, monitoring and evaluation. Programming management and monitoring began at the start of the Programme in August 2018, and continued to the end of the Programme. The aim was to use monitoring data to make quarterly adjustments to the Programme, and to scale-up the Programme to other education providers after the Programme ends.¹⁰⁷

The Programme Document included a Results Monitoring Framework (RMF) with defined performance indicators, coupled with baseline data, targets and means of verification (see Annex B: Terms of Reference, Annex Table B1). Administrative data was used to track the effects of transforming teaching on students' grades and academic performance, from AY 2018-2019 and up until the 1st Quarter of AY 2019-2020. Prior to the start of the Programme, for more than four years, SOEBGS had been tracking average grades of students by school and classroom on a quarterly basis. During AY 2019-2020, after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, MINOWC ended the grading systems in primary schools as part of educational reform. Thus, student grades are not available beyond the 1st Quarter of AY 2019-2020.

As part of monitoring, coaches and teachers were also assessed through portfolio assessment methods and their participation in training sessions. In the first stage of the Programme's implementation, 134 teachers received professional development from one module of the Programme.

At this time, it was determined that it is important to have an independent evaluation of the Programme to determine whether the Programme brought about the desired changes and improvements to teacher's abilities and skills to teach using differentiated teaching and learning approaches and styles in the classroom to meet the needs of students.

¹⁰⁷ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

4. EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

4.1. Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this **formative evaluation** was to learn about enabling factors, bottlenecks and challenges as inputs for learning and future action for improving and scaling up of the Programme. The evaluation gathered information and evidence from SOEBGS and primary schools that implemented the Programme. This included the collection of data and information to determine the **relevance, coherence¹⁰⁸, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability** of the Programme before, during and after the pandemic

This evaluation has resulted in evidence-based recommendations for improving the Programme and the potential for scaling up differentiated teaching approaches to other grades and in other schools, and to inform national teacher training programmes. This evaluation can also be used by UNICEF to sharpen its focus areas of support to MINOWC for mainstreaming differentiated teaching approaches in education, and the overall approach to quality education.

The intended uses of this evaluation is to inform ongoing implementation of the Programme in SOEBGS primary schools. Thus, this evaluation offers evidence-based recommendations for further improvement of the Programme and the potential for scaling it up to other grades and schools, and to inform national teacher training programmes. This evaluation offers strategic guidance to UNICEF on how to sharpen its focus areas of support to SOEBGS and MINOWC for mainstreaming differentiated teaching and learning approaches in education, and the overall approach to quality education.

The target audience, including primary expected users of this evaluation is UNICEF SCO, SOEBGS and MINOWC. This evaluation will also be of interest to partner UN agencies and international financial institutions/donors that contribute to UNICEF results and wider UN system commitments, intended outcomes and efforts on the realization of children's rights and wider human rights commitments, including equitable access to quality education and improvement to learning skills and outcomes.

4.2. Evaluation Objectives

The main objective of this formative evaluation was to assess to what extent, before and during the pandemic, that the Programme was successful at improving the performance of SOEBGS schools, in terms of target components (learners, teachers, programme management and alignment with MINOWC and policy frameworks). Consideration was also given to gender, equity and child rights, and what has or has not been working and why.

More specific objectives included:

- a. Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the differentiated student-oriented programme in the 56 SOEBGS schools, as a key enabler in promoting child-centred teaching and student performance considering interruptions in education due to the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020-2021.
 - i. Assess the relevance of the differentiated learning approaches in terms of design relevance and justifications for such an intervention
 - ii. Assess the efficiency of the programme's implementation process and costs related to the teaching and learning approach, and identify different cost components needed to take place to plan and inform budgeting for scale-up of the Programme.
 - iii. Assess the effectiveness of the Programme's implementation process and see to what extent the differentiated approach has achieved its objectives, and identify areas that need further strengthening in ways that the approach is understood and implemented.
 - iv. Assess the sustainability of the intervention (i.e., Is the Programme and approach sustainable? And, how feasible is it to roll the approach out to other schools?)
- b. Assess what has or has not been working in supported schools regarding components of the Programme, identify similarities and differences of targeted components across schools (before and during the pandemic),

¹⁰⁸ In the TOR, coherence was mentioned in the section related to purpose of the evaluation, but there was no mention of coherence in the objectives of the evaluation or the evaluation framework and criteria, and there were no questions related to coherence.

and analyse causal factors that explain successes and failures, and similarities and differences before and during the current pandemic.

- c. Assess how gender, equity and child rights approaches have been applied in the components of supported programme before and during COVID-19.

This evaluation documented good practices and lessons learned, as well as gaps, bottlenecks and challenges considering pre-pandemic and pandemic contexts. Based on the findings and conclusions related to the ability of SOEBGS to implement the Programme, this evaluation proposes pragmatic recommendations for improving the Programme and its implementation going forward.

To achieve these objectives, human and child rights-based and equity-based approaches guided the evaluation approach. Attention was paid to exploring human and child rights as the goal of the Programme, while taking into account beneficiaries' interests. Attention was also paid to equity dimensions of the intervention. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favouritism. Equity-based evaluations provide assessments of what works and does not work to reduce inequity, and highlights intended and unintended results for the most vulnerable groups as well as inequalities in outcomes for vulnerable children and families. To the extent possible, access to quality support and outcomes for different subgroups of vulnerable children and families will be explored in this evaluation, and the groups least reached will be identified.

4.3. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

Evaluation evidence was assessed using the OECD-DAC criteria¹⁰⁹ of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The evaluation also incorporated equity, gender equality and human rights considerations as cross-cutting issues. In keeping with the TOR, this evaluation was designed to answer a total of 36 evaluation questions related to each of the criteria and cross-cutting issues.

Evaluation questions related to **relevance** included:

- a. Relevance of the teaching approach for delivering the primary curricula:
 - i. How relevant is the differentiated teaching approach for the Surinamese context and the national primary education curricula?
 - ii. How does MINOWC and SOEBGS schools define child-centred teaching and learning? And, how well does the differentiated teaching approach work towards and/or against the approach they have in mind?
 - iii. To what extent are teacher and learning concepts, tools and methodologies accepted by national and local stakeholders?
 - iv. How does the differentiated teaching approach work within the school environment and classroom spaces?
- b. Relevance of training teachers and preparing them to adopt the approach in the classroom:
 - i. How relevant are the teacher trainings to prepare teachers to adopt the differentiated learning approach in the classroom?
 - ii. What are the different approaches or modalities of teacher training that have been applied?
 - iii. How relevant are current contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used for the training?
 - iv. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the teacher trainings? And, how could they be improved?
- c. Relevance of the teaching and learning materials used:
 - i. What are the different types of materials used for implementing the approach?
 - ii. How relevant are these materials developed by teachers to achieve the objectives?
 - iii. What are the positives and negatives? How could it be improved?

¹⁰⁹ Retrieved on 9 June 2023 from: oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

Evaluation questions related to **effectiveness** included:

- a. To what extent and how has the approach achieved its objectives?
- b. How well has the approach been integrated and applied into daily teaching and learning practices?
- c. To what extent and how has the Programme helped to improve teacher performance in effectively addressing the different needs of students? And to making teaching and learning more inclusive?
- d. To what extent and how has the approach helped to make differences in students' learning behaviour and progress?
- e. What and how have differences come about for other beneficiaries, such as education officials, principals and parents?
- f. What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the differentiated learning objectives? How can the approach be more effective (e.g., training, materials, class and school environment, resources, monitoring and measurement mechanism and tools, coordination, and governance)?
- g. Were there any challenges, barriers or negativities surrounding the approach by stakeholders? How were these addressed?

Evaluation questions related to **efficiency** included:

- a. To what extent does the Programme deliver the necessary quality at the least necessary cost?
- b. What are the different cost elements in implementing this approach in schools (e.g., training, monitoring, material, classroom improvements)?
- c. Was the approach implemented in the most efficient way, compared to alternatives (e.g., training all teachers instead of applying a train/coach the trainer concept)?
- d. What are the challenges faced in sourcing funds for these costs?
- e. How can different cost elements be made more cost effective and sustainable?

Evaluation questions related to **sustainability** included:

- a. To what extent is the differentiated learning approach and interventions sustainable?
- b. To what extent did the Programme build upon and contribute to increasing existing national and local government capacities to deliver child-centred learning in primary education?
- c. To which extent is the approach externally driven and owned or managed by SOEBGS schools?
- d. How much of a continuous "external input" does it require (e.g., monitoring, training and provision of materials) for sustainability?
- e. What are the implications and requirements for potentially transitioning to a completely SOEBGS- run/owned approach?
- f. What new capacities within education services have been established or restored?
- g. To what extent does the SOEBGS have sufficient financial and human resources and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme?
- h. To what extent have the stakeholders undertaken the necessary decisions and course of actions to ensure sustainability of the approach?
- i. How have UNICEF and stakeholders ensured SOEBGS and school ownership of the approach (i.e., intrinsically driven to apply the approach)?
- j. To what extent the contents of the approach and its implementation modality have a potential for scaling and mainstreaming? Is there political will to support the mainstreaming of principles and approach in the education system?

Evaluation questions related to **equity, gender equality and human rights-based approaches** included:

- a. To what extent have human rights-based approaches and equity and gender equality goals and processes been incorporated into planning documents and resource materials of the Programme interventions?
- b. To what extent has the approach been effective to advance equitable access to education and learning?
- c. To what extent did the different groups, including children with disabilities and other most marginalised children, benefit in different ways from the approach?

4.4. Evaluation Scope

In terms of **thematic scope**, this evaluation covered all related programme interventions and references relevant to primary education, including: the developed differentiated education curriculum and syllabus; materials (e.g., lesson plan tools) and delivery mechanisms; level and modality of adoption in schools and classrooms; planning and monitoring approach; and awareness-raising and capacity building of stakeholders. This evaluation also considered the regulatory framework, including relevant policies, plans, and strategic documents.

Given the lack of a comprehensive baseline for all schools and other robust comparable data, this evaluation was formative in scope and took into consideration disruptions to education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For these reasons, the attributable 'impact' of the approach will not be assessed or determined in this evaluation. The evaluation, however, will assess how the Programme is making a difference in teaching practices and students' learning behaviours and progress, as well as differences among beneficiaries (e.g., SOEBGS counsellors, school heads, coaches and teachers).

In terms of **geographic scope**, the evaluation focused on the **56 SOEBGS primary schools** that were supported indirectly by UNICEF through funding SOEBGS to implement the Programme. The 56 SOEBGS schools are **located in several coastal area districts and in the interior of Suriname**. Bear in mind, SOEBGS primary schools are autonomous in terms of management and delivery of education, but follow national policies, regulations and curriculum, and are accountable to MINOWC.

In terms of **temporal scope**, this evaluation covered the Programme's implementation period which began in 2018 and was still being implemented to some extent at the time of this evaluation in -2023; thus this formative evaluation covers parts of the previous UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme 2017-2021, and the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications, as well as the UNICEF Guyana and Suriname Country Programme 2022-2026.

Stakeholders who were consulted included SOEBGS management and counsellors, and community level representatives (i.e., school heads and teachers); UNICEF SCO staff, as well as NGO SAGA Foundation (implementation partner).

5. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

To ensure the evaluation approach was as thorough and reliable as possible, a **mixed methods evaluation approach** was developed to ensure systematic collection of qualitative and quantitative data and information related to each of the evaluation criteria and questions. The primary sources of data and information were qualitative in nature; however, quantitative data was collected to supplement the qualitative data, where possible.

The evaluation methods and data collection tools developed for this evaluation were guided by the TOR and a desk review, with input from UNICEF. The evaluation methods and data collection tools served to ensure that data and information collected was valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the evaluation criteria and provide credible answers to the evaluation questions.¹¹⁰ The evaluation methods and data collection tools served to allow for a fair and unbiased evaluation of the Programme and its implementation by SOEBGS in its primary schools. Each component of the evaluation methodology are described in the sections that follow.

The evaluator applied participatory approaches and principles of integrating human rights in evaluations, including recognizing key stakeholders and beneficiaries as 'rights-holders, and the responsibility of the State and other actors to act as 'duty-bearers' to support realization of children's rights and wider human rights commitments, including promoting gender equality and equitable, inclusive and relevant educational services. It should be noted that this evaluation did not involve a Reference Group, although SOEBGS management was engaged as the primary user of the evaluation during the evaluation design and implementation stages, and the reporting and validation stages.

Given the focus of the evaluation, the evaluation was utilization-focused as it was designed to ensure that the findings would serve to inform decision-making and improve programme performance going forward. Thus, the primary intended users of the evaluation, SOEBGS and UNICEF SCO, was engaged in the evaluation process, including selecting study sites and helping to arrange site visits, and the in the validation of findings and in prioritizing the recommendations and next steps. Utilization-focused evaluation approaches are beneficial because they help to ensure that help to ensure the evaluation will be useful to and utilized by its intended users.¹¹¹

5.1. Desk Review

The evaluation began with a desk review of seven relevant programme-related documents, including the programme document, an annex on programme design, the teacher training manual for the programme and workbook on differentiated teaching¹¹², templates to monitor student grades and some analysis of the two years of available grade data, and a detailed budget for the programme. The desk review also included a review of materials on the environment in which Programme operated before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname (2021) and Country Programme Documents (CPDs). Because the Programme was funded UNICEF as a thematic initiative and not with external donor monies, programme-related documents were limited in number, as there were no specific external donor reporting requirements. Nevertheless, programme-related documents that were available were reviewed and used in the inception phase to design the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, and are used in this evaluation report, when appropriate, to draw conclusion and develop recommendations.

5.2. Inception Phase Consultations

Evaluations are typically characterized by extensive evaluator engagement throughout the evaluation period, coupled with independent field assessments, data collection and analysis, and generation of findings and conclusions by the evaluator to ensure independence and open discussion. Thus, UNICEF SCO was in planning for the evaluation, determination of the evaluation methods and data collection tools, selection of sites (schools) to visit, and coordination and scheduling for site visits and of interviews, and finalization of the Inception and Evaluation Reports. SOEBGS management was also be involved in the process of identifying the 10 primary schools to visit and advising schools on organization for site visits by the evaluator.

¹¹⁰ Norms and Standards for Evaluation. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017, p. 23.

¹¹¹ Retrieved on 9 June 2023 from: [Utilisation-focused evaluation | Better Evaluation](#)

¹¹² The teacher training manual for the programme and workbook for teachers on differentiated teaching are currently in Dutch and will need to be translated into English, in whole or in part.

During the inception phase, before beginning the evaluation and data collection in the field, several online consultations occurred with staff from UNICEF's Suriname Country Office (Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist and Education Specialist). The focus of these consultations was on planning for the evaluation, developing the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, and planning for the mission trip to conduct data collection in the field.

5.3. Site Visits

This evaluation does not aim to represent the entire country, but will be conducted in Paramaribo, the capital city, where UNICEF and SOEBGS management are located, as well as some of the SOEBGS schools, and in several coastal area and interior districts of Suriname, where SOEBGS primary schools are located. The districts and primary schools to be visited were identified in consultation with UNICEF SCO and SOEBGS management. The initial plan was to visit 10 SOEBGS primary schools located in both coastal and interior areas, including 7 SOEBGS primary schools in coastal areas, including Paramaribo, and 3 SOEBGS primary schools in interior areas. The focus was on SOEBGS primary schools that were implementing the Programme, but maybe at different stages of implementation, and that had been successful, to varying degrees, so that lessons learned and good practices could be documented, along with barriers and challenges faced.

Site visits and data collection in the field were conducted during a four-week period of time from 13 February to 9 March 2023. During this time period, Suriname experienced civil unrest as demonstrations against the government descended into against a backdrop of high inflation descended into protestors clashing with the police and storming Suriname's national parliament, as well as vandalizing and looting nearby government buildings and businesses.¹¹³ This civil unrest and concerns about future unrest disrupted the evaluators ability to visit schools and collect data in the field. As a result, one school in the interior was dropped from the list of schools to be sampled. Thus, a total of 9 SOEBGS primary schools were sampled, including 7 SOEBGS primary schools in coastal areas, including Paramaribo, and 2 SOEBGS primary schools in interior areas.

Map 5.1 . Study sites in Suriname



¹¹³ Protesters storm Suriname's parliament as anti-austerity rally turns chaotic. Reuters, 17 February 2023. Retrieved on 24 March 2023 from: [Protesters storm Suriname's parliament as anti-austerity rally turns chaotic | Reuters](https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/protesters-storm-suriname-parliament-anti-austerity-rally-turns-chaotic-2023-02-17/)

5.4. Sample

The sample included a cross-section of duty-bearers and rights-holders, and UNICEF SCO. More specifically, this sample included: UNICEF SCO; EGBS management and counsellors; SOEBGS primary school heads; and SOEBGS primary school teachers and coaches (trained teachers). The initial plan was to interview the Director of NGO SAGA Foundation; however, due to unforeseen circumstances the Director passed away during the evaluation period.

A purposeful sampling approach was used to interview 89 individuals who had knowledge of and/or experience with the Programme at stages of planning, development and implementation. **Table 5.1** provides summary information about the sample size by type of institution/school and gender. The methods of data collection – key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) – are also identified for each group of respondents. Section 4.5 on data collection methods offers more explanation as to how each of these targeted groups were selected and sampled.

| Table 5.1. Sample by type of institution and schools | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Level/Type of Entity | # Institutions /schools | Final Sample N=89 | | Gender | Data Collection Approach |
| | | n | % | | |
| National and subnational levels | | | | | |
| UNICEF SCO staff | 1 | 1 | 1.1 | 1 male | KII |
| SOEBGS management | 1 | 5 | 5.6 | 5 females | KII |
| SOEBGS counsellors | 1 | 4 | 4.5 | 4 females | KII |
| NGO SAGA Foundation Inc. | 1 | 0 | 0.0 | n/a | KII |
| School level | | | | | |
| School head/deputy head | 9 | 10 | 11.2 | 1 male 8 females | KII |
| Coaches (teachers) trained | 9 | 11 | 12.3 | 9 females | KII |
| Teachers targeted via peer coaching | 9 | 58 | 65.2 | 1 male 57 females | 2 FGDs per school (3-4 per group) |
| Total | 11 | 89 | 100.0 | 3 males 86 females | |

The initial evaluation design included FGDs with students from grade 3-6 who were taught in classes with teachers trained by the Programme¹¹⁴; however, not all schools were able to obtain parental consent prior to the evaluator's visit to the schools due to the civil unrest that occurred at the start of the evaluation. FGDs were attempted with students in two schools, however, given the young age of students and the amount of time (20 minutes) the evaluator had to engage with students, it was not possible to have a meaningful discussion and collected the desired information. In addition, the evaluator, as an English speaker, was working through a translator, which added an additional layer of challenge for the students and the evaluator. Thus, the decision was made by the evaluator to not proceed with FGDs with students.

The evaluation was conducted over a five-month period from 28 December 2022 to 3 April 2023, including data collection in the field during a four-week period of 13 February to 9 March 2023. The evaluator spent one day at each of the schools visited (school hours were 8:00 to 13:00).

5.5. Data Collection Methods and Tools

As previously mentioned, to ensure the evaluation approach was as thorough and reliable as possible, a mixed methods evaluation approach was developed to ensure systematic collection of qualitative and quantitative data

¹¹⁴ As it related to children/students, in advance of the FGD, parents' informed consent was obtained for each child/student who will participate in FGDs. Parental consent forms were collected prior to beginning the FGD. In addition, prior to starting the FGD, each child/student was asked to give their verbal informed assent to participate in the FGD using a standard script that was part of the FGD guide. As part of the informed consent, both parents and students were informed about the purpose and scope of the evaluation, their voluntary participation and right to decline participation (without penalty), and planned uses of the FGD data and evaluation findings. On average, the FGDs with students took about 20 minutes to complete. FGDs took place in the schools for purposes of comfort and ease of participation. The International Consultant worked with an interpreter in the field to conduct FGDs in Dutch, but not all children were fluent in Dutch.

related to each of the evaluation criteria and questions. The primary sources of data and information were qualitative in nature; however, quantitative data was collected to supplement the qualitative data, where possible. The sections that follow describe the data collection methods and tools used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

5.5.1. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

A purposive sampling approach was used to interview persons who had knowledge of and experience with the planning, development and implementation of the Programme. In many cases, more than one person was identified as a relevant contact in each of the different institutions/schools. Given this reality, the evaluation approach involved conducting a combination of one-on-one and small group key informant interviews (KIIs). Small group KIIs included two to three persons.

One-on-one KIIs were conducted in those situations where there was one person in an institution/school that needed to be interviewed and/or in situations where a senior official/representative (e.g., SOEBGS management, school head) needed to be interviewed. One-on-one KIIs were conducted in situations where an individual, such as a coach, has an area of specialization or expertise that requires a one-on-one interview.

Small group KIIs of two to three persons were used when interviews needed to be conducted with a small number of staff in the same institution/school (e.g., SOEBGS counsellors and school staff). Small group KIIs allowed for some degree of synergy and discussion on questions which allowed for more depth and perspective by groups from the same institution/school. Small group KIIs allowed the evaluator to maximize their contact with a wide range of individuals from institutions/schools identified as partners and key stakeholders by UNICEF SCO.

A structured interview questionnaire was used to guide KIIs. The interview questionnaire included questions focused specifically on the evaluation questions related to each of the evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as equity, gender equality and human rights. Questions were designed to capture a historical perspective, to the degree to which respondents had a historical perspective of the Programme. On average, KIIs will take about one hour to complete.

Informed consent was obtained from all persons who participated in KIIs (see Annex F: Consent Form). As part of the informed consent, respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they were ensured confidentiality. All interviews were conducted in the language of preference to the interviewees. The International Consultant worked with an interpreter in the field, as needed, to conduct interviews in Dutch. UNICEF SCO provided an independent interpreter to support conducting KIIs in Dutch. Most all KIIs were conducted in-country by the Evaluator.

5.5.1.1. KIIs with UNICEF

A KII was conducted with UNICEF SCO staff who had working knowledge of UNICEF's support to plan, develop and implement the Programme in partnership with SOEBGS. A one-on-one interview was conducted with this UNICEF staff member.

A structured interview questionnaire was used to guide the interview with UNICEF SCO staff (see Annex G: UNICEF and National Partner Questionnaire). The interview questionnaire included questions related to each of the evaluation criteria and questions, and were designed to capture historical perspectives and experiences to the degree to which the respondent had a historical perspective of and experiences with the Programme. The interview with the UNICEF SCO staff took about one hour to complete and was conducted in English.

5.5.1.2. KIIs with Implementing Partners

Another important component of this evaluation was to interview implementing partners, including SOEBGS management and NGO SAGA Foundation who had working knowledge of UNICEF's support to establish and implement the Programme in the 56 SOEBGS primary schools, including current and former SOEBGS management and counsellors. As previously mentioned, the initial plan was to interview the Director of NGO SAGA Foundation; however, due to unforeseen circumstances the Director passed away during the evaluation period.

A structured interview questionnaire was used to guide the interviews with national partners (see Annex G: UNICEF and National Partner Questionnaire). The interview questionnaire included questions related to each of the evaluation criteria and questions, and were designed to capture historical perspectives and experiences to the degree to which respondents have a historical perspective of and experiences with the Programme. On average, interviews with national partners, , will take about one hour to complete.

5.5.1.3. KIIs with SOEBGS School Staff

School staff from 9 SOEBGS primary schools who had working knowledge of UNICEF's support to establish and implement the Programme were interviewed. In each school, separate one-on-one and small group interviews were conducted with the principal and/or deputy principal, and coaches (teachers) trained.

SOEBGS and UNICEF notify each of the 9 SOEBGS primary schools about the dates for the evaluation site visit and provided guidance as to which school staff the Evaluator would like to interview, and how to organize them. Still, however, respondents were instructed that their participation in the evaluation was voluntary.

A structured interview questionnaire was used to guide interviews with school staff (see Annex H: School Staff Questionnaire). The interview questionnaire included questions related to each of the evaluation criteria and questions, and were designed to capture historical perspectives and experiences to the degree to which respondents had a historical perspective of and experiences with the Programme, with a particular focus on implementation of the Programme in their respective schools. On average, interviews with each separate group of school staff identified above took about one hour to complete.

5.5.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Teachers

In each of the 9 SOEBGS primary schools that were sampled, separate FGDs were conducted with teachers targeted via peer coaching as per the Programme. A purposive sampling approach was used to determine which teachers were invited to participate in FGDs. Teachers were asked to organize the FGDs of teachers by inviting them to participate in the FGD with the Evaluator on a particular day and time. FGDs were limited to four teachers.

In each of the 9 primary schools sampled, two separate FGDs were conducted with 2-4 teachers per FGD for a total of 6-8 teachers per school. The focus was on primary school teachers who received peer coaching and participated in the Programme, and taught using differential teaching approaches to support student-centred learning.¹¹⁵ A total of 18 FGDs were conducted with teachers and included a total of 58 teachers who were targeted via peer coaching and participated in the Programme (**Table 5.1**).

Box 5.1. Pilot school sample

In each pilot school visited during the evaluation the goal will be to conduct:

- KII with school head/deputy head
- KII with coaches (trained teachers)
- 2 FGDs with primary school teachers who received peer coaching

A structured FGD guide was used to guide the FGDs with teachers (see Annex J: FGD Guide for Teachers). The FGD guide included questions related to many of the evaluation criteria and questions, and were designed to capture perspectives and experiences related to the Programme, with a particular focus on implementation of the Programme in their respective schools.

In each school, school heads were asked to identify teachers who had been targeted via peer coaching and participated in the Programme (taught using differential teaching approaches), and who are available and willing to participate in an FGD. This selection criteria was be provided to each of the schools to help them identify teachers. FGDs with teachers took place in the school during school hours for purposes of teachers' comfort and well-being.

Prior to beginning FGDs, informed consent was obtained from each of the teachers who participate in the FGD (see Annex F: Consent Form). All teachers were informed about the purpose of the evaluation and that their participation was voluntary, and that they were be guaranteed confidentiality. They were also informed that the

¹¹⁵ It was brought to the attention of the Evaluator that in most of the schools, there will be only 6-8 teachers teaching grades 3-6. In a couple of larger schools there may be a few more teachers teaching grades 3-6; however, they will not have all been coached or taught to use differential teaching styles and approaches.

FGD would not be audio-recorded, but verbatim notes were taken by the Evaluator on her laptop during the FGD. On average, each FGD took about one hour to complete. The International Consultant worked with an interpreter in the field to conduct FGDs in Dutch. UNICEF SCO provided an independent interpreter to support conducting FGDs in Dutch.

5.5.3. Review of Administrative Data

Although there is a lack of administrative data to measure the Programme's effectiveness in terms of students' academic performance, effort was made to learn more about the types of administrative data that were collected by SOEBGS as part of Programme implementation, such as the number of teachers trained to be coaches, the number of teachers supported with peer coaching, number of students who benefited from differentiated education and learning. To the degree possible, effort was made to collect summary administrative data, without identifiers to support this evaluation; administrative data was not collected on individuals. Administrative data that were relevant and available were compiled and included in the findings section of this report. Bear in mind, however, education management information system (EMIS) data that were available were neither useful nor meaningful to this evaluation.

5.5.4. Stakeholder Participation and Triangulation

The Evaluator used participatory approaches, which include involving stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly participants in the Programme and those affected by the Programme, in specific aspects of the evaluation process.¹¹⁶ In keeping with participatory approaches, the Evaluator recognized that implementing partners, key stakeholders and beneficiaries are important and should actively participate in the evaluation, as they can contribute to the production of knowledge and understanding needed to conduct an evaluation. To ensure their participation in the evaluation process, the Evaluator set out to collaborate with SOEBGS management and primary school staff during the data collection process. The use of participatory approaches helped to strengthen the evaluation and ensure that human and child rights (including the rights to participate and have their voices heard) were built into the evaluation process.¹¹⁷ In addition, key stakeholders will participate in the validation meeting where they will have the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations

Triangulation was also an important part of the evaluation approach to ensure the credibility of information and data collected, and to allow diverse perspectives and experiences to be captured. Triangulation was conducted to ensure that perspectives and experiences of implementing partners, key stakeholders and beneficiaries of the Programme were captured. This is important because it ensures that individuals and groups who see the Programme from different vantage points have their voices heard during the evaluation.

The Evaluator undertook the analysis and interpretation of data collected in the field as an opportunity to allow different vantage points and diverse perspectives and experiences captured through triangulation to come to the forefront and to reveal the influence of the Programme, including its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Effort was also made to triangulate primary data collected in the field with secondary data contained in programme documents and monitoring reports, to the degree possible. Bear in mind, however, the number of programme-related documents are limited in number and scope.

Triangulation is also important because it allows for a critical, unbiased and objective examination and analysis of data and information from groups and individuals with differing opinions and experiences with the Programme to come to the forefront. When contradictory information was obtained from groups and individuals with differing opinions and experiences with the Programme, effort was made to understand the reasons for such contradictory information, including sector and institution/agency differences in perspectives and experiences, and how to address them in the evaluation findings.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Guijt, I. (2014). *Participatory Approaches*. UNICEF Methodological Briefs, Impact Evaluation No. 5. UNICEF Office of Research – Innocent: Florence, Italy.

¹¹⁷ *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

5.5.5. Equity and Gender Integration

This evaluation aimed to integrate equity and gender, to the degree possible, in keeping with UNICEF's approach to integrating equity and gender into evaluations. Equity and gender were taken into consideration during the evaluation planning and development phases and were further mainstreamed into the collection, analysis and report writing stages.

- **Evaluation design and planning phase** – Equity and gender were integrated into the country context analysis and evaluation objectives; equity, gender equality and human rights were included in the evaluation questions; equity and gender-sensitive indicators, and equity and gender-responsive data collection and analysis methods were included in the evaluation design; and the evaluator had a strong background in equity and gender research and evaluation methods, and equity and gender analysis.¹¹⁹
- **Evaluation implementation phase** – Equity, gender equality and human rights were included throughout this Inception Report; quantitative and qualitative (mixed) methods included sex-disaggregated data and data disaggregated by schools and districts, including coastal and interior areas; data collection methods were gender-sensitive and attentive to who was conducting the interviews, who was participating in the interviews and how questions were drafted/asked; and a woman is leading the data collection and analysis.
- **Evaluation reporting phase**– Report includes a discussion and analysis of equity and gender in the findings and recommendations, to the degree possible; unexpected results and outcomes on equity and gender, and other equity- and gender-based differences or results are addressed, to the degree possible.

5.6. Ethical Considerations

The evaluation followed *UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations*.¹²⁰ In keeping, the evaluation was “conducted with the highest standards of integrity and respect for the beliefs, manners and customs of the social and cultural environment, for human rights and gender equality, and for the ‘do not harm’ principle for humanitarian assistance.”¹²¹

In keeping with *UNICEF Procedures on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*¹²², principles of respect, beneficence, justice, integrating and accountability were integrated into the methodology, data collection and ethical procedures, and informed day-to-day decision-making during data collection in the field and as part of the data analysis and report writing process (**Box 5.1**).

The evaluation was conducted in an independent manner, with key elements of impartiality, objectivity, professional integrity and absence of bias at all stages of the evaluation process. Credibility was established as evaluation findings and recommendations were informed by and grounded in the use of the best available qualitative and quantitative data and analysis to meet organizational needs for learning and accountability.¹²³

Universally recognized values and principles of human rights, gender equality and do no harm were integrated into all stages of this evaluation and respected by the evaluator.¹²⁴ In keeping, special measures were put in place to ensure that the evaluation process was ethical and that participants could openly provide information and express their opinions in confidence, as respondents were guaranteed confidentiality. In keeping, sources of information were protected; only the evaluator knows the source of information. In keeping with UNEG Ethical Guidelines, attention was paid to issues related to harm and benefits, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and exercising commitment to avoid conflicts of interest in all aspects of the evaluation, thereby upholding the principles

¹¹⁹ It is important to note that the Evaluator, Dr. Robin Haarr (PhD), is a gender expert with more than 25 years of experience academic experience designing and conducting gender-focused and gender-sensitive research and evaluations, including within the development context, and conduct gender analyses and theory-building on gender, offering gender recommends to support gender mainstreaming in the development context.

¹²⁰ Retrieved from: <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp> and <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>

¹²¹ *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017, p. 11.

¹²² UNICEF (2021). *UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*. UNICEF: New York, NY USA. Retrieved on 15 January 2023 from: [Branded Procedure Template \(unicef.org\)](https://www.unicef.org/branding/Branded-Procedure-Template)

¹²³ *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017.

¹²⁴ *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017, p. 12.

of independence, impartiality, credibility, honesty, integrity and accountability.¹²⁵ Data were protected and coded to ensure anonymity.

Box 5.1. Five principles that will inform evidence generation in this evaluation

1. **Respect** – This principle involves engaging with all stakeholders in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, participation and personal agency, and acknowledges any limitations of agency. This evaluation will be responsiveness to respondent’s sex/gender, age, background, ethnicity and ability, among others characteristics.
2. **Beneficence** – This principle means striving to do good for people while minimizing harms arising from evidence generation. This evaluation weighs the harms and benefits of data collection. Data collected will be purpose-driven (directly informed by the activity or benefit), proportional (only collecting what is required) and protective of children’s rights.
3. **Justice** – The principle of justice requires that consideration is given to those who benefit and those who carries the burden of evidence-generation, and the broader equity of the project, its implementation and outcomes. This evaluation will be “people-centric”, which means the needs, interests and expectations of people, including school staff and students will be prioritized by the evaluation team.
4. **Integrity** – This principle necessitates the active adherence to moral values and professional standards, which are essential for all evidence that is commissioned or undertaken.
5. **Accountability** – Is the obligation to be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken, and to be responsible for honoring commitments, without qualification or exception, as well as to report potential or actual harms observed through the appropriate channels. The principle includes accountability to relevant populations. This principle will be followed in keeping with the process of ethical review and international ethical standards of research and evaluation, including human subjects protections.

Source: *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017, p. 21.

All participants were informed of the purpose of the evaluation, and that their participation was voluntary and that they were guaranteed confidentiality. To ensure confidentiality, all interviewees were assigned a unique identification (ID) number at the time of the interview by the Evaluator; names were never recorded. The ID number was included in the field name on the data collection tools. In the evaluation report, only generic categories (e.g., school heads, coaches, teachers) are used to identify and differentiate respondents; neither district nor school names are used. Also, schools were provided an ID number at the time of writing this report to ensure schools anonymity; school ID numbers were randomly assigned and do not correspond in any way with the order of schools visited.

All interview and FGD notes were saved in password protected files with only the identification numbers assigned to them to further ensure confidentiality. Qualitative data are presented in the report in a manner that ensures anonymity and confidentiality to ensure that respondents cannot be identified, particularly in the case of school staff. This is especially important to reduce the risk that their participation does not impact their experiences working in or studying in their schools. Still, however, the Evaluator cannot fully guarantee that participation in this evaluation can have some sort of negative effects.

The Evaluator did not audio record interviews or FGDs; rather, verbatim interview notes were typed directly into Word on a laptop by the Evaluator during the interviews and FGDs, and cleaned immediately thereafter for accuracy. The Evaluator has the skills needed to record verbatim interview notes in this manner, which is more efficient and just as effective as audio recording interviews.

¹²⁵ *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017, p. 21.

Efforts to minimize risks included the following complementary components:

- The evaluation methodology provided sufficient detail to demonstrate how each data element contributes to the analysis plan to eliminate unnecessary procedures and to minimize the risk of procedures
- Minimum data needed for the evaluation were collected
- A minimum number of identifiers needed for the evaluation were collected
- Only procedures that are necessary to achieve the evaluation purpose and objectives were performed
- Steps were taken to ensure confidentiality and minimize risk to human subjects
- Data were coded to conceal identifiers
- Stored data were secured so that confidentiality of subjects is preserved

5.7. Ethical Review Process

The Inception Report was submitted for external ethical review. UNICEF SCO submitted the Inception Report for external ethical review to ensure effective processes and accountability for ethical oversight, and to ensure that human subjects protections, including the protection of and respect for human and child rights were incorporated into evaluation methodology and data collection processes in keeping with *UNICEF Procedures for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*.¹²⁶

The ethical review was conducted by an external Ethics Review Board (ERB) in Washington, DC, United States of America (USA). The ERB was responsible for reviewing the evaluation methodology and data collection to ensure the following requirements were satisfied:

- Proposed evaluation approach is methodologically sound and designed to minimize risk to human subjects (participants).
- Human subjects are not placed at undue risk, and any risks are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- Special protections are provided to special populations, including children.
- Human subject's participation in the evaluation is voluntary.
- Informed consent is sought from each human subject or the subject's legally authorized representative prior to their participation in the evaluation.
- Informed assent is sought from children prior to their participation in the evaluation.
- Relevant protection protocols are in place to ensure human subjects' protections and safety
- Human subjects' safety, privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity when possible, are maximized.
- Data collection and analysis does not result in violations of confidentiality and/or anonymity

ERB reviewers paid attention to the following written elements of this Inception Report:

- Informed consent forms or guidelines
- Protocols for the protection of subjects' safety
- Protocols for the protection of subjects' identities
- Protocols for the protection of collected data
- Interview questionnaires and other data collection instruments, human subject recruitment plans, and any parts of the evaluation approach that are relevant to human subject protections.

ERB approval was obtained on 13 February 2023 (HML IRB Review #688SURI23). HML IRB is authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB#1211, IORG #850, FWO #1102).

¹²⁶ *UNICEF Procedures for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*, 2015. Document Number: CF/PD/DRP/2015-001

5.8. Data Management and Analysis

Data were coded and analyzed using grounded theory.¹²⁷ Grounded theory allows data collection and analysis to occur simultaneously, strengthening both the quality of data and analysis. As data collection and analysis progressed and preliminary findings begin to emerge the Evaluator was able to identify and explore emerging themes, such as results achieved, lessons learned, challenges faced and adjustments made to the Programme.

KII and FGD data were extremely important to this evaluation, as these data represent the voices of both ‘duty-bearers’ and ‘rights-holders’, and reveals their perspectives and experiences with the Programme. KII and FGD data offer insights into how the Programme was implemented across SOEBGS primary schools, including similarities and differences in Programme implementation, challenges and bottlenecks faced, and steps taken to overcome those challenges and bottlenecks. The plethora of primary data was collected during this evaluation allowed the Evaluator to triangulate findings by types of respondents. Where possible, primary data was triangulated with information garnered from the desk review.

All data from KIIs and FGDs will be saved in Word files (a total of 100 pages of qualitative data were collected). Qualitative data from open-ended questions were managed and coded in Word based upon themes and sub-themes for each question, and were analysed for patterns by the Evaluator. Quantitative data from close-ended questions were coded and input into SPSS, and analysed by the Evaluator. Both the qualitative and quantitative data allow for an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the Programme and its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability; this includes progress made toward expected outcomes. The Evaluator managed all data and led all qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

5.9. Reporting and Validation

The Evaluator led the report writing process. The evaluation report has been prepared according to the *UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards*¹²⁸, as per the Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS).

The evaluation report incorporates desk review materials, although limited in number, and qualitative and quantitative data collected in the field. As previously mentioned, EMIS data that were neither useful nor meaningful to this evaluation. The evaluation report was drafted in accordance with the agreed upon outline for the evaluation report.

The evaluation report was prepared in English for UNICEF and SOEBGS for comment, and UNICEF Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO). UNICEF took the lead to translate the evaluation report into Dutch. Based upon comments and feedback received, the evaluation report will be revised and finalized. The Evaluator will respond to all comments in the report using comment boxes and tracking changes to ensure transparency of the process.

Findings and recommendations were presented at a UNICEF SCO and SOEBGS organized full-day workshop event in Paramaribo on 8 May 2023. The event engaged SOEBGS management, school heads, coaches and teachers. The presentation allowed the evaluator UNICEF SCO to validate the findings and recommendations, in partnership with SOEBGS.

5.10. Evaluator

This external evaluation was conducted by Dr. Robin Haarr (PhD), International Consultant/Evaluator from the USA. The Evaluator has extensive experience conducting evaluations for UNICEF and other UN agencies, as well as experience interviewing children. This Inception Report, including the evaluation methodology and data collection tools, was developed by the Evaluator, in consultation with UNICEF SCO. UNICEF reviewed and approved the evaluation approach and data collection tools prior to beginning the evaluation (see Annex E: Evaluation Work Plan).

¹²⁷ Glaser, B. & A. Strauss (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Sociology Press: Mill Valley, CA, USA.

¹²⁸ UNICEF (2017). *UNICEF-Adapted UNEF Evaluation Reports Standards*. UNICEF: New York, NY, USA.

Specific tasks of the International Consultant/Evaluator included

- Desk review of all relevant programme documents and reports, previous studies and research, and other relevant documents
- Develop and provide methodological guidance for the team with regard to methodology and data collection tools development, and defining the overall direction of data analysis and quality assurance
- Manage the evaluation workplan
- Maintain coordination and communication with UNICEF SCO
- Lead evaluation planning and implementation processes
- Lead and undertake the data collection in the field, with support from the National Expert
- Lead data analysis and report writing
- Lead presentation of evaluation findings and recommendations to UNICEF SCO and MINOWC

The Evaluator was supported by an independent translator/interpreter provided by UNICEF SCO.

6. EVALUATION FINDINGS

Given the lack of documentation related to this Programme, including monitoring and reporting documentation, the findings presented are based large upon primary data and information collected during the evaluation in the field, including interviews and focus group discussion with SOEBGS management and counsellors, school heads/deputy heads, trained coaches (teachers) and primary school teachers.

The three-year Implementation plan for the Programme (2018-2020) was interrupted and impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Training of SOEBGS counsellors, school heads and coaches occurred in 2018-2019, as initially planned. In 2019, coaches began to train other teachers in their schools to implement the Programme; however, activities planned for 2020 were interrupted in March 2020 by the pandemic. Because of the pandemic, SOEBGS management and NGO SAGA Foundation were unable to perform school visits and provide refresher trainings that were initially envisioned. During the pandemic, SOEBGS management and school staff shifted their focus to delivering education to students remotely, largely via television and radio; as a result, teachers had limited contact with students and were unable to assess their learning or use differentiated teaching approaches. When students returned to the classroom, school heads and teachers were focused on reintegrating children into the classroom, delivering curriculum and limiting contact between children to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools.

The closure of schools puts gains made in access to education and learning outcomes at-risk, especially for the poorest and most marginalized children in Suriname. The pandemic highlighted that Suriname needs to invest more in the professional development of teacher, as most teachers were not prepared and lacked the skills needed to shift from in-person to remote and/or online teaching. During the pandemic, MINOWC found that 50 percent of teachers could not use a computer/laptop or electronic device. Thus, the pandemic highlighted the fact that MINOWC needs to invest in lifelong learning and training for teachers.¹²⁹

In 2020, during the pandemic, the MINOWC enacted the Automatic Promotion Policy, a practice of allowing students to progress from one class/grade to the next higher class/grade at the end of the school year regardless of academic performance or educational attainment.

At the time of this evaluation, Programme activities had ended although not fully completed due to the pandemic, but schools were still implementing the Programme to varying degrees. Although this evaluation was unable to assess the Programme's implementation as originally envisioned at the design stage, it was able to evaluate the Programme's implementation as it occurred in the context of a global pandemic. Thus, the evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Programme, based upon where the Programme was at the time of this evaluation, although implementing partners and key stakeholders were asked to recall Programme implementation prior to the pandemic, from January 2018 to March 2020.

6.1. Relevance

6.1.1. How relevant is the differentiated teaching approach for the Surinamese context and the national primary education curricula? And, to what extent are teacher and learning concepts, tools and methodologies accepted by national and local stakeholders?

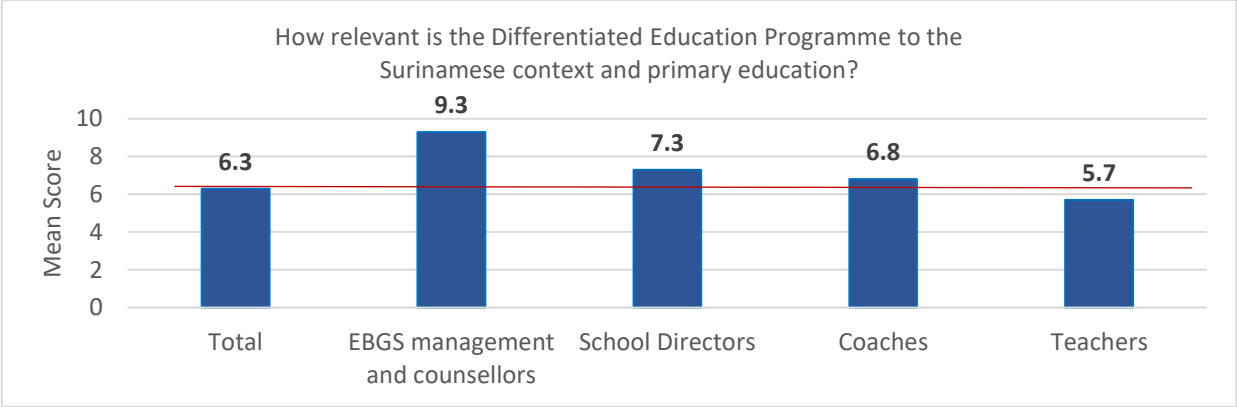
Prior to the pandemic, the Programme was highly relevant to the Surinamese context and national primary education; and it remains so today. In the years prior to the launch of the Programme, MINOWC had been discussing the need to reform the national primary education model and introduce differentiated teaching approaches that tailor instruction to students' learning needs. MINOWC recognized that the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that has long been at the centre of the country's primary education model was not effective for all students, as many students were having to repeat primary school grades and were not transitioning from primary to secondary education. Given the high rates of grade repetition and school dropout, MINOWC envisioned differentiated teaching approaches as a way to meet the learning needs of all students, regardless of the differences in their abilities.

¹²⁹ UNICEF (2021). *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Suriname*. UNICEF Suriname Office: Paramaribo, Suriname.

Despite this recognition, MINOWC has yet to make significant progress at developing and implementing differentiated education; thus, in 2018, SOEBGS management partnered with NGO SAGA Foundation to develop and implement a Differentiated Education Programme that involved training teachers to use differentiated teaching methods and to tailor teaching to meet the learning needs of students. This included capacitating teachers to develop and use differentiated teaching approaches, materials and assessment measures to ensure that all students within a classroom can learn effectively, regardless of the differences in their learning needs and abilities. SOEBGS management decided to pilot the Programme in their 56 primary schools, with support from NGO SAGA Foundation and funding from UNICEF Suriname. SOEBGS management envisioned that the Programme would serve to strengthen teacher training and build teachers’ knowledge and skills to apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom to improve student learning and academic performance.

In an effort to document the Programme’s relevance, respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not relevant to 10=very relevant) how relevant the Programme is to the Surinamese context and primary education. **Chart 6.1** shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme was relevant to the national context and primary education. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme as 6.3 on a 10-point scale.** SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=9.3) were most likely to report the Programme is ‘very relevant’ to national context and primary education, whereas school heads (mean=7.3), coaches (mean=6.8) and teachers (mean=5.7) were more likely to report the Programme as ‘somewhat relevant’.

Chart 6.1. Relevance of the Differentiated Education Programme (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not relevant and 10 = very relevant

Respondents reported the Programme was ‘very relevant’ to the national context and primary education (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) included all SOEBGS management and counsellors, 40 percent of school heads, 19 percent of teachers and 18 percent of coaches. They reason they ranked the Programme as ‘very relevant’ was because they understood that the Programme was developed and implemented with the goal of strengthening teacher training and building teachers’ knowledge and skills to apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom to teach all students, and it included giving additional attention to students who struggled to learn. They understood that the Programme was ultimately designed to improve student learning and academic performance, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

They also recognized that the Programme provided teachers with the tools and skills to teach students with different learning needs and abilities, including students who learned at different paces and in different ways. The Programme introduced a three-star system which enabled teachers to identify and group students based upon their learning pace and academic performance (i.e., star 1, star 2 and star 3 students) in language and mathematics courses. Star 1 students were considered students who under-performed academically (i.e., the so-called slow learners), whereas star 3 students were high academic achievers and star 2 students were average learners.

“9 – Because we move from traditional to differentiated instruction it is true that it is time consuming [differentiated education approaches], but moving from traditional teaching to differentiated learning is an important thing. You are more active with the children and can help the children, and see where their weaknesses are, and you can pay more attention to the weaker pupils, and stronger pupils you can give them additional work to do.” (Teachers, School 8)

Respondents also recognized that the Programme was designed to reduce grade repetition and school dropout, which is the aim of educational reforms being introduced by MINOWC. Some school heads pointed out that differentiated education is 'very relevant' because MINOWC is now offering teacher trainings on differentiated education, but they recognized that it was SOEBGS that introduced the Programme first.

At the same time, however, respondents who ranked the Programme as 'very relevant' also recognized that the Programme had yet to be implemented at the level that it should be and that there are teachers who are not engaged in differentiated education and are still asking the question, "What is the Differentiated Education Programme?" In large part, this is because the Programme's implementation was interrupted in March 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic. As previously mentioned, during the pandemic, schools and teachers shifted away from teaching using differentiated teaching approaches to focus on providing distance-learning initiatives in a difficult context where access to technology and the internet is extremely limited. During this time period, when schools were temporarily closed, teachers had limited to no contact with their students. Many students fell behind in their learning and education during this time. When schools reopened, school heads and teachers were focused on trying to encourage students to return to the classroom and helping them to catch-up in their learning.

Since MINOWC enacted the Automatic Promotion Policy school heads and teachers have found that the Policy has had a negative effect students' motivation and learning, as well as teacher's morale. Moreover, school heads and teachers have found that they are no longer able to use differentiated teaching approaches and the three-star system to motivate students to learn and avoid grade repetition, as they did prior to the pandemic and the enactment of the Automatic Promotion Policy.

Respondents who felt that the Programme was 'somewhat relevant' to the national context and primary education (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) included 82 percent of coaches, 60 percent of school heads and 57 percent of teachers. They considered the Programme 'somewhat relevant' because they recognized the benefits of the Programme, but they also focused on the Programme's shortcomings. For instance, the Programme was developed to be implemented in grades 3-6; thus, the Programme's workbook and teaching materials were designed around these specific grades. There were not Programme materials to support the use of differentiated education in pre-school or the upper primary school grades. Thus, by the time students reach the upper primary school grades, teachers are using traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that use rigidly prescribed lessons plans where students put all of their focus on the teacher and students are passive listeners. During activities, students work alone and collaboration is discouraged. Teacher-centred pedagogy limits teachers' abilities to use differentiated teaching approaches that are responsive to students' different learning needs and capabilities.

Some school heads and teachers also reported that there is little time to teach using the three-star system and differentiated teaching methods, especially when teachers have only 45-50 minutes to teach a subject, such as language or math. Thus, teachers reported that they do not have enough time to work with star 1 students using active teaching methods, while also giving attention to star 2 and 3 students.

"7 – In the beginning [of Programme implementation before the COVID-19 pandemic], I would give it a 9 because it was really applied at that time [2018-2019], and I could see improvements. But now I give it a 5. So, I will average it to a 7. We don't have the right materials, everything is expensive. Sometimes pupils or people from the neighbourhood they come and steal things and some of the pupils they destroy the materials" (Teachers, School 7).

"5 – When we look at education in Suriname it is changing . . . but when they implement something new, it should be done properly. It should not be done halfway. We don't have the textbooks or sufficient materials. For example, the lesson plans, we don't receive copies, we have to photocopy, we have to use our own funds. It is not well organized . . . I am worried that we start doing it and then we don't continue, it confuses the children. Students from the 3rd grade move to the 4th grade and have to return to the old system. Also, the groups are too large. When applying differentiated teaching approaches, you need smaller groups of students." (Teachers, School 5)

Despite recognizing the benefits of the Programme, many teachers have resisted the Programme because it requires 'too much writing'. Teachers are required to write daily lessons plans for both language and math courses using a standardized five-page lesson plan form (i.e., ten-pages on a daily basis for two courses). Given that very few

teachers have access to computers, these five-page lesson plans need to be handwritten on a daily basis. Teachers complained that they do not have time to write these five-page lesson plans and they lack the materials needed to teach using differentiated teaching approaches, which requires the use of visual educational and teaching materials and materials to teach using activities or games.

It was only teachers (24 percent) felt that the Programme was ‘not relevant’ to the national context and primary education (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale). Teachers felt the Programme was ‘not relevant’ was because they were not sufficiently trained to implement the Programme and use differentiated teaching approaches. Some teachers reported that they have too many students and not enough space in their classrooms, and not enough time to teach using differentiated teaching approaches. Some teachers do not like the three-star system of categorizing students based upon their learning pace and academic achievements because it creates a hierarchy in the classroom between star 1, 2 and 3 students, which contributes to star 1 students (i.e., slow learners) being bullied by their classmates.

Teachers were not satisfied with the Programme because it is time consuming and requires a lot of writing to develop daily lesson plans, which is on top of their other teaching responsibilities. Teachers explained that when they return home from work they have domestic and care responsibilities in their families. Some women also have to travel by bus for up to an hour or more each way to and from their home to the school. They also complained that the burden is put on teachers to pay for the Programme by making photocopies of lessons plans (which can cost teachers as much as 400 SRD a month) and buying materials needed to create visual teaching aids (e.g., pictures, story tables, word walls).

6.1.2. What are the different approaches or modalities of teacher training that have been applied? How relevant are the teacher trainings to prepare teachers to adopt the differentiated learning approach in the classroom? How relevant are current contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used for the training?

The Programme was designed to include different approaches or modalities of teacher training. SOEBGS and NGO SAGA Foundation partnered to deliver a series of six-day training-of-trainers to 119 teachers who were selected to be coaches. School heads at the 56 primary schools were asked to identify two teachers who would be trained to be coaches to support implementation of the Programme in their schools. The training for coaches followed the Activating Direct Instruction model which allowed coaches to experience how lesson materials could be transferred. Fifty-four (54) School heads were also trained on the Programme; however, they did not receive the same in-depth training that the coaches received and they were trained separately from the coaches.¹³⁰

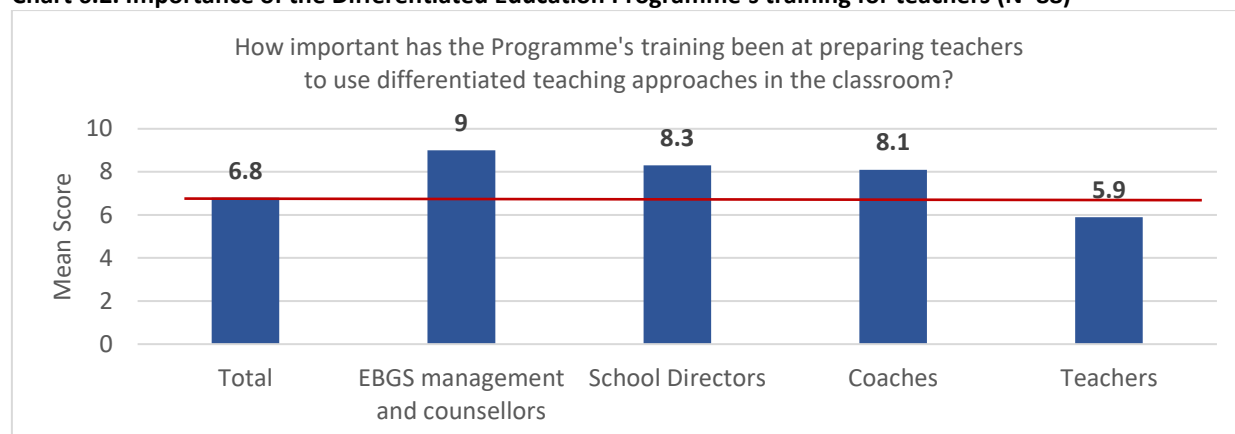
During the training, coaches were provided with a Programme manual and workbook, but not all school heads were provided with the same Programme manual and workbook. Coaches were expected to return to their schools and deliver trainings on the Programme to their colleagues, and they were expected to coach their colleagues to properly develop daily lesson plans, apply three-star system of categorizing students and use differentiated teaching approaches in the classrooms. Not all coaches followed through with these responsibilities for a variety of reasons, including: lack of commitment or buy-in to use differentiated education in the classroom; lack of understanding of differentiated education based upon the trainings received; lack of capacities and/or time to train and coach their colleagues; resistance from their colleagues; and lack of support from school heads.

In an effort to document how important the Programme’s training has been at preparing teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom, respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not important to 10=very important) how important the Programme’s training has been at preparing teacher to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. **Chart 62** shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme’s training was important at achieving this objective. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme as 6.8 on a 10-point scale.** SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=9.0), school heads (mean=8.3) and coaches (mean=8.1) were more likely to report that the Programme’s training has been ‘very important’ at preparing teachers to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom, whereas teachers (mean=5.9) ranked the Programme as only ‘somewhat important’ at preparing teachers to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. School heads and coaches ranked the training as more important than did teachers, because they were directly trained on the Programme by SOEBGS and NGO SAGA Foundation, whereas teachers

¹³⁰ 1st Report for the Project “Moving from Traditional to Differentiated Instruction. Period: August – December 2018.

who indirectly trained or coached by coaches as part of a cascade training approach. Shortcoming and challenge related to the cascade training approach are discussed below.

Chart 6.2. Importance of the Differentiated Education Programme's training for teachers (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not important and 10 = very important

Respondents who ranked the Programme's training as 'very important' (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) included 90 percent of school heads, 88 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 73 percent of coaches and 19 percent of teachers. SOEBGS management and counsellors thought the Programme's training was 'very important' because it strengthened teachers abilities to develop daily lesson plans. Prior to the Programme, teachers did not prepare lesson plans that were student-centred, as they were using a teacher-centred model. Thus, SOEBGS management thought the Programmes' training helped to ensure that teachers are prepared to teach students and to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom.

Respondents also recognized that teacher trainings are necessary to achieve change in the educational system. They understood that teachers need to be capacitated to think about teaching in student-centred ways and to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. Some coaches thought the training actually built their capacities to develop lesson plans and to assess students' academic performance using the three-star system, so that they could use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom to teach star 1, 2 and 3 students. They also thought the that training help to develop their colleagues capacities to do the same; however, teachers revealed that not all coaches were capacitated to transfer their knowledge to other teachers. A few teachers appreciated the support provided by the coaches, but not all coaches trained or coached their colleagues to implement the Programme in the way that they were expected to, in keeping with the Programme's design.

*"9 – Change does not come over night, you need to prepare and train your teachers, and tell them about the importance, and they need to be open to apply it [differentiate teaching approaches]. I always say that education is a dynamic thing, but to make the change you need to train teachers to make them aware so that they know why and acknowledge the importance of the change, and to be open to it. You need to find support for the change to make the change."
(School Head, School 9)*

Respondents who ranked the Programme's training as 'somewhat important' (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) included 63 percent of teachers, 27 percent of coaches, 13 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, and 10 percent of school heads. Some teachers reported that the coaches helped them to understand how to develop lesson plans and to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom; whereas other teachers were not confident in the coaches capacities because they could not answer questions that teachers had about how to implement the Programme and to develop lesson plans. Some teachers said they read the Programme's workbook

and/or manual on their own in an effort to figure out how to implement the Programme in the classroom. Teachers also complained that they did not always receive feedback from coaches and/or school heads as to whether the daily lesson plans they developed were done properly.

In general, the Programme's trainings resulted in some coaches and teachers being capacitated to understand the Programme, but both coaches and teachers asked for more capacity building trainings (e.g., refresher trainings) related to the Programme. Many teachers said they prefer to have the same training that the coaches received so that they could have more knowledge and understanding of how to implement the Programme. Other teachers wanted trainers to actually come to the school to deliver the training and demonstrate how to use differentiated teaching approaches and visual materials in the classroom. Given the fact that the majority of teachers are women, they often face challenges staying away from their home and family for any length of time to participate in trainings.

Teachers did not think that the use of cascade training was a good approach because not all coaches were able to properly train and coach their colleagues. Coaches faced a multitude of challenges when it came to transferring Programme-related information to their colleagues. Teachers recognized that some coaches made an effort to pass along information about the Programme to their colleagues and even emphasized the importance of developing daily lessons plans and using differentiated teaching methods in the classroom, but they were met with resistance from their colleagues, particularly more senior teachers who are accustomed to traditional teacher-centred pedagogy.

Given these challenges, teachers thought it is best to identify teachers who are really interested in being a coach, because not all teachers selected be coaches were interested in participating in the trainings and/or taking on the additional roles and responsibilities of being a coach. Such coaches, were less inclined to coach their colleagues, especially if they encountered resistance.

Only teachers (19 percent) ranked the Programme's training as 'not important' (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale). These teachers complained that coaches did not take the time to capacitate teachers at their schools and/or did not have time to coach them. Teachers explained, *"We can't blame them, they have their own classes to teach, but it is very important that they support the teachers and that is not happening"* (Teachers, School 1). Also, teachers

"7 - The transfer was good. When I was stuck with something I could always go to her [the coach] with my questions and she was open to the questions I had. Without her [the coach] I could not prepare my lesson plans." (Teachers, School 2).

"7 - Perhaps what they can do is send a coach to the school and demonstrate ways to use differentiated teaching approaches and the different types of materials to use. What went wrong is that the training is not provided directly to teachers. All teachers should be trained directly, don't just train two teachers and then expect them to train us. We [teachers] prefer the trainers to come here [to the school]." (Teachers, School 5)

"6 - Sometimes you had to select the people who were interested and had the time, and were able to go to the training; you can't just select two random people to go to the training and to transfer their knowledge to us. The coaches have to be able to motivate us; they were not able to motivate us." (Teachers, School 8)

"6 - In the beginning, the coaches perhaps did not understand it [the Programme] that well themselves, so in the beginning, the training did not go so well and it was difficult for us to understand . . . In the beginning, I got a little irritated because I didn't know how to do it" (Teachers, School 5).

"6 - They [coaches] were willing to help, but they could not really address all of our questions and they [coaches] met some resistance that they had to overcome; as a result, it was not possible for them [coaches] to do their work" (Teachers, School 8)

"5 - I noticed that some of the teachers were forced to become a coach and were selected by the school leaders. They didn't have the ambition to be a coach and the way they transferred knowledge was as if they did not want to do it." (Teachers, School 2)

"1 - The trainers were not that much value to us because they were not that much help, they didn't explain it to us. They didn't understand it and also they are teaching. It was also about the lack of time because in addition to teaching their own class they had to train us." (Teachers, School 6)

who only started teaching in the past year or two, after the pandemic, were not trained on differentiated education or to develop lesson plans. It was also found that teachers trained to be coaches in one school have since transferred to another school after they were trained, but they were not acting as coaches in the new school. In some cases, teacher at the new school did not even know that they were coaches at their previous school, because the coaches did not tell their colleagues.

“Coaches who transferred from one school to another, typically do not take on the role of a coach at their new school and most of their colleagues were not even aware that they were trained to be a coach. I was working at another school and there I was assigned as a coach, but I didn’t stay there for a long time and came here and here there were a number of coaches . . . There were already coaches here so I didn’t coach so much.” (Coach, School 3)

6.1.3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the teacher trainings? And, how could they be improved?

As previously mentioned, the implementation plan for the Programme was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. After being trained, school heads and coaches were expected to return to their schools and implement the Programme, and coaches were expected to train other teachers in their schools. One of the disadvantages of this cascade training approach was that coaches received little feedback and support or additional training and guidance once they trained and returned to their schools.

Because of the pandemic, SOEBGS management and NGO Saga Foundation were unable to perform the school visits and deliver refresher trainings that were originally envisioned in the Programme’s design. In 2021, when schools were re-opened and teachers and students returned to the classroom, the Programme was never re-started because teachers were focused on reintegrating children into the classroom, teaching primary education curricula, trying to help students who had fallen behind academically to catch-up, and maintaining social distance between students to curb the spread of COVID-19 in schools. Thus, Programme activities that were interrupted were never restarted. Thus, it is impossible to fully assess the of Programme’s approach to training teachers.

Taking into consideration these realities, this evaluation focused on understanding the advantages and disadvantages of the trainings that teachers did receive prior to the pandemic, and the usefulness of the cascade training approach that was used. The advantages and disadvantage identified are discussed below, along with some recommendations for making improvements, some of which will be developed and further articulated in the Section 8. Recommendations.

6.1.3.1. Advantages of the Programme’s teacher training

The Programme’s teacher training reinforces good differentiated education and teaching that school heads and teachers recognize benefit students and help them to move from one grade to the next, particularly before the pandemic. Coaches and teachers appreciated that the Programme’s teacher training helped them to identify and work with students with different learning needs and who learn at different paces; however, teaching using the three-star system can be a challenge in the classroom, particularly when teachers have a large number of students. While coaches were better trained than the majority of teachers to use differentiated teaching methods in the classroom, not all coaches were as accepting of or skilled at using differentiated education. To improve Programme implementation, all teachers should receive the same training delivered to coaches under the aegis of the Programme.

“She divided the groups and she is able to reach the children who were not supposed to move onto the next grade. With teachers you really need to stimulate and motivate them, and with some teachers they are really using it. Some teachers are not technical and those using it help to improve the results of the school’s performance. I noticed that the Programme forced teachers to think out of the box and children are more visually motivated . . . The teaching needs to be adjusted to meet the learning needs [of students], and the teachers take more time on how to structure the lesson.” (School Head, School 9)

Teachers who were trained to be coaches were provided with a Programme manual and workbook. The Programme manual and workbook provide instruction, guidance and tools that teachers need to understand and apply the Programme. Coaches and teachers who had these two resources in their entirety typically reported that they were useful or relevant; however, not all teachers were provided with the Programme manual and workbook and some teachers were provided with only a few select pages of the manual and/or workbook. Teachers who were able to obtain a copy of one or both of these documents reported that they were expected to pay to photocopy them, which in total was 200 pages (estimated 400 SRD). It is also notable that not all school heads were provided with Programme manual and workbook. Some teachers had a copy of one of these documents and others had neither of the documents. To improve the Programme, all teachers should be provided with a hard and/or digital copy of the Programme manual and workbook, and a copy of these documents should be made readily available in each school library, so that teachers can easily access and/or sign out them for a few days at time.

The Programme's teacher training, if delivered properly and in its entirety, can capacitated teachers to understand and apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. The Programme's teacher training approach did capacitate some coaches and teachers to understand and apply differentiate teaching approaches, and to see the benefits of the Programme on students and their learning outcomes. For instance, the training enabled some teachers to better identify and provide additional attention to star 1 student who were slow to learn and under-performed academically, particularly in math and language.

With cascade training, coaches were supposed to train and capacitate teachers in each of their respective schools. Some coaches did this to some extent, but not fully, whereas other coaches did not do this at all. In most schools, the training provided by coaches occurred prior to the pandemic, but were not continued after the pandemic. To improve the Programme and its Implementaiton, SOEBGS should provide all teachers with the same training that the coaches received, and should provide refresher trainings on an annual basis. More specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education should also be developed and made available to teachers and school heads.

"In the beginning they [coaches] came to visit the classroom more often and we had to submit the lesson plans, and they were really telling us what to do and providing us feedback, and I thought that worked well. But with me, it should be a continuous process . . . This is not something you can start for a month and then stop. They [coaches] should continue to provide feedback, and if that happened it can be improved. Sometimes it is difficult for the coaches and they cannot help, especially for the work methods." (Teachers, School 2)

"Now we teach in a differentiated way and if you look closely you can see it works well because it brings all the children up to one level, and then the weak pupils are no longer left behind because they get extra instruction and materials, so no one is left behind. The weaker students, you provide them with materials to feel accepted and this is very important, and now they are more motivated. I use different approaches, such as active work methods, and it is no longer boring for them [students]. But making the transition is not easy because I have been teaching for over 30 years, but now I see the benefits for the children." (Teachers, School 8)

"In the beginning, the Programme was not clear, but after the training it became clearer. When the information came back to the school, it was very difficult and we did not get any feedback from SOEBGS. I had to do everything myself . . . We had to submit documents through email and the last school director helped me to send photos, lesson preparations and examples. I never got any feedback on whether it was done correctly. I completed the portfolio and I was supposed to get a certificate, but it was not completed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They didn't feel that we completed the work to get the certificate." (Coach, School 8)

The Programme's teacher training did succeed at capacitating teachers to develop daily lesson plans, to varying degrees. SOEBGS management and many school heads mandated that teachers develop daily lessons plans for math and language using the lesson plan forms in the Programme's manual and workbook. Coaches were supposed to teach their colleagues how to develop daily lessons plans. Some coaches were very supportive at helping teachers to develop their daily lessons plans and even reviewed their lessons plans and provided feedback and suggestions;

whereas other coaches did not do this. Some teachers complained that they were expected to develop lesson plans with limited training or support from the coaches or school heads, and a lack of understanding of the Programme.

Some teachers took the initiative to photocopy and read the Programme's training manual and/or workbook to capacitate themselves to develop daily lessons plans for their classes, particularly language and mathematics. To improve the Programme and its implementation, SOEBGS should capacitate all teachers to develop lesson plans using differentiated teaching approaches, and to align their lesson plans with required learning outcomes as per the subject and grade. These do not need to be daily lesson plans, which is time consuming for teachers, but could be weekly lesson plans.

6.1.3.2. Disadvantages of the Programme's teacher training

SOEBGS counsellors were not fully capacitated or committed to support schools to implement the Programme. Not all SOEBGS counsellors were champions of the Programme and they were not properly capacitated to support schools to implement the Programme; thus, schools complained that they received limited feedback, guidance and support from SOEBGS counsellors. To improve the Programme and its implementation, SOEBGS counsellors must be agents of change and champion of the Programme, and they need to be fully capacitated and certified to train school heads and teachers on all components of the Programme, and to assess its implementation in the classroom. They should also be required to participate in annual refresher trainings related to the Programme and re-certified every five years. Each SOEBGS counsellor should also have an annual plan for visiting schools and deliver refresher trainings and technical assistance to each of the SOEBGS primary schools in their cluster to strengthen the roll out and mainstreaming of the Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools.

There was no clear criteria or guidance provided to school heads for selecting teachers to be trained as coaches to support the implementation of the Programme, and teachers who were selected to be coaches were not clearly informed as to what would be their roles and responsibilities as coaches in their schools. Each school head was asked to select two teachers who would be trained to be coaches, preferably one teacher from the lower grades and one from the upper grades of the primary school. Some school heads were hesitant to select teachers to be coaches because of the lack of human resources and out of concern that they might select a teacher who would not represent the school well at the training.

Some school heads selected the 'best teachers' to be coaches, whereas others selected the 'weaker teachers' to pull them along. Some school heads identified the so-called 'positive teachers', 'more motivated teachers' and those who were 'more flexible and willing', 'enthusiastic', 'open to learning new things' and/or 'already looking for different teaching methods'. To improve the Programme's implementation, there should be clear criteria and guidance for school heads to recruit and select teachers to be coaches, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for coaches. Teacher should know what is expected of them prior to agreeing to be a coach. Also, teachers who are trained to be coaches should be offered an incentive and/or a reduced teaching load to fulfill the defined roles and responsibilities as a coach.

"SOEBGS didn't give us [school heads] any criteria, they just stated that I had to appoint two coaches. What I did was communicate this in a meeting and nobody wanted to do it. At a certain point, I thought I will appoint two coaches and I took someone from the upper level and the lower level. It was not like they were forced, but not all were enthusiastic. I had a conversation with one coach after the first training and she said, 'I don't know what I am doing here.' At a certain point I initiated a discussion with her that if she did not want to do it, she didn't have to. I encouraged her that she would learn something. She said okay I will continue with the training. So, I saw that she finished the training so as not to disappoint me, but she was not open to this method because when she was asked certain things she was not enthusiastic. The other coach she was enthusiastic because she was still being trained to be a teacher, so she used it in her studies. She shared all the information with the rest of the team . . . One coach did really well." (School Heads, School 9)

School heads should have received the same trainings that coaches received so that they fully understood all components of the Programme, as well as additional trainings on how to manage the Programme's implementation and support teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom. Because school heads did not receive the same in-depth training that the coaches received, nor did they receive both the Programme manual

and workbook, they typically did not fully understand all components of the Programme (e.g., differentiated teaching approaches, development of lesson plans, use of visual materials and interactive learning activities) and how to apply them. For this reason, in part, not all school heads were agents of change and champions of the Programme, and they were unable to manage the Programme's implementation and support teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom. It is important that school heads are fully capacitated to understand all components of the Programme and to manage the Programme's implement and support teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom, and to review and provide feedback on lesson plans.

To varying degrees, teachers were capacitated to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom, but they were not capacitated on how to use differentiated testing. The use of differentiated teaching approaches to teach students based upon their learning needs using the three-star system made sense to teacher, but they also need training and tools to properly assess student's learning and progress under the three-star system. The Programme did not do this. School heads and teachers explained that they need different assessment tools or tests for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade level because having one test for all students does not allow teachers to properly measure student learning and assess whether star 1 and 2 students are progressing, and when to move students from star 1 to 2 and star 2 to 3. To improve the Programme, the Programme's trainings and tools should include differentiated testing and tests that teachers can use in the classroom at each grade level. This will help to create more consistency across classes and primary schools as to which students belong in star 1, 2 and 3 groups.

"It would be good to educate the school leaders because we would get the information directly and we could monitor directly, it is never too much. If we received the training, we would have been sure. It would have been better if the school leader had a brief training because if the ADI forms, the school leaders have the do the checking of the forms and check whether it was filled out properly. So the school leaders should have more information." (Directors, School 9)

"I think if they were to have different levels of tests then I could see if different star pupils are making progress and increasing from star 1 to 2; that can only be observed in the classroom. Some children are star 1 in language, but in math they are star 2, and you need to start monitoring them to make sure they are improving, but when they make a test it is hard to make the distinction. We have some flexibility on how to design the test, but we don't get the approval to make different levels of tests. (School Head, School 4)

"The coaches were trained, but they did not simultaneously train the school leaders, so the school leaders had a difficult time monitoring the programme. The school leaders were trained separately, but they should have been trained first or simultaneously to monitor the programme." (School Head, School 8)

The cascade training approach of training teachers to be coaches and then expecting them to return to their schools and deliver trainings and support to their colleagues to implement the Programme was wrought with challenges. This approach was partially unsuccessful for a multitude of reasons, many of which have already been explained. In particular, the trainings provided to coaches did not capacitate all coaches to fully understand the Programme and to apply it in the classroom; thus, they were unable to train their colleagues on how to do so. Many teachers felt that the coaches were not confident to train or provide their colleagues with guidance on how to develop daily lesson plans and to use differentiate teaching methods in the classroom.

Teachers also recognized that coaches often did not have time to take on these additional roles and responsibilities, such as reviewing their colleagues daily lesson plans and providing timely feedback, visiting their colleagues' classrooms to observe how they teach and provide feedback on how to improve their teaching by using differentiate teaching approaches, and more. They also recognized that those who trained the coaches did not visit the schools to provide coaches with the technical assistance that they needed to properly do this work. Because of these shortcomings with the cascade trainings, the Programme was reduced down to completing the daily lesson plan forms, assigning students to star groups based upon their learning abilities, using visual materials in the classroom (e.g., storyboards) and spending more time with the star 1 students (i.e., slow learner).

6.1.4. What are the different types of materials used for implementing the approach? How relevant are these materials developed by teachers to achieve the objectives? What are the positives and negatives? How could it be improved?

Across schools, Programme implementation varied significantly depending upon the school head's commitment to the Programme, coaches understanding of the Programme and their commitment and abilities to train their colleagues on all components of the Programme, and the willingness of teachers to implement the Programme in their classrooms. A lot also depended upon the support provided by SOEBGS management and counsellors to schools to implement the Programme and the level of teacher resistance to the Programme.

As previously mentioned there was a Programme manual and workbook. Both of these documents were provided to coaches during their training. The Programme manual provides information on the structure of the training coaches received, key elements of differentiated education and information about bullying, whereas the workbook provides teachers with lesson plans and activities that they can use in the classroom to transition to teaching using differentiated teaching methods. Some school heads were also provided with one or both of these Programme document, but not all school heads were provided with copies. Most teachers were not provided with a copy of the Programme's manual or workbook, although some made a photocopy of one or both of these documents, typically at their own cost. Other teachers reported that they were not aware of these Programme documents and had not seen them.

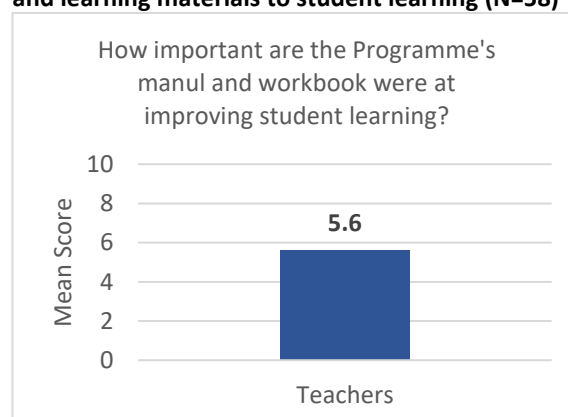
In an effort to document how relevant the Programme manual and workbook were, teachers were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not important to 10=very important) how important the Programme's manual and workbook were at improving student learning. **Chart 6.3** shows that **on average, teachers ranked the Programme's teaching and learning materials as 'somewhat important' (ranked a 5.6 on a 10-point scale).**

Teachers (26 percent) who ranked the Programme's manual and workbook as 'very important' (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) did so because they recognized that the Programme's training manual and workbook were practical or useful and benefited students, but they still struggled to work with star 1 students (i.e., so-called weaker students).

Teachers also point out that the Programme is time consuming and a lot of work for teachers and not all teachers received a copy of the Programme's manual and workbook, so they struggled, at times, to know how to implement the Programme. Teachers complained that they had to make copies of the Programme's manual and workbook at their own cost, and they were disappointed that the materials did not include different assessment tools and tests that could be used in keeping with the three-star system to assess students learning, particularly differences between students in the star 1, 2 and 3 groups.

Teachers (47 percent) who ranked the Programme's manual and workbook as 'somewhat important' (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) did so because they do not like having to fill out the daily lesson plan forms and to elaborate on how they plan to teach in the classroom every day. Some teachers had difficult time completing the lesson plans and determining whether a student belongs in the star 1, 2 or 3 group. Use of the three-star system became even more difficult after the pandemic because school closure resulted in significant learning losses for many students, and the learning losses were even greater in math and language. The Automatic Promotion Policy was further compounding learning losses for many students as they were progressing on to the next grade at the end of the year without achieving the required learning outcomes.

Chart 6.3. Importance of the Programme's teaching and learning materials to student learning (N=58)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not important and 10 = very important

"8 – For the children, it is beneficial that they get extra help, but the children that finish early need additional work. For the children it is very positive and for you, as the teacher, it is a lot of work, and it depends on what grade you are teaching and the number of students in your classroom." (Teachers, School 8)

When teachers have a large number of students in their classroom, they cannot successfully implement the Programme because teachers have to spend so much time working with the star 1 student (i.e., ‘weaker students’) that they don’t have time for the star 2 and 3 students. Teachers also found it difficult to reach the star 1 students and to help them learn because the learning losses for students have been so significant due to the combined effects of the pandemic and the Automatic Promotion Policy.

Teachers are not applying everything in the Programme’s manual and workbook because they need more capacity building training and technical assistant to implement the Programme. Moreover, there are still numerous teachers who have never seen the Programme’s manual and workbook, so they cannot use them.

Teachers (26 percent) who ranked the Programme’s manual and workbook as ‘not important’ (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale) did so because they were not working with the Programme and did not receive the Programme’s manual or workbook; thus, they did not understand the Programme. They may have attempted to use differentiated teaching approaches, such as playing games, but they did not think these approaches worked well at motivating students to learn. Again, some teachers complained that the number of students in their classes were too many to do differentiated education, whereas others pointed out that their classrooms are too small to put children into groups and teach them using differentiated education.

“3 – I only used it two to three times and when I saw it didn’t work I stopped working with it . . . The children didn’t participate, and as a teacher, if you don’t understand what to do, it would be difficult to motivate the children.” (Teachers, School 4)

6.1.5. How does the differentiated teaching approach work within the school environment and classroom spaces?

During the evaluation, both coaches and teachers spoke about how differentiated education and teaching approaches were being heavily pushed by SOEBGS management. Much of the responsibility was put on school heads and coaches to make sure that teachers were capacitated and applying differentiated education in the classroom. This was accomplished, in large part, by requiring teachers to develop daily lessons plans using standard daily lesson plans forms that were in the Programme’s manual and workbook.

At the time of the evaluation, the push for using differentiated education and teaching approaches in the classroom was not as pervasive as prior to the pandemic, and teachers were instructed by their school heads that they could re-use daily lessons plans that were developed in the previous year(s) for the same grade. This was a decision made by many school heads in an effort to respond to complaints and resistance from teachers that the five-page daily lessons plans were too time consuming to develop and costly for teachers as they typically had to pay out-of-pocket to make photocopies of the five-page daily lessons plans for both mathematics and language (10 pages on a daily basis, 50 pages a week and 200 pages a month at a cost of 2 SRD per page, which is 400 SRD or 12 USD per month). Now, only if teachers change the grade that they are teaching are they required to develop new daily lesson plans. It was not clear how daily lesson plans were being reviewed, approved or used by either school heads and teachers.

“Teachers were complaining that they had to do a lot of writing to make up the lesson plans. In the beginning we received copies of the lesson plans, but later we had to make our own copies and our salaries are not that great to make copies of the lesson plans four to five times a week for math and language. Also, teachers complained about materials because, for example, you had to create a reading corner or storytelling table and then you need materials for that and it is not easy to get the materials. Teachers complained about the lack of materials to do the assignments and the lack of time, because some of the teachers still get training in the afternoon and they have work to do at home . . . Some teachers made a joke during training that their husbands would get mad at them.” (Coach, School 2)

Since being trained, coaches and teachers have taken a wide range of steps to introduce differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. Teachers spoke about using different teaching materials that fit with the learning levels of students, particularly in the lower primary school grades. They also told stories about using visual materials, storyboards, word walls and other interactive activities to engage and teach students. The challenges teachers

faced, however, was a lack of visual materials and other materials (e.g., paper, paints, crayons/markers, glue, scissors) that are needed for interactive activities, such as making a storyboard table. The expectation is that teachers will buy education and teaching materials for their classrooms, using their own money, given the lack of school budget for such materials. Teachers, however, refused to do so and complained that many of the materials needed for differentiated education are simply not available. Also, in more rural and remote areas, including the interior, teachers would need to travel several hours to Paramaribo to purchase educational and teaching materials that they need for the classroom.

At the time of the evaluation, daily lesson plans were still being used in some schools, although many teachers were reusing lessons plans developed in previous years. Some teachers were also still grouping students based upon their learning levels and spending more time working with students who were considered 'slow learners' or were academically behind for their grade. Both school heads and teachers recognized that the Programme is not be consistently implemented by teachers from classroom-to-classroom or grade-to-grade. One school head explained, *"In the beginning differentiated education was very clear, but now you really have to remind them to keep using differentiated education"* (School 6). Similarly, another school head explained, *"The teachers don't continuously use differentiated teaching approaches in the class; if you don't use it consistently, then you are not used to doing it"* (School 2).

There were teachers who recognized the differentiated education and active work methods are a good approach, but some teachers did not like the star system because they don't like having to put children into different groups based upon their learning needs. As previously mentioned, some teachers felt that this creates hierarchies in the classroom that contributes to bullying of star 1 students. These teachers preferred not to seat students according to the three-star system, and some preferred to have students sit in mixed groups, so that weaker students can benefit from being in a group and engaging with stronger or smarter students.

"They resisted the fact that they had to write so much, and you have to think of games to use and you have to look at your time schedule. When you first use differentiated education it is difficult to plan correctly . . . You need to write the lesson plan because you need to prepare and children will know if you not prepared. I kept talking to them [my colleagues] and encouraged them to write and make more effort for the children." (Coach, School 7)

"You saw the different groups, you also saw that in the old system they didn't have as much visual material, but now when teachers use differentiated education you see more visual materials, and you see the children are moving more, you see the children laughing and more interaction between teachers and pupils. Some children need visual material to understand, and some children need to do things by themselves, and some learn by hearing things Now with the ADI programme you reach all children." (School Head, School 4)

"In dividing the children into groups some get assigned a star 1 or 2, and I don't want that in my classroom, there are fast learners and weaker pupils, and they help each other, so I don't like to make this distance and to keep them separate in my class. Sometimes the children need to hear the materials from the stronger pupils, and it is easier for them to understand it then, because it is not coming from the teacher. You have the division into the groups and the different groups will not communicate with each other, but if you have strong pupils with the slow learners they can help the slower learners to understand it better." (Teachers, School 9)

6.2. Effectiveness

6.2.1. To what extent and how has the Programme helped to improve teacher performance in effectively addressing the different needs of students? And to making teaching and learning more inclusive?

The goal of the Programme was to build teachers' knowledge and capacities to apply differentiated education and teaching approaches in the classroom to improve student learning and academic performance. Respondents were asked whether the Programme had achieved this goal or had fallen short of this goal. Some school heads felt that the Programme's goal had been achieved because it introduced differentiated education and teaching approaches which have provided opportunities for children to be more engaged in the classroom, which was not a practice

under the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that has been used in the educational system in Suriname. Whereas other school heads contend that the Programme's goal has not been achieved because not all teachers are using differentiated education in the classroom or taking into consideration the different learning needs of students, and they have yet to see the results of the Programme on students.

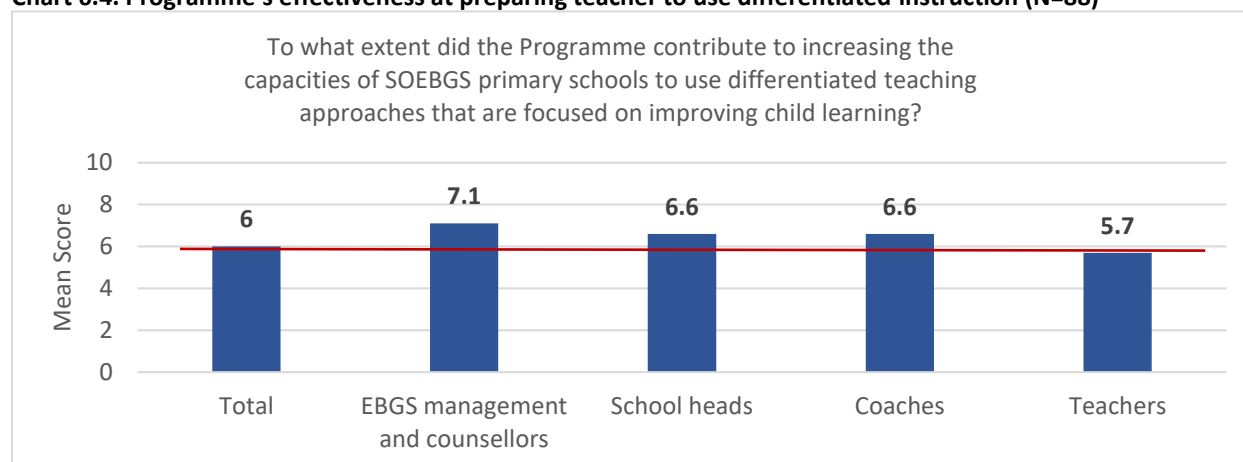
Both school heads and teachers pointed out that prior to the pandemic, most teachers were applying differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom, particularly for math and language, and were using the three-star system to group students based upon their learning needs. The pandemic, however, halted progress that was made when schools temporarily closed and distance-learning initiatives were introduced to stop the spread of COVID-19. This greatly impacted the effectiveness of the Programme. As previously mentioned, once teachers and students were able to return to the classroom, teachers were no longer focused on using differentiated teaching methods in the classroom, rather they were focused on reintegrating children into the classroom, teaching the primary school curricula and help students to catch-up from the learning that was lost during the pandemic. They were also focused on maintaining social distance between students (e.g., sitting in rows), which made it difficult to teach students in groups using the three-star system. Since returning to the classroom, some school heads have repeatedly encouraged teachers to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom and to be more actively involved with students when teaching, but progress made prior to the pandemic has been lost.

The Automatic Promotion Policy has also had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the Programme. The Policy has had a significant impact on both students and teachers. Some school heads reported that they have to keep motivating teachers to be actively involved with the students and to identify their learning gaps and needs, and teach in ways that help to address those learning gaps and needs. The challenge is that teachers perceive students as being less motivated to learn, and as a result, teachers are less motivated to expend more time and energy to help to address students learning gaps and needs, because both groups know that the student will be promoted to the next grade at the end of the year, regardless of their learning outcome and academic achievements, or lack thereof. One school head explained, *"What I have noticed is that teachers have an attitude like I almost don't have to do anything anymore because children will move on to the next grade"* (School 6).

"Now all children automatically move on to the next grade. I now have a class with three children who are not able to read or write, but they automatically moved from grade 3 to 4, then the problems continue in the next grades, because they are not able to read and write in grade 3. So, how will your problems be solved if you keep moving on and up in grades; it does not help. Moving on in grade automatically may be a good idea, but children who cannot read, it is impossible for them to move on to the next grade with the children . . . When they move on to secondary grades, teachers should know which children can read and write." (Teachers, School 6)

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not at all to 10=very much) to what extent the Programme contributed to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiated teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning. **Chart 6.4** shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme contributed to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiated teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the extent of the Programme's contribution as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale.** SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=7.1), coaches (mean=6.6) and school heads (mean=6.6) were more likely to report the Programme 'somewhat' contributed to achieving this objective, compared to teachers (mean=5.7).

Chart 6.4. Programme's effectiveness at preparing teacher to use differentiated instruction (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not at all and 10 = very much

Respondents who felt that the Programme ‘very much’ contributed to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiated teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale), included 90 percent of school heads, 88 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 73 percent of coaches and 19 per cent of teachers. The gave this ranking because they recognized that the Programme has helped to improve the way that teachers teach and students are able to learn. School heads thought the Programme contributed to reinforcing teachers understanding that *“everyone has a different way of learning and should have the time to do so, and if necessary can get additional attention (School Head, School 1).* Teachers also recognized that the Programme contributed to teachers getting to know their students better and making an effort to identify more active teaching approaches that can be used in the classroom to help their students learn, and that it is important that students are more active in the learning process.

Some respondents pointed out that before the pandemic many more teachers were more actively applying the Programme, but now there are new teachers who have never even heard of the Programme; thus, they called for more trainings on differentiated education. Some schools have also expanded the Programme beyond grades 3-6, as originally planned, and are now trying to implement the Programme in pre-school and the upper grades.

Respondents who ranked the Programme as having ‘somewhat’ contributed to increasing the capacities of of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiated teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale), included 63 percent of teachers, 27 percent of coaches, 13 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors and 10 percent of school heads. They gave this ranking because they recognized that not all teachers are using differentiate teaching

“8 – Because we have seen that the pupils who are very weak, we can help to improve their performance, and now we have more visual experiences that help to improve student learning.” (Teachers, School 7)

“8 – Children have moved from star 1 to 2 because you don’t want the child to stay at the same level, you want them to improve. Children when they participate, they like it, it is fun and they are more involved with the teacher. In the past, we just gave traditional instructions to all the children, but the Programme taught us to use the differentiated method, and it teaches you to better understand the differences between students and to approach the students differently and to divide the students into different levels.” (Teachers, School 4)

“6 – Because we still don’t have the results, especially after COVID, because it seems like children are hard-to-reach at their level. Some children who are not motivated only come to school because it is mandatory for them.” (School Head, School 7)

“6 – Because the teachers should make more of an effort to really make this work and to really get the children to engaged. They are not really using differentiated instruction and you need to monitor. If you don’t they won’t apply it anymore. They always tell me they have a lot of things to do already and are very busy . . . They keep going back to the old system versus using differentiated education.” (School Head, School 2)

approaches in the classroom, but they were aware of students who had benefited from the Programme. Some school heads reported that they discussed differentiated teaching methods with their teachers, but were not fully satisfied with the results of the Programme and saw room for improvement. This, in part, is because after the pandemic there was significant learning loss among students and some children have been less motivated to learn and hard-to-reach, regardless of the teaching approach.

Not all teachers are implementing the Programme in the classroom and teachers complain that developing the daily lesson plans that are part of the Programme is a lot of writing and time consuming. As a result, teachers from many of the schools reported that they have reverted back to using traditional teaching-centred pedagogy. While they may develop and submit lesson plans, in keeping with the Programme, because it is mandatory, they do not always follow the lesson plans when they are teaching in the classroom.

Only teacher (19 percent) ranked the Programme as ‘not at all’ contributing to increasing the capacities of of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiated teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning (ranked 4 or less on a 10-point scale). They gave this ranking because they didn’t have any evidence that the Programme worked or improved student learning, and this has been more so an issue since enactment of the Automatic Promotion Policy. Teachers also complained that they are asked to prepare daily lesson plans and submit them to the school heads, but the school head do not provide teachers immediate feedback, so the lesson plans do not help the teachers; it is just time-consuming work.

“6 – It [the Programme] did increase the capacities of teachers, then we were hit with CVOID. When we returned we didn’t apply it as much because we were very much behind. Sometimes we really needed it and had to go back to the Programme. I do apply it, but not as much as before because we have the different system [Automatic Promotion Policy].” (Coach, School 4)

“4 - I didn’t really see that it works for improving learning performance of the children because before the Programme we just had our lesson plans, and if we had weaker pupils in math and language, you had a special teacher assigned to give them special attention, but now we ourselves and are required to do additional work.” (Teacher, School 7)

“1 – When I was trained as a teacher, I was trained in a different way. I am used to that way, and now I am here I am asked to teach in a new method, but I have had no one to teach me on the new method. The Programme did not help me because I sometimes prepare my lesson plan according to the Programme’s approach, but I just teach in my own way according to the traditional way. The Differentiated Education Programme is confusing to me.” (Teachers, School 4)

6.2.2. To what extent and how has the approach achieved its objectives? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the differentiated learning objectives? What and how have differences come about for other beneficiaries?

There were several objectives of the Programme, including:¹³¹

- Teachers are able to encourage students’ creative thinking by asking questions in a different way (e.g., Socratic questioning).
- With differentiated teaching approaches, teachers’ are able to respond in a more dynamic manner to students learning differences and talents, and classroom dynamics.
- Teachers are better able to identify and assess the learning needs of students and adapt their teaching approaches accordingly.
- Teachers are better able to understand and work with diverse groups of students in the classroom, and to support students who underperform or have learning delays or difficulties, and do so by increasing students’ learning opportunities.
- Through efforts of the Activating Didactic Instruction (ADI) Model students are provided the opportunity to participate and take a more active role in their lessons and to participate in the learning process.
- Teachers are more aware of the language goals and are better equipped or capacitated to support language

¹³¹ From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme Document, 2018.

stimulation and production among students.

- Teachers are capacitated to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, to increase their understanding and solution-oriented thinking.

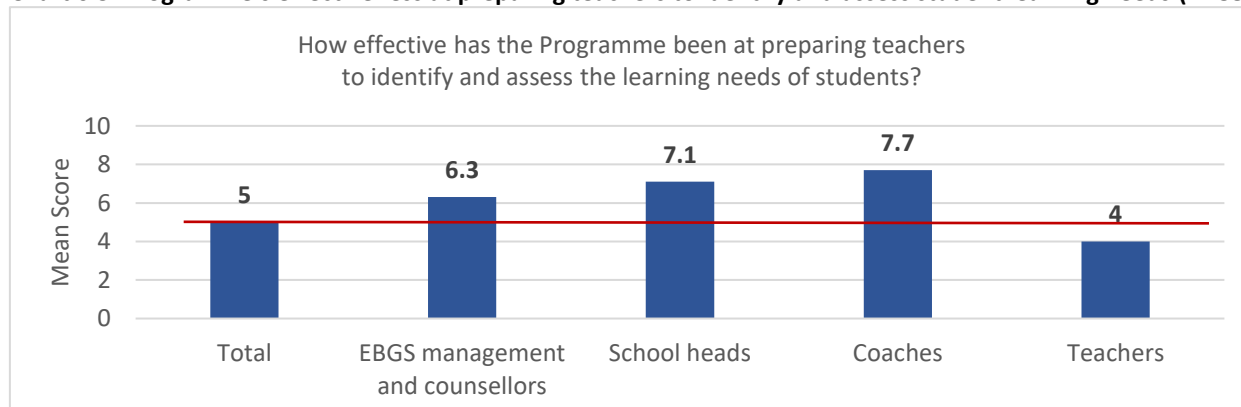
To evaluate whether the Programme achieved its objectives, respondents were asked a series of scale-item questions:

- How effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students?
- How effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students in the classroom, with different learning abilities?
- How effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways?
- To what extent did the Programme contribute to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to deliver more innovative teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning and academic performance?

Findings related to each of these questions are presented below.

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not effective to 10=very effective) how effective the Programme was at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students. Chart 6.5 shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme was ‘somewhat effective’ at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of student, except for teachers. On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme’s effectiveness related to this objective as a 5 on a 10-point scale. Coaches (mean=7.7) and school heads (mean=7.1) were most likely to report that the Programme was ‘somewhat effective’ at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students, followed by SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=6.3). Whereas teachers (mean=4.0) were more likely to report the Programme as ‘not effective’ at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students. This, in part, is because teachers were not trained in the same way as school heads and coaches, and only 55 percent of teachers reported that the coaches trained them to identify and assess the learning needs of students.

Chart 6.5. Programme’s effectiveness at preparing teachers to identify and assess student learning needs (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not effective and 10 = very effective

Respondents who ranked the Programme as ‘very effective’ (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) at achieving this objective, included 55 percent of coaches, 40 percent of school heads, 33 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors and 9 percent of teachers. They gave this ranking because they felt that the Programme was ‘eye-opening’ and taught teachers to learn more about their students learning needs and gaps, and encouraged teachers to monitor student’s progress, and if necessary, provide students who need additional support with help. School heads pointed out that the Programme forces teachers to use teaching methods that help them to assess the learning needs of students and assign them to groups, along with students who learn at the same pace, where they can provide students with more attention and support, as need. Yet, they recognized that it is not always easy for teachers to determine whether students belong in the star 1, 2 or 3 groups for math and language.

Coaches were far more likely than teacher to rank the Programme as ‘very effective’ because they were trained to identify and assess the learning needs of students using the three-star system; however, coaches were unable to explain what the criteria are for categorizing students as star 1, 2 and 3. Some teacher considered the Programme

‘very effective’ because it provided teachers with guidance on how to use the three-star system to group students and to determine what type of assignments they should give to students based upon their star level; yet, when asked, teachers were unable to explain what the criteria are for categorizing students as star 1, 2 or 3.

Respondents who ranked the Programme as ‘somewhat effective’ (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students, included 60 percent of school heads, 50 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 46 percent of coaches and 34 percent of teachers. This was because they felt the Programme did help them to identify and assess the learning needs of students, yet some claimed they knew how to do this before the Programme. Many teachers reported the Programme was only ‘somewhat effective’ because they did not receive any training or guidance from the coaches on how to identify and assess the learning needs of students. Some teachers felt that the coaches did not even know how to do it themselves because the information they received was not clear to them. School heads also point out that teachers need clear criteria for assessing the learning needs of students and assigning them to star 1, 2 and 3 groups.

Some teachers reported that they cannot assign all students to a star group because they need more guidance and support, particularly for students who require a lot more assistance and support than the teachers can provide in the classroom. This is because some students are no longer motivated to learn under the new education system with the Automatic Promotion Policy.

Teachers who ranked the Programme as ‘not effective’ (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students, included 57 percent of teachers and 17 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors. Teachers gave this ranking because the coaches provided them with no training or guidance on how to identify and assess the learning needs of students. Teachers complained that “it was not clear, they only told us to look at the performance of the pupils and based upon the performance divide them into groups” (Teachers, School 4). Thus, “we had to figure it out for ourselves, we had to do everything ourselves” (Teachers, School 2)

Respondents were also asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not effective to 10=very effective) how effective the Programme was at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities. Chart 6.6 shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme’s training was ‘somewhat effective’ at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme’s effectiveness related to this objective as a 5.3 on a 10-point scale.** School heads (mean=7.1) and coaches (mean=7.0) were more likely to report that the Programme as effective at achieving this objective, compare to SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=6.3). Whereas teachers (mean=4.4) were more likely to report the Programme was ‘not so

“8 – As a teacher it pushes you to know your pupils better. As a teacher, you see if the child is weak and when working with the pupil, you see if the child is making progress.” (Coach, School 1)

“7 – In the training we attended they explained when a pupil is not able to keep up, this is a pupil that needs assistance. Then there are pupils who finish quickly and you can give them additional work so that they don’t disturb the other pupils in the class. The 2-star are the average students.” (Teacher, School 6)

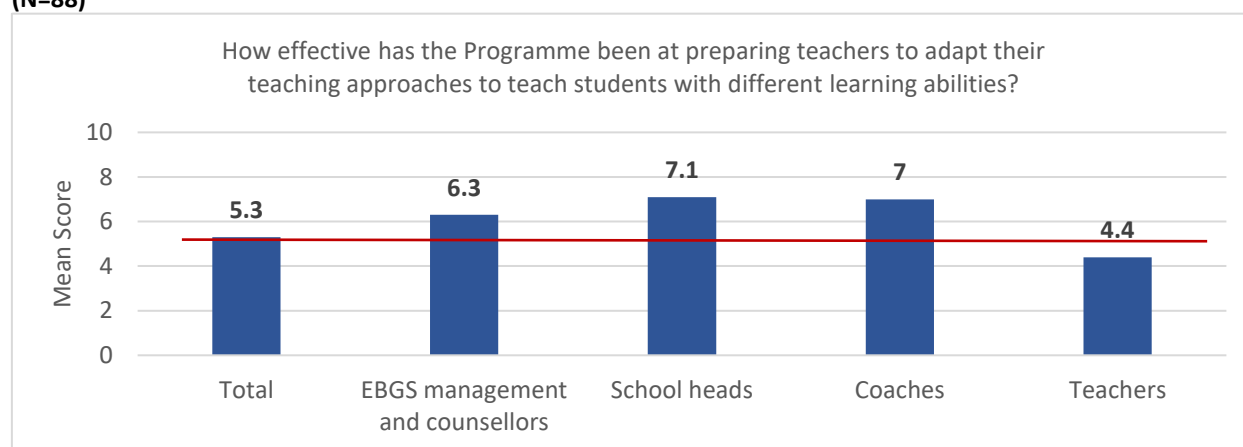
“7 – You know who the weaker pupils are, but the Programme enables you and tells you what you need to look for when making an assignment to different groups. It teaches you that you may have some weak pupils, but they are not weak in all the different subjects” (School Head, School 2)

“6 – Maybe that knowledge was not transferred because they themselves don’t know how to do it, because if you have three different groups how can you assess them with one test. Why I don’t want to give lower than a 6 is because they [coaches] need more information before they come to us, they could not answer questions. They are also dependent on management. It was mandatory for them to go to the training.” (Teachers, School 8)

“0 – We didn’t get to see how the coaches work and how they taught, we didn’t get to see how the coaches structured their lessons, during the training they did not instruct how to do this. I see this in the books, but they addressed it very briefly, they said you know your children and who should be given a star 1, 2 and 3.” (Teachers, School 6)

effective' at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities.

Chart 6.6. Programme's effectiveness at preparing teachers to teach students with different learning needs (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not effective and 10 = very effective

Respondents who ranked the Programme as 'very effective' (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities, included 60 percent of school heads, 50 percent of coaches and only 4 percent of teachers. They gave this ranking because they felt that the Programme was 'eye-opening' and taught teachers to learn more about their students, and that it encouraged teachers to monitor student's progress and provide additional support to students when it is needed.

Coaches were most likely to rank the Programme as 'very effective' because they felt that the training they received to become a coach prepared them to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning needs and abilities. They learned that you cannot use one teaching approach for the entire class, as students learn at different paces and in different ways. The Programme also reinforced the need to use visual teaching materials to teach students who have a more difficult time learning.

Respondents who ranked the Programme as 'somewhat effective' (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) at achieving this objective included 88 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 54 percent of teachers, 50 percent of coaches and 30 percent of school heads. SOEBGS management gave this ranking because the Programme was not fully implemented as planned due to the pandemic. In comparison, teachers gave this ranking because they were not trained or coached on how to use differentiated teaching approaches to teach students with different learning needs and abilities. Teachers wanted more practical guidance and direction on how to do this and adapt their teaching approaches in the classroom, but they were often told by coaches to go through the workbook and use the different exercises to determine what students can do. Some coaches felt that they were not capacitated enough to answer all the questions their colleagues posed to them when it came to applying differentiated education in the classroom to teach students with different learning abilities.

"8 – The Programme forces you to think about the fact that you have star 1 learners that are slow learners, and what method should I apply for the star 1 learners, because the same method will not work with star 2 and 3 learners. It forces you to think about the work method for different students." (School Head, School 9)

"6 – In the beginning the teachers really were not very enthusiastic about using the method, but through asking questions they were able to indicate and make a decision between the different levels of the student. The teachers who have been in the school longer they are able to, but the new teachers they are not able to do that, not yet." (School Head, School 7)

"5 – They weren't really engaged, they explained it to us and then we just had to work on our own. The school head also would give us more counselling and guidance because when we prepared our lesson plan she would give us feedback, but the coaches did not do that . . . The coaches never came to our classrooms to see how we were doing differentiated education." (Teachers, School 3)

Teachers voiced their concerns that teaching using differentiated teaching approaches is time and energy consuming, and they do not always have enough the time to plan or impelment this approach in the classroom; thus, not all teachers were eager to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. Other concerns expressed by teachers were that: when they used differentiated teaching approaches they did not always see improvements in students' learning, so they assumed it did not work; the Programme's workbook only applies to the lower primary grades and not the upper grades; and they are not provided with the materials needed to teach using differentiated education in the classroom, as described in the Programme's workbook.

"5 – When you divide the children into groups then the coach would not help you. The coach would not give any examples on how to help the students assigned at different level. They asked what we would do; they placed it on us. They could give examples or take over our class to show us" (Teachers, School 7).

Respondents who ranked the Programme's as 'not effective' (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities, included 42 percent of teachers, 13 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors and 10 percent of school heads. School heads tended to rank the Programme as 'not effective' because they do not see all teachers making an effort to develop their lesson plans as they should or to teach using differentiated teaching approaches. Some respondents felt this was because coaches were unable to explain how to adapt teaching approaches to teach students with different learning needs. Some teachers reported the coaches came to their classrooms to observe and provide them with guidance, whereas other teachers did not get this support.

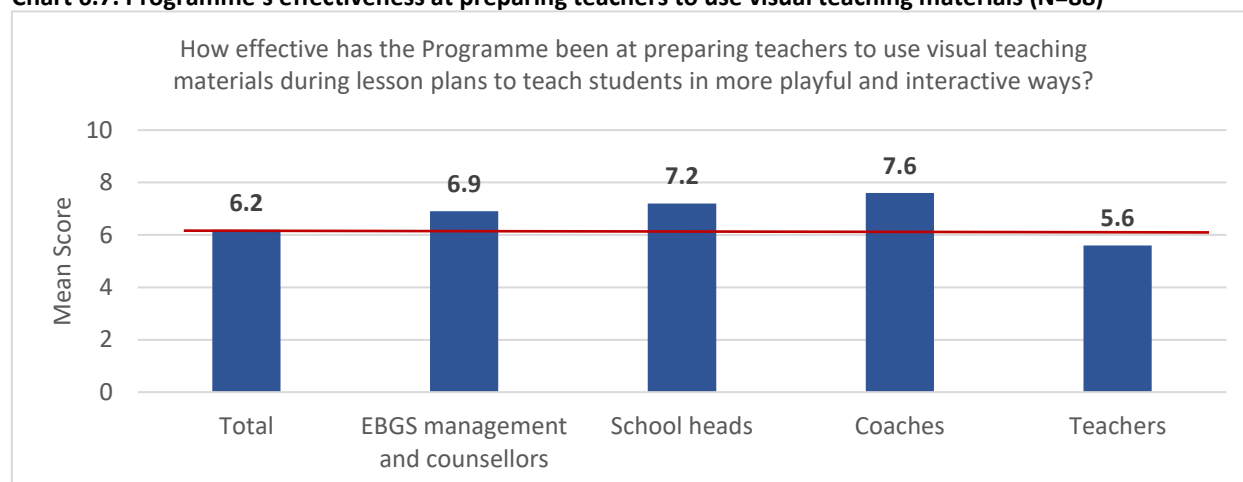
Some teachers explained that they often had to read the Programme's manual and/or workbook and teach themselves how to adapt their teaching approaches to teach star 1 and 2 students. They discussed with other teachers how to do this, but they did not receive much support from the school heads or coaches. Teachers also reported that some coaches got irritated when them when they asked too many questions about the Programme; they assumed it was because the coaches did not know how to answer the questions, as coaches were struggling themselves to understand the Programme. Some teachers pointed out that the coaches were not even certified as trainers of the Programme.

"3 – They [coaches] were not really involved in giving us the skills on how to deal with these types of students and we had to do everything ourselves because they did not have time to visit us. This is something that needs to be addressed." (Teacher, School 1)

Other teachers took a more compassionate perspective. They recognized that coaches helped teachers as much as they could, but were also busy teaching their own classes, so they did not want to disturb them; thus, it was not always the coaches fault that they could not support the teachers. Some teachers recognized that *"it was very difficult for the coaches; they worked hard for nothing and they were not compensated in any way"* (Teachers, School 2).

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not effective to 10=very effective) how effective the Programme was at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways. Chart 6.7 shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme was effective at achieving this objective. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme's effectiveness related to this objective as a 6.2 on a 10-point scale.** Coaches (mean=7.6) and school heads (mean=7.2) were most likely to report the Programme was effective at achieving this objective, followed by SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=6.9). Teachers (mean=5.6) also reported the Programme was effective at achieving this objective, but to a lesser extent.

Chart 6.7. Programme's effectiveness at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not effective and 10 = very effective

Those who reported the Programme was 'very effective' (ranked 8 or higher a 10-point scale) included 46 percent of coaches, 44 percent of school heads, 31 percent of teachers and 29 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors. They gave this ranking because they recognized that the Programme's training taught them how to develop daily lesson plans, although not all teachers liked that they had to develop daily lesson plans. School heads and coaches found the daily lesson plans useful because they help teachers to think about the different teaching activities that they are going to use in the classroom and how they will manage their time. Although it was not easy for all teachers to use interactive and playful teaching methods, the daily lessons plans encouraged teachers to use games and visual materials when teaching.

Teachers pointed out that before the pandemic, coaches sometimes came to their classes to see how they were teaching and gave them advice on how to use more visual materials. One school head explained, "From what I have seen from some of the teachers, they use it [lesson plans] and now apply it [lesson plans]. They are no longer standing in front of the classroom and sitting in their chairs" (School 8).

Those who ranked the Programme as 'somewhat effective' (ranking 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways, included 71 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 56 percent of school heads, 55 percent of coaches and 39 percent of teachers. They gave this ranking because they were required by school heads to develop lesson plans and were encouraged to use visual materials, but pointed out that their schools do not have visual teaching materials or the resources and materials needed to create visual materials (e.g., story tables and word walls). Some

"8 – Because my school leader, who was also a coach, he really encouraged our teachers to use as much visual materials as possible . . . The previous school leader required us to have posters on the wall. When the children see something, they can remember it more easily, and children like to be active and use materials to create things." (Teachers, School 4)

"7 – It depends on the school environment . . . Some teachers are more engaging and some do not even engage; it depends on the type of teacher. You are able to identify the effective teachers because you can see the children's progression, how far they go and how good they perform . . . The school leaders also have a very important role because if you have careless school leaders, this influences the teachers, but if you have a charismatic school leader who emphasizes the Programme's importance, the chances are higher." (SOEBGS Management and Counsellors)

"5 – We did get some explanation on how to use visual materials for the different star levels. They just told us to use visual materials, but they did not give us any visual materials to work with. We had to think of games to use ourselves, we had to create those ourselves. Sometimes you have to buy materials. If we had the Programme workbooks it would be good, but we didn't get them. We heard that the book included suggestions for games." (Teachers, School 5)

teachers complained that “it seems like no one cares about what you need in the classroom, like materials, but they do talk about it” (School 4).

School heads pointed out that they often encourage teachers to use visual materials because they do help students to understand the lessons and assignments. Coaches also recognized that “when you use playful ways of teaching, the children are more active in the lesson and you see that they are more interested” (School 6).

The challenge is that it takes more time and energy for teachers think of the different ways that they can teach students and to identify activities that they can use to teach, and to get the materials needed to create visual teaching materials. Also, it is easier to use playful and visual teaching materials in the lower primary school grades, but it is not as practical for teacher in the upper grades because there is no Programme workbook for the upper grades.

Only teachers (31 per cent) ranked the Programme as ‘not effective’ (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point class) at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways. Teachers gave this ranking because they were not properly trained or coached on how to use visual teaching materials in their lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways, nor were they provided with the materials needed to do so. They also gave this ranking because schools lack the resources and materials that teachers need to create their own visual teaching materials. Some teachers complained that while coaches expect them to use visual materials in the classroom and to teach using more playful and interactive ways, they don’t see the coaches doing the same.

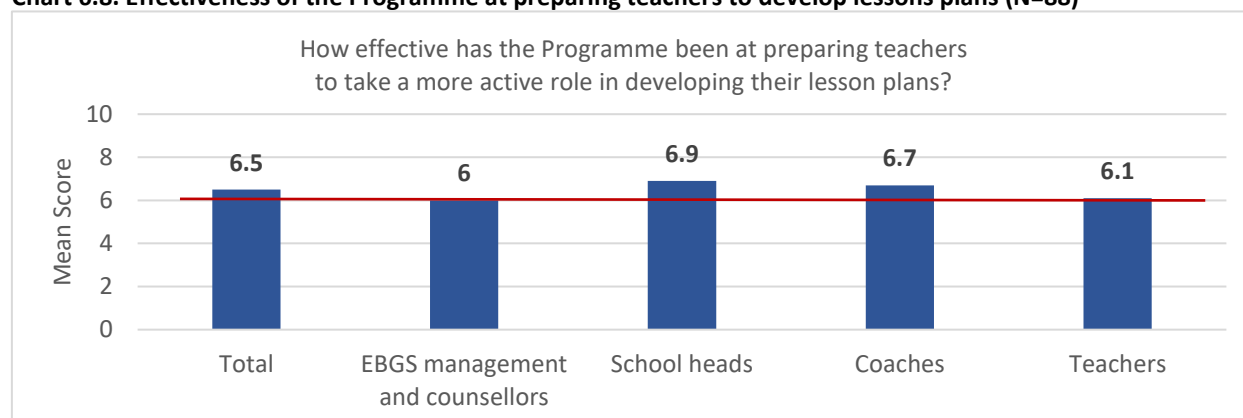
“4 – For one lesson you need to purchase so much material and then divide into three groups and have different materials for each group, and for the financial aspect it will not work for you. You want to use an active working method but without the funds it is not possible.” (Teachers, School 8)

“3 – They don’t do it themselves [coaches] and if you are coaching and expect me to do it very well, you need to be a role model for me and provide me with the necessary tools. If I see you are not applying it, how do you expect me to apply it.” (Teachers, School 2)

6.2.3. How well has the approach been integrated and applied into daily teaching and learning practices?

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not effective to 10=very effective) how effective the Programme has been at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lesson plans. **Chart 6.8** shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme was effective at achieving this objective. **On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme’s effectiveness related to this objective as a 6.5 on a 10-point scale.** School heads (mean=6.9), coaches (mean=6.7), teachers (mean=6.1) and SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=6.0) all reported that the Programme was ‘somewhat effective’ at achieving this objective, with little variation in mean scores.

Chart 6.8. Effectiveness of the Programme at preparing teachers to develop lessons plans (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not effective and 10 = very effective

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘very effective’ (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) at this objective, included 43 percent of teachers, 33 percent of school heads, 30 percent of coaches and 13 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors. They gave this ranking because they recognized that the Programme contributed to teachers spending more time on developing daily lesson plans and making more of an effort to plan how they will use differentiated teaching approaches and playful activities in the classroom to teach students. This was especially true prior to the pandemic, but not as much after the pandemic.

Coaches recognized that spending more time on developing lesson plans improves the way teachers teach and their relations with students. Whether or not teachers submit daily lesson plans depends upon the expectations or requirements of school heads; some school heads require teachers to develop and submit their daily lesson plans, whereas others do not. School heads that require teachers to develop and submit lesson plans reinforce the importance of the Programme to teachers.

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘somewhat effective’ (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lesson plans, included 43 percent of teachers, included 88 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 60 percent of coaches, 56 percent of school heads and 29 percent of teachers. They gave this ranking because not all teachers are developing daily lesson plans or understand the importance of the lesson plans. However, teachers who develop lesson plans recognized that they are beneficial at helping teachers to prepare and to be able to answer questions that students have about the subject matter and assignments. Some teachers only develop lesson plans because they are mandatory, whereas others do not develop them at all.

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘not effective’ at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lesson plans, included 43 percent of teachers, (4 or lower on a 10-point class) included 29 percent of teachers, 11 percent of school heads and 10 percent of coaches. They gave this ranking because they were resistant to develop lesson plans. They saw the lesson plans as time consuming and not very useful. Teachers also complained that they have to pay to photocopy the lesson plan forms and the costs can be high for teachers, particularly those teachers who teach math and language.

In some schools, prior to the pandemic, teachers were required to submit their lesson plans to both the school head and coach, whereas in other schools they submit them to school heads only. After the pandemic, school heads are typically being submitted to only the school head. In some schools, school heads and/or coaches have visited classrooms to see if the lesson plans were being followed.

“9 – When they were making the lesson plan under the old system they would do it very quickly; they did not spend a lot of time. Under the Programme, they look up other lesson plans and look for more playful ways to involve children.” (School Head, School 4)

“8 – If you want to work according to the Programme you need to prepare yourself well; you have to go through all the steps of preparation if you really want to ensure that you reach the children and optimize their abilities. If you don’t prepare yourself well, this method will not work.” (School Head, School 9)

“8 – The teachers are trying to make the lesson plans. Now it is going better than before because the new director brings more spirit, which helps with motivation. Under the last school head, it was mandatory [to develop daily lesson plans], but he did not force teachers to submit the documents. This director demands that teachers submit the lesson plans.” (Coach, School 8)

“6 – You have to be prepared before you come to school and do your lesson, when you want to do your math, if you want to teach from 8-9, some pupils will ask some questions and you need to be able to explain material clearly to them, so preparation needs to be really well. Whether teachers are more prepared and able to ask the questions that students have? If they do the preparation it will enable them to answer the questions better (39, Coach, School 3)

“4 – They were resistant because first you have to learn it yourself, but as a teacher if you do not want to I can’t make you. It is understandable that it is expensive to make all the copies, but you have to be willing to use a different teaching method in the class. So, some of the teachers had a very passive attitude.” (Coach, School 2)

“When you make an ADI you really have to think hard about the steps and what kind of games to use for the different lessons. You need to make more of an effort and think about what you can use when you give them instructions, and which activating questions to ask when evaluating. It requires additional preparation and as a teacher you need to make more of an effort to plan.” (School Head, School 4)

6.2.4. To what extent and how has the approach helped to make differences in students’ learning behaviour and progress?

During Programme design, the plan was to use school and classroom grades to track the effectiveness of the Programme. School and classroom level grades were available for AY 2018-2019 and up until the 1st Quarter of AY 2019-2020. During AY 2019-2020, after the start of the pandemic, MINOWC ended the grading system in primary schools as part of educational reform and introduced the Automatic Promotion Policy. Thus, comparable school and classroom grades are not available beyond the 1st Quarter of AY 2019-2020.

When it comes to the Programme making a difference in student learning and progress, teachers and coaches identified gaps in the Programme. On the one hand, teachers are expected to organize students into groups based upon the three-star system, and the star groups (i.e., star 1, 2 and 3) are based upon students’ learning abilities and needs; yet there is only one test. School heads and teachers explained that they need different assessment tools or tests for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade level because having one test for all students does not allow teachers to properly measure student learning and assess whether star 1 and 2 students are progressing, and when to move students from star 1 to 2 and star 2 to 3.

As part of Programme monitoring, coaches were supposed to develop teaching portfolios that could be used to assess the Programme’s effectiveness. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, these teaching portfolios were never developed. Thus, there are no measures to determine whether the Programme brought about the desired changes and improvements in students’ learning and progress.

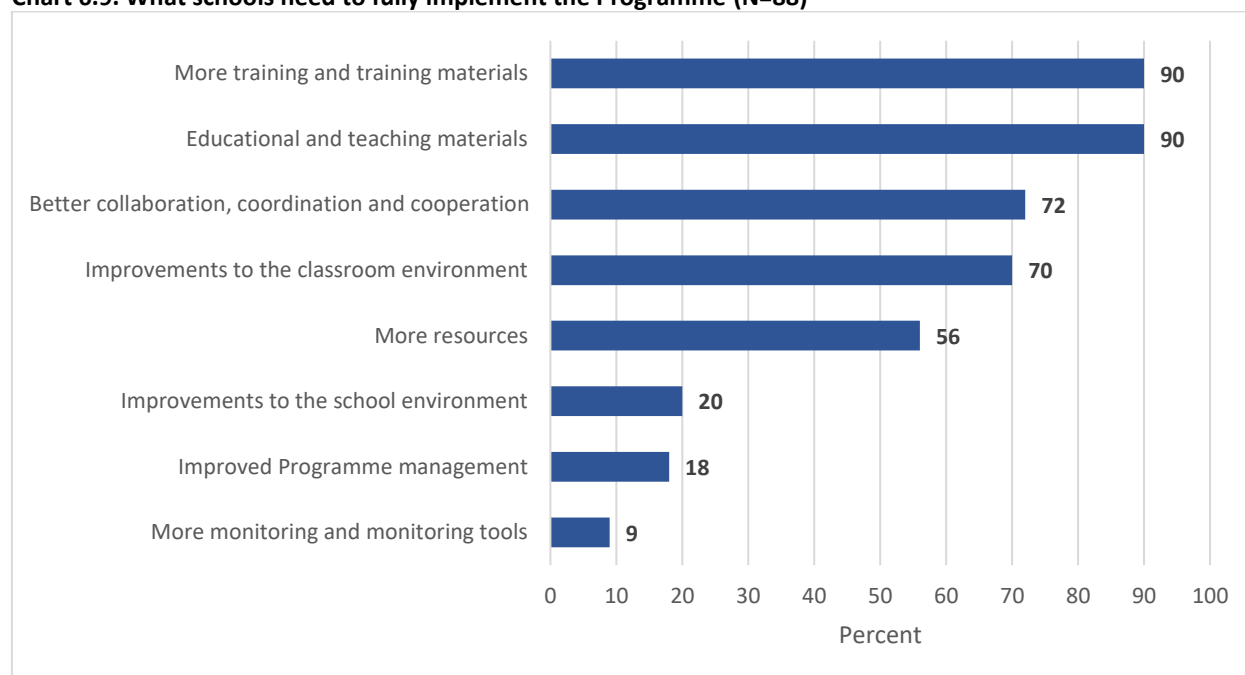
“When we teach using the three-star groups, and when we give a test, all the children get one test, and we should actually have three tests for the three levels . . . [Interviewer: How to figure out when to move a star 1 student to star 2?] Based upon the grades they get on the standard test and at the end of the school year, you can draw the conclusion.” (Coach, School 4)

“I had a meeting with the inspectors of the Ministry of Education for primary schools and we informed them of the innovation and our programme, and that the lesson plans differ from the government schools, and when they observed the teachers they saw there is a difference. They were happy to hear that we were starting to innovate, but we could not monitor because of COVID to see the growth of this programme.” (SOEBGS Management)

6.2.5. How can the approach be more effective (e.g., training, materials, class and school environment, resources, monitoring and measurement mechanism and tools, coordination, and governance)?

Respondents were asked how the Programme could be strengthened and what they need to fully implement the Programme. **Chart 6.9** shows that nearly all respondents identified the need more training and training materials (90 percent), as well as educational and teaching materials (90 percent). The majority of respondents also identified the need for better collaboration, coordination and cooperation (72 percent), improvements to the classroom environment (70 percent) and more resources (56 percent). Fewer respondents also identified the need for improvements to the school environment (20 percent), improved Programme management (18 percent) and more Programme monitoring and monitoring tools (9 percent). Each of these are explained in more detail in the sections below.

Chart 6.9. What schools need to fully implement the Programme (N=88)



6.2.5.1. More training and training materials

Any effort to bring about change in an institution, and especially in the educational sector, requires significant training for school heads and teachers, as well as support staff, such as counsellors. Training should include in-service trainings for all school heads, teachers and support staff, as well as induction trainings for all new school heads, teachers and support staff. Under the aegis of this Programme, training was provided only to counsellors, schools heads and coaches; however, the training for counsellors and school heads was not as in-depth as the training for coaches. Refresher trainings that were planned for 2020, were cancelled due to the pandemic. Since 2019, there have been no additional trainings offered by SOEBGS as it relates to the Programme.

For these reasons, 90 percent of respondents maintained there needs to be more trainings and training materials developed and rolled out to all school heads and teachers, and induction trainings need to be established for all new school heads and teachers. There should also be more specialized trainings and training materials for counsellors, given the role they are expected to play in supporting schools to rollout the Programme. Counsellors need to be properly capacitated to provide trainings, guidance and support to school staff in their cluster. In addition, school heads should receive the same in depth training that coaches received and additional trainings on how to manage the Programme's implementation and support teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom, and to review and provide feedback on lesson plans. Whereas, all teachers should receive the same in-depth training that coaches received.

These trainings for school heads, teachers and counsellors should not be a one-off, but should occur on an annual basis, particularly, over the next five years in an effort to mainstream differentiated education and teaching approaches into all primary schools. Also, SOEBGS should make improvements to existing training materials – Programme manual and workbook – and make sure that

"Most of the teachers are comfortable with the old method of teaching, which is getting a book, reading the book and teaching from the book. The tools are lacking. Another challenge is the economic situation in Suriname. The lessons are costly to implement for the teachers who do not want to give out money to implement the Programme. Schools don't have laptops or the internet, so to mitigate the problem of not having the necessarily tools they have to do a lot of photocopying, and that costs a lot of money for each of the lessons. (EBG Management and Counsellors)

"Materials that you can use in your classroom, because as a teacher you need to use your own funds to do your lesson well and to make it a more active. Sometimes you need materials and don't have the funds to purchase." (Coach, School 6)

all school heads, teachers and counsellors have a copy or access to these materials. One approach is to provide several copies of all training materials to each school and guidance on how to place them in the school library where they can be accessed by school heads and teachers (e.g., allowing them to be checked out by school heads and teachers for several days).

To successfully implement and mainstream the Programme into all SOEBGS primary school, this will require trainings that are designed to increase school heads, teachers and counsellors knowledge, attitudes and skills to properly apply differentiated education and teaching approaches in the classroom. SOEBGS needs to 'win the hearts and minds' of school heads, teachers and counsellors, and secure their commitment to implement the Programme.

6.2.5.2. Educational and teaching materials

To strengthen and fully implement the Programme, schools and teachers need educational and teaching materials, including more activity workbooks and visual materials for each grade. This includes materials (e.g., paper, paints, crayons/markers, glue, scissors, blocks, dice and more) that teachers can use in the classroom to engage students to create visual materials (e.g., story boards) and learn through doing. Some teachers wanted their school to have an inventory of visual materials that they could access and use in the classroom. These visual materials should be replenished and updated every year and be appropriate for all primary school grades.

6.2.5.3. Better collaboration, coordination and cooperation

The majority of school heads, coaches and teachers reported there needs to be better collaboration, coordination and cooperation in schools to implement the Programme. This includes collaboration and coordination between school heads and teachers, and among teachers. Some respondents proposed that teachers in the schools should to come together to develop lesson plans to create more consistency in the curriculum and to ensure progressive learning across the grades. They also believe that teachers have a role to play in mentoring new teachers to properly develop lesson plans. Some teachers are already collaborating by giving advice to each other and sharing teaching approaches and activities; whereas other teachers are not doing or are left out of the loop. Teachers did, however, express a real desire to learn from each other.

"We [teachers] do already collaborate and ask questions and advice [from each other]. I ask if someone has developed some materials and I look at examples that others have. We communicate." (Teachers, School 8)

"If we had a team and were working as team to discuss the problems we have and where we can support each other, and provide advice to each other, I think it would be more fun." (Teachers, School 1)

They also reported the need for better collaboration, coordination and cooperation with SOEBGS management and counsellors to support implementation of the Programme in schools. There is a need for more capacity building training and guidance from SOEBGS management and counsellors to support implementation of the Programme, as well as more education and teaching materials for use in the classroom.

Since they were trained in 2018 and 2019, some coaches were transferred to other schools, some were promoted to be counsellors and school heads, and some left teaching all together. Thus, there needs to be better coordination in SOEBGS to assess how many coaches remain and are located in each school and the proportion of those who are still interested in serving as a coach to support implementation of the Programme. Coaches who are still interested in coaching their colleagues to implement the Programme should receive refresher trainings and a certification to service as a coach.

6.2.5.4. Improvements to school and classroom environments

School heads and teachers identified a variety of classroom improvements are needed to improve their abilities to implement the Programme. These include:

- Having more teachers and classrooms in the schools to support differentiated education
- Having fewer students in each classroom (smaller classroom sizes), so teachers can spend more time working with each student
- Schools and classroom should be cleaned and painted, and more colourful to be child-friendly
- Classrooms need better desks and chairs to be child-friendly
- Classrooms need furniture to create reading and math corners in classrooms
- Classrooms need floor mats for sitting on the ground in the corners and playing games
- Classroom should be better secured and/or have cupboards with locks to store materials
- Classroom need more educational and visual materials on the walls to support learning
- Schools need a computer or tablets and internet connection

6.2.5.5. More Resources

In Suriname, the education sector lack resources to deliver basic education. This includes a lack of resources to support implementation of the Programme. There is a real need for more resources to ensure that teachers have access to digital devices for online trainings and career development opportunities, and to support teaching and student learning. There is also a need for more textbooks for students and teacher workbooks that support differentiated education at all grades.

Schools also need a library or inventory of educational and visual materials that teachers can readily access for use in the classrooms, particularly since educational and visual materials are crucial to the Programme.

There is also a need for more human resources in schools, including additional teachers in classrooms to support differentiated education and teaching using the three-star system.

6.2.5.6. Improved Programme management

SOEBGS management needs to develop a business plan for managing implementation of the Programme going forward, i.e., if they plan to continue implementing the Programme. One approach could be to establish a specialized Differentiated Education Unit that is made up of highly trained individuals who are champions for the Programme and can conduct Programme-related trainings for school heads and teachers, and provide schools with regular technical assistance and guidance on how to implement the Programme. A Differentiated Education Unit can help to mainstream differentiated education into all schools and classrooms, including all grades and subjects.

"The classrooms are open and you can't store materials because of the weather and theft. It is damp and after a year of hanging in the classroom the quality of the visual material is lost. So, reusable educational materials are important, but not all schools have them and if they do it is only for the first and second year." (SOEBGS Management)

"Perhaps less children, some of the classrooms are small so if you want to use the active work method you don't have much space." (Coach, School 3)

"My classroom has a wall made of stone and you cannot use a staple. I have to work with glue and they complain when the cleaner has to clean the wall, the materials fall off the walls." (Teachers, School 7)

"The classroom needs to be child friendly. There should be pictures on the wall and drawings. The classroom should look nice for children. We need furniture." (Teachers, School 4)

"In the classroom you need an instruction corner, a reading corner and math corner. The corners need to be visual in the classroom and need additional materials." (Coach, School 6)

"You have to be creative and decide how to put things on the wall and make them visual for the pupils. But if they were to make the classroom more appealing. It needs to look nice. The schools are all constructed differently. Sometimes we put something on the wall, but it doesn't stay. Everything has one colour, but classroom has more appealing colours. It should have a fun colour." (Teacher, School 6)

From the perspective of school heads and teachers, improved Programme management would include more regular trainings on differentiated education and teaching approaches, and providing schools with the resources and educational and teaching materials needed to implement the Programme.

6.2.5.7. More monitoring and monitoring tools

SOEBGS management and counsellors thought that there should be more monitoring and better monitoring tools for the Programme. Since the Programme's inception, SOEBGS has not been able to effectively monitor the Programme's implementation, largely because it did not have a suitable or manageable monitoring framework or monitoring tools that could be used by schools and SOEBGS management and counsellors. SOEBGS counsellors also need more capacity building and training to monitor the Programme's implementation in schools using the monitoring framework and tools.

6.3. Efficiency

6.3.1. What are the different cost elements in implementing this approach in schools (e.g., training, monitoring, material, classroom improvements)? To what extent does the Programme deliver the necessary quality at the least necessary cost? Was the approach implemented in the most efficient way, compared to alternatives (e.g., training all teachers instead of applying a train/coach the trainer concept)?

This Programme was implemented with no donor funding; it was funded predominately by UNICEF.¹³² **Table 6.1** provides a summary of Programme expenditures. The total cost of the Programme was USD 89,728 (SRD 663,989), of which USD 81,355 (SRD 602,032) was UNICEF's contribution and USD 8,373 (SRD 61,957) was a CSO contribution (i.e., SOEBGS). SOEBGS did report that they had no budget short falls and that that financial resources available to implement the Programme were sufficient for carrying out the planned activities.

SOEBGS and UNICEF signed a Programme Cooperation Agreement for implementation of the Programme. Initially, the plan was that the Programme would be implemented over a three-year period (2018-2020), but the Programme was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the national context and environment in which the Programme was being implemented, UNICEF and SOEBGS were simply unable to pivot and shift the Programme to an online platform during the pandemic. During the pandemic, lockdown measures and temporary school closures created unique challenges for the whole educational system in Suriname, including SOEBGS schools. Thus, the implementation phase and project management, monitoring and evaluation were interrupted. Since the pandemic, there was also a change in SOEBGS management.

UNICEF and SOEBGS learned that two years (2018-2019) was not enough time to implement the Programme to the extent that it was able to change the culture of schools and reform education in primary schools to include differentiated education. Nor was there enough time to really assess the Programme's effectiveness and impacts, or to ensure sustainability. Schools need a longer period of time to be capacitated to possess the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effectively implement the Programme as a whole school approach. SOEBGS schools would benefit from an additional training and technical assistance to implement the Programme, and additional resources to ensure that schools have the training and teaching materials needed to fully implement the Programme in all 56 primary schools.

¹³² Conducting a costing analysis was beyond the scope of this evaluation and the evaluator was not able to conduct cost comparisons. The evaluator was provided with summary expenditures data presented by implementation phase and result/activity.

| Table 6.1. Summary of programme expenditures, 2018-2022 (SRD) | | | |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Output | UNICEF Contribution | CSO Contribution | Total CSO + UNICEF |
| <u>Preparation Phase (1 Aug 2018 – 1 Nov 2020)</u> | | | |
| • Detailed Programme planning | 29,295 | 3,255 | 32,550 |
| • Developed integrated training for the Programme | | | |
| 2018 (SRD) | 29,295 | 3,255 | 32,550 |
| <u>Training Phase (1 Nov 2018 – 1 Aug 2020)</u> | | | |
| • 112 trained primary education coaches | 410,079.63 | 38,304.38 | 448,384 |
| • 5 trained education consultants | | | |
| • 2 coached project leaders (management) | | | |
| • 65 training days | | | |
| 2018 (SRD) | 218,206.09 | 20,382.01 | 238,588.11 |
| 2019 (SRD) | 191,873.53 | 17,922.36 | 209,795.89 |
| <u>Implementation Phase (1 Nov 2018 – 1 Aug 2020)</u> | | | |
| • 224 coached teachers | 82,467.75 | 8,129.75 | 90,597.50 |
| • 340 class consultations | | | |
| 2018 (SRD) | 7,407.45 | 730.23 | 8,137.68 |
| 2019 (SRD) | 19,753.20 | 1,947.29 | 21,700.49 |
| 2020 (SRD) | 55,307.10 | 5,452.23 | 60,759.33 |
| <u>Effective Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (1 Aug 2018 – 1 Oct 2020)</u> | | | |
| • 1 developed monitoring instrument | 80,189.25 | 12,268.25 | 92,457.50 |
| • 2 effect measurements | | | |
| • 12 project groups meetings | | | |
| • 5 reports | | | |
| 2018 (SRD) | 14,733.53 | 2,254.10 | 16,987.62 |
| 2019 (SRD) | 38,246.25 | 5,851.34 | 44,097.59 |
| 2020 (SRD) | 27,209.48 | 4,162.81 | 31,372.29 |
| Total Programme Costs (SRD) | 602,031.63 | 61,957.38 | 663,989.00 |
| 2018 (SRD) | 269,642.07 | 26,621.35 | 296,263.41 |
| 2019 (SRD) | 249,872.98 | 25,720.99 | 275,593.97 |
| 2020 (SRD) | 82,516.58 | 9,615.04 | 92,131.61 |
| Total Programme Costs (USD) | 81,355.63 | 8,372.62 | 89,728.24 |
| 2018 (USD) | 36,438.12 | 3,597.48 | 40,035.60 |
| 2019 (USD) | 33,766.62 | 3,475.81 | 37,242.43 |
| 2020 (USD) | 11,150.89 | 1,299.33 | 12,450.22 |

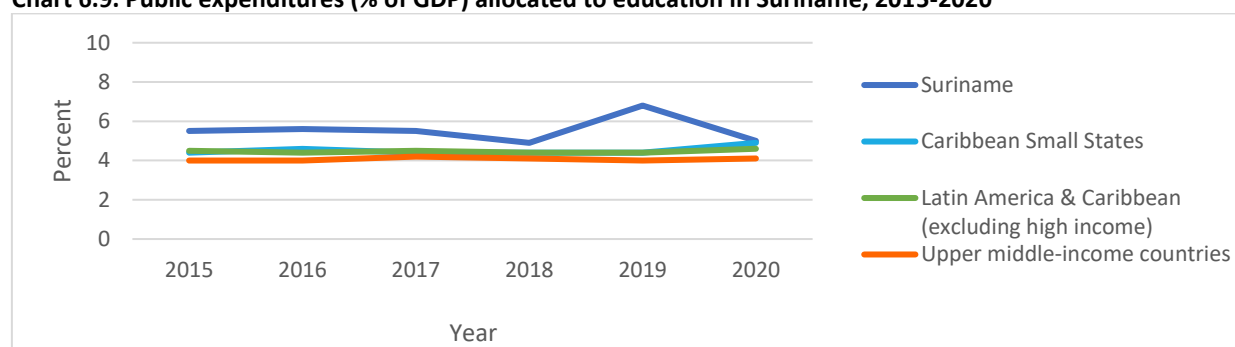
Source: UNICEF, 2023

6.3.2. What are the challenges faced in sourcing funds for these costs? How can different cost elements be made more cost effective and sustainable?

Mobilizing national resources for children in Suriname is critical to ensure sustainable and equitable impact on the lives of children. Part of this includes influencing national budget processes. For the rights of children to be fully achieved, sustainable resources that yield sustainable results for children's in education is important. During the four-year period of 2014-2017, on average, the Government allocated 1.7 percent of the government's budget to education.¹³³ **Chart 6.9** shows public expenditures, as a percent of the GDP, that are allocated to education in Suriname, in comparison to averages for Caribbean Small States, Latin American and Caribbean countries (not including high income countries) and upper middle-income countries. According to the data, from 2015-2019, Suriname contributed an estimated one percent more of public expenditures, as a percent of the GDP, to education, compared to Caribbean Small State Latin American and Caribbean countries (not including high income countries) and upper middle-income countries; this difference ended in 2020.

¹³³ UN (2020). *Republic of Suriname Common Country Analysis: Final Report*; see also *ABS Statistical Yearbook 2016/2017*.

Chart 6.9. Public expenditures (% of GDP) allocated to education in Suriname, 2015-2020



Source: Retrieved on 26 March 2023 from: [Government expenditure on education, total \(% of GDP\) - Suriname | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#); [Government expenditure on education, total \(% of GDP\) - Caribbean small states | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#); [Government expenditure on education, total \(% of GDP\) - Latin America & Caribbean \(excluding high income\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#); [Government expenditure on education, total \(% of GDP\) - Upper middle income | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)

Going forward there is a real need for more financing to reinvigorate the Programme and ensure its continuity. This is especially important given the fact that the country has experienced significant inflation since the pandemic. From 2019 to 2020, the inflation rate (average consumer prices) increased 4.4 percent to 34.9 percent, and climbed to 59.1 percent in 2021 and remained at 47.6 percent in 2022.¹³⁴ The rising inflation rate has caused the Programme to become more expensive to implement.

Given the lost learning time and learning losses experienced by children during the pandemic, additional resources are needed to support programming, such as the Differentiated Education Programme, that aim to help students recover from learning losses and to catch-up from unfinished learning. Ultimately, there is much work to be done, yet the challenges for educators, students and parents are considerable and will require educational reforms and interventions that include a focus on differentiated education and tailored or remedial instruction that focuses on helping teachers to deal with students who are not prepared for the classroom and the materials and at very different levels of understanding

"We have children with learning disabilities and due to COVID-19 we were closed for 7 months and this morning there were a group of children standing in the hallway and they can't read yet, and they are in the 3rd grade, and we separated the children, and those who can read are taught by one teacher and other children are taught at their level. And now they are able to get instruction at their level. This is something that ADI has taught us to start at the level of the children and then work them up." (School Head, School 8)

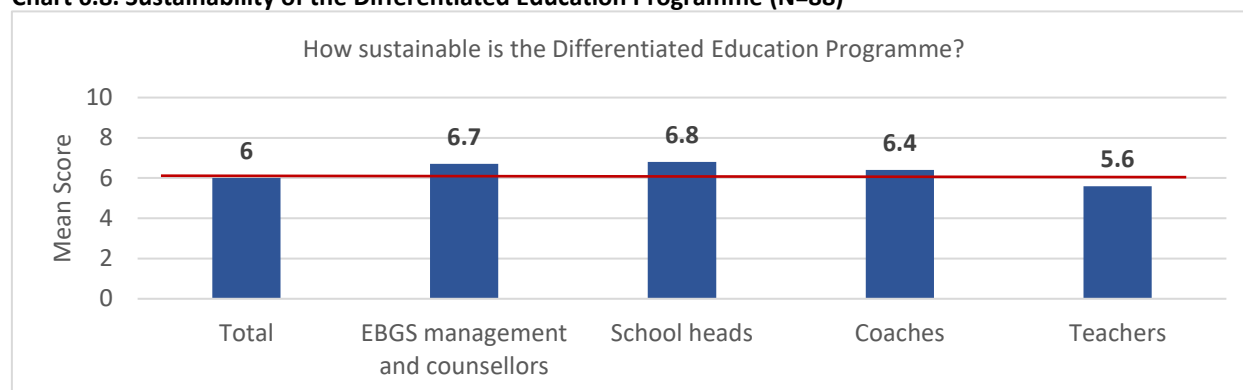
6.4. Sustainability

6.4.1. To what extent is the differentiated learning approach and interventions sustainable? To what extent have the stakeholders undertaken the necessary decisions and course of actions to ensure sustainability of the approach?

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not sustainable to 10=very sustainable) how sustainable is the Programme. Chart 6.8 shows that the majority of respondents thought the Programme is 'somewhat sustainable'. On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the Programme's sustainability as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale. School heads (mean=6.8), SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=6.7) and coaches (mean=6.4) were equally like to report that the Programme is 'somewhat sustainable', whereas teachers (mean=5.6) were slightly less likely to think the Programme is sustainable.

¹³⁴ Retrieved on 26 March 2023 from: [Suriname and the IMF](#)

Chart 6.8. Sustainability of the Differentiated Education Programme (N=88)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not sustainable and 10 = very sustainable

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘very sustainable’ (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) included 38 percent of teachers, 33 percent of school heads, 25 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors and 10 percent of coaches. They gave this ranking because they recognized that the Programme benefits students. To ensure sustainability, however, teachers need additional training on how to implement the Programme, including training on how to develop lesson plans and how to teach using differentiated teaching approaches and testing. They also need educational and teaching materials, and differentiated tests that are aligned with teaching based upon the three-star system.

Some teachers think the Programme is sustainable because it is mandatory that they develop lesson plans. Most teachers have developed daily lesson plans, but after the pandemic, school heads told them that they do not need to develop new lesson plans every year. School heads told teachers that they can use the same lesson plans from year-to-year for up to five years. If, however, a teacher is assigned to teach a new grade they will need to develop new daily lesson plans for that grade. In many cases, it sounded as though school heads and teachers had reduced their understanding of the Programme down to the concept of developing daily lesson plans.

Respondents also recognized there needs to be better cooperation among teachers in schools and support from school heads to implement the Programme. One school head explained that, “If teachers see that we [school heads] are really encouraging them and monitoring them to apply the Programme, then I am quite sure that they will continue to use differentiated teaching methods” (School 7). Teachers also said that there needs to be a more consistent school policy that supports the Programme. As they explained, “It depends on the school policy because they keep changing the school policy . . . It will be much better if they stick to the agreed upon policy, hopefully they don’t keep changing the policy” (Teachers, School 8).

“9 – If all the teacher cooperate and every time use differentiated education, and the school leader is also focused on applying the Programme, then I do think it is [sustainable]. I hope it will be sustainable because I put a lot of effort into developing the materials and I hope in coming years I will be able to use them.” (Teachers, School 8)

“8 - We need the Programme. We are used to using the star 1, 2 and 3 system. It is nice when you have a star 1 student and they go to star 2. It is nice when you can monitor the child. I had a child that came and was not able to read and when guiding them I could see how he could read a sentence out loud. He was really good in math, but not language.” (Teachers, School 7)

“8 - If there is a good training and the trainings are being done regularly, the sustainability is going to be at a good level. There should be an institution and one or two more persons who focus on this. There should be more people at SOEBGS who go to the schools.” (SOEBGS Management and Counsellors)

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘somewhat sustainable’ (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) included 80 percent of coaches, 75 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 56 percent of school heads and 29 percent of teachers. They gave this ranking because a lot depends upon whether there are additional trainings for

school heads and teachers to implement the Programme. They were aware that the Programme was still being applied, to some extent, because they were required to develop daily lesson plans, but they were not sure how differentiate education was really being implemented in the classroom by teachers. At the same time, because school heads told teachers that they do not need to develop new daily lesson plans every year, teachers were uncertain if the Programme would be sustainable. Teachers explained, *“It depends because at one point and time, at the beginning of the school year, we all thought we had to keep writing the lesson plans, but now they told us we can use the lesson plans of the next year. If that is the case and we don’t have any additional learning materials, I would say a 7”* (Teachers, School 6).

Teachers also recognized that when they are transferred to another school it may not be a school that is implementing the Programme, so the school head may not require daily lesson plans or the use of differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. Also, as school heads, coaches and teachers retire the institutional knowledge of the Programme will be lost, without regular capacity building trainings because there is resistance to the Programme. One school head explained that, *“Not all schools are good in offering guidance to teachers [on how to implement the Programme] and school leaders are not always capable to develop and make recommendations to lesson plans”* (School 8).

School heads also recognized that since the pandemic, the Programme is not being applied as much prior to the pandemic. While they recognize the Programme works, since the pandemic, there are new school heads and teachers in primary schools that have yet to be trained on the Programme. There is also a need for proper supervision and monitoring of the Programme’s implementation across schools and in the classroom if the Programme is to be sustainable. If SOEBGS is not willing to invest resources to capacitate school heads and teachers, and provide teachers with the educational and teaching materials needed to implement the Programme, then sustainability will be at-risk.

Those who ranked the Programme as ‘not sustainable’ (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale), included 33 percent of teachers, 11 percent of school heads and 10 percent of coaches. They gave this ranking because they perceived there is a lot of resistance to the Programme. Teachers considered developing lessons plans a lot of work and writing. Some teachers developed daily lesson plans only because it is mandatory. Yet, they explained, *“We don’t use it [the lesson plans] and apply it because it does not make any sense”* (Teachers, School 4). Some teachers also explained, *“I don’t use it [the Programme], so why should I develop the lesson plans if I don’t use it [differentiated teaching approaches]”* (School 3).

Another challenge to sustainability is that new school heads and teachers have not been trained on the Programme, so they do not understand the Programme or know how to implement it. For a variety of reasons, since the

“7 – We are still using ADI and will continue to use differentiated teaching approaches because we see that when the children are active in the classroom, we can encourage them to remember. So, the Programme did help us. As pilot schools we have to, it is our job to make it sustainable because it helped a lot, not only the students, but the teachers benefit. But we need the correct guidelines on how to do it, and we need the assistance and help. If we get all of that we will continue. When we recruit new teachers they need to be trained in the use of differentiated teaching approaches as well.” (Teachers, School 4)

“7 – From what I understand, it is a good model to use, but we need training. If we get training I think it would work and be sustainable. There is too much resistance here at this school. I have no problem with the Programme, but it is time consuming.” (Teachers, School 5)

“6 – If school leaders don’t drive the application of differentiate education, the teachers will not apply it. This is what I saw when I came to this school. My previous school, they were already motivated to apply it [the Programme]. There, if I instructed them to submit their lesson plans, they did it, but if other schools are not motivated, like here, after 5 years it will fade away.” (School Head, School 4)

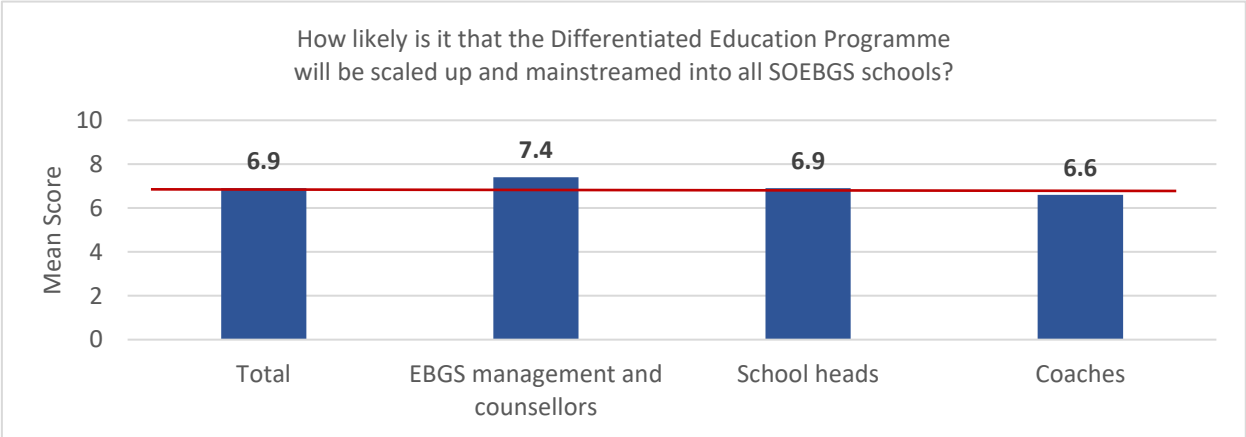
“5 – Because SOEBGS should make it mandatory and need to keep reminding us and pushing us, and need to make sure it is important. If they don’t put pressure on us in this regard, then we don’t use it as much. If we don’t hear much about the Programme, then we don’t apply it.” (Coach, School 4)

pandemic and the enactment of the Automatic Promotion Policy, the Programme is not being implemented at the same level as it was prior to the pandemic.

6.4.2. To what extent the contents of the approach and its implementation modality have a potential for scaling and mainstreaming? Is there political will to support the mainstreaming of principles and approach in the education system?

Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1=not likely to 10=very likely) how likely is it that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. Chart 6.9 shows that the majority of respondents thought it is ‘somewhat likely’ that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. On average, the full sample of respondents ranked the likelihood of the Programme’s scale up as a 6.9 on a 10-point scale. SOEBGS management and counsellors (mean=7.4), were slightly more likely than school heads (mean=6.9) and coaches (mean=6.6) to believe it is likely that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. Teachers were not asked this question.

Chart 6.9. Likelihood of scaling up and mainstreaming the Differentiate Education Programme (N=30)



Note: Means score based upon a 10-point scale where 1 = not likely and 10 = very likely

Those who ranked it as ‘very likely’ that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools (ranked 8 or higher on a 10-point scale) included 80 percent of SOEBGS management and counsellors, 50 percent of school heads and 11 percent of coaches. They thought it was ‘very likely’ if there are more Programme-related training and more school heads and teachers come to understand that the Programme is relevant, important and benefits students, as evidence through learning outcomes and increased academic performance. School heads contend that everyone needs to see that schools that are implementing the Programme and that schools are making progress as a result.

They also recognized that schools need to be provided with the resources and educational and teaching materials for the Programme to be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. Additional invests will need to be made to ensure that the Programme is implemented in schools in the interior, to ensure that teachers in the interior are properly capacitated and provided with the technical assistance they need, coupled with the resources and educational and teaching materials.

“9 – If you introduce refresher course, then at a certain point people will become more aware of the relevance and the importance of the Programme, and people will become aware of the benefits [of the Programme] for their school. Some of the school leaders are not very enthusiastic, but when they see benefits.”
(School Head, School 9)

“8 – The schools in the interior, how will SOEBGS reach all the teachers in those schools so that they will follow the Programme’s training sessions, so they apply it in the classrooms. Perhaps in the holiday they provide trainings or send people out to the interior to give them counselling, so all of them in the schools can use the Programme’s training in all the schools. And monitoring needs to be improved to see if they are applying the Programme in the schools. School leaders need to be involved when providing the training and school heads can start with training the new teachers.”
(School Head, School 4)

Those who ranked it as ‘somewhat likely’ that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools (ranked 5, 6 or 7 on a 10-point scale) included 78 percent of coaches and 40 percent of school heads. They thought it was ‘somewhat likely’ because teachers are already required to develop daily lesson plans, although not all school heads and teachers are using the daily lesson plans as intended and explained in the Programme’s manual and workbook. Because most school heads and teachers are implementing the Programme without having read the Programme’s manual or workbook, the Programme is not being implemented as intended, and if it continues to be implemented in this way, it will be severely diluted.

Those who ranked it as ‘not likely’ that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools (ranked 4 or lower on a 10-point scale) included 20 percent of SOEBGS management counsellors, 11 percent of coaches and 10 percent of school heads. They gave this

ranking because they recognized that not all school heads and teachers are trained to understand the Programme or willing to implement the Programme in their schools and classrooms. The Programme will not be scaled up and mainstreamed in all SOEBGS schools in the current environment, SOEBGS needs to invest more resources in the Programme and identify a cadre of change agents and champions of the Programme and imbed them in schools across the country. SOEBGS also needs qualified/certified personnel who can provide trainings and technical assistance to schools heads and teachers on all components of the Programme and how to properly implement the Programme in schools and classrooms.

“6 – As a school leader, a counsellor or above me, we need to be aligned that all the SOEBGS schools will use the Differentiated Education Programme. Sometimes from the other school leaders and teachers I get the impression that the Programme is not applied at all SOEBGS schools. Then the teachers come and say way do we have to use the Differentiated Education Programme when other schools are not using. If every school uses it, I think it will work.” (School Head, School 2)

“5 – Lack of ADI trainers and counsellors because many have left and if we want to really implement this properly we need people who are capable of delivering training courses and also provide additional guidance, the additional guidance is important to monitoring the progress. That is something to be done and to ensure sustainability of the next few years. (30, Director, School 2)

6.4.3. To what extent did the Programme build upon and contribute to increasing existing national and local government capacities to deliver child-centred learning in primary education? What new capacities within education services have been established or restored?

As previously mentioned, prior to the pandemic, the Programme was highly relevant to the Surinamese context and national primary education curricula; and it remains so today. In the years prior to the launch of the Programme, MINOWC had been discussing the need to reform the national primary education model and introduce differentiated teaching approaches that tailor instruction to students’ learning needs. MINOWC recognized that the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that has long been at the centre of the country’s primary education model was not effective for all students, as many students were having to repeat primary school grades and were not transitioning from primary to secondary education. Given the high rates of grade repetition and school dropout, MINOWC envisioned differentiated teaching approaches as a way to meet the learning needs of all students, regardless of the differences in their abilities.

In 2012, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) provided the GoS with a USD 13.7 million loan to help improve the quality of education from pre-primary through lower secondary education. The funds supported the GoS’s plans to strengthen the efficiency and quality of the new basic education system and increase the learning outcomes in core subjects of language (Dutch) and mathematics for students in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education. The Basic Education Improvement Programme (BEIP) was to be implemented in two phases. Phase I focused on developing the curriculum framework for the entire basic education system and on increasing learning outcomes of students in grades 1-8; whereas Phase II centred on improving learning outcomes in the lower secondary grades.¹³⁵ A review and analysis of the BEIP was beyond the scope of this evaluation; however, it was discussed at times by a handful of teachers who participate in trainings related to the BEIP or spoke about the new

¹³⁵ Suriname to improve education with IDB support. IDB News Release, 22 June 2012. Retrieved on 26 March 2023 from: [Suriname to improve education with IDB support | IADB](#)

BEIP textbooks and assignments that target different types of students. It was reported, however, that BEIP-related teaching materials are only available up to grade 3.

Thus, the UNICEF-supported Differentiated Education Programme has built upon and contributed to increasing efforts of the MINOWC to deliver student-centred learning in primary education, particularly by capacitating SOEBGS school heads and teachers to assess the learning needs of students and to teach using differentiated teaching approaches to meet the learning needs of students. Still, however, there is a need for increased investment and more capacity building and technical assistance to build upon the progress made and ensure differentiated education and student-centred learning are scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools, and adopted by MINOWC for rollout in government-run primary schools and other faith-based school systems.

6.4.4. To which extent is the approach externally driven and owned or managed by SOEBGS schools? How have UNICEF and stakeholders ensured SOEBGS and school ownership of the approach (i.e., intrinsically driven to apply the approach)?

The Programme is owned and managed by SOEBGS management, but has not yet been fully embraced and owned by all SOEBGS school heads and teachers. Because the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted Programme implementation, progress that was made at scaling up and mainstreaming the Programme into all SOEBGS primary schools was diminished. Still, however, SOEBGS management recognized that *“some school really own it [the Differentiated Education Programme] and do it [use differentiated education and teaching approaches].”*

Thus, as the pandemic comes to an end and schools return to operating normally, SOEBGS management and UNICEF saw this as an opportune time to assess and evaluate where the Programme is at and how it can be reinvigorating the Programme. Based upon these evaluation findings and lessons learned, it is also an opportune time to make revisions to the Programme and strengthen it going forward.

6.4.5. How much of a continuous “external input” does it require (e.g., monitoring, training and provision of materials) for sustainability? What are the implications and requirements for potentially transitioning to a completely SOEBGS- run/owned approach? To what extent does the SOEBGS have sufficient financial and human resources and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme?

Any effort to ensure sustainability of the Programme requires continued external inputs, including financial support and technical assistance to support a review and revisions to the Programme manual and workbook based upon lessons learned from this evaluation, and the development of improved capacity building trainings and training materials for continued trainings of counsellors, school heads and teachers. Ongoing trainings should focus on ‘winning the hearts and minds’ of counsellors, schools and teachers to be change agents and champions of differentiated education and tailored instruction that meets the learning needs of students. This includes financial support to ensure that Programme-related manuals, workbooks and teaching materials are readily available to all teachers in all SOEBGS schools.

External inputs are also needed to ensure that schools and teachers have the resources and materials they need to practice differentiated education in the classroom. This includes reusable educational and teaching aids, such as visual teaching materials, blocks and furniture to create reading and math corners in schools and classrooms.

External inputs are also needed to support results-based monitoring, including the development of a results-based monitoring framework and tools that can be implemented and utilized by SOEBGS management, counsellors and school heads. SOEBGS counsellors should also be capacitated and supported to visit schools and deliver trainings, provide technical assistance and do monitoring to support implementation of the Programme. Monitoring information and data should then be used to inform bi-annual results-based monitoring meetings of SOEBGS management, counsellors and school heads to ensure Programme implementation is progressing as planned and differentiated education is being mainstreamed into all schools and classrooms.

It is also important to create a community of practice for and opportunities for school heads and teachers from different schools to learn from each other and see for themselves that there is a movement to implement the Differentiated Education Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools and the Programme is benefiting students and teachers alike.

If it is considered a good approach, external inputs would be needed to support the establishment and rollout of a specialized Differentiated Education Unit that is made up of highly trained individuals who are champions for the Programme and can conduct Programme-related trainings for school heads and teachers, and provide schools with regular technical assistance and guidance on how to implement the Programme. A Differentiated Education Unit can help to mainstream differentiated education into all schools and classrooms, including all grades and subjects.

6.5. Equity, Gender Equality and Human Rights-Based Approaches

6.5.1. To what extent have human rights-based approaches and equity and gender equality goals and processes been incorporated into planning documents and resource materials of the Programme interventions? To what extent has the approach been effective to advance equitable access to education and learning?

The Programme was developed to ensure that all children have access to education and supported education equity, as differentiated education is necessary to ensure equity in the classroom. As previously mentioned, the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy, that has long been at the centre of the country's primary education model, has been recognized as ineffective, and many students were having to repeat primary school grades and were not transitioning from primary to secondary education. Given the high rates of grade repetition and school dropout (particularly among children living in poor households and the rural interior, and among Surinamese Maroon children), differentiated teaching approaches were envisioned as a way to meet the learning needs of all students, regardless of the differences in their abilities. Thus, the Differentiated Education Programme was designed specifically to capacitate teachers to develop and use differentiated teaching approaches, materials and assessment measures to ensure that all students within a classroom can learn effectively, regardless of the differences in their learning needs and abilities.

6.5.2. To what extent did the different groups, including children with disabilities and other most marginalised children, benefit in different ways from the approach?

Initially, the Differentiated Education Programme was introduced in the two special schools operated by SOEBGS. After seeing the benefits of differentiated education on children in the special schools, SOEBGS and NGO SAGA Foundation decided to partner and adapt differentiated education initiative in special schools to SOEBGS primary schools. Since its inception in primary schools in 2018, it has been used by some teachers to work with children with learning disabilities who are studying in primary schools. This includes children in star 1 groups who have not been officially diagnosed with a learning disability, but teachers believe the child may have some form of learning disability given the challenges they face in the classroom. However, not all children with learning disabilities have benefited from differentiated education because they need more specialized education.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The section offers **conclusions** that are derived from the findings and present a picture of the strengths and limitations of the Programme as it relates to the Programme's goal, objective and aims, and the Programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The conclusions are followed by **evidence-based lessons learned and recommendations** which are forward-looking and offer short-, medium- and long-term opportunities to strengthen and scale-up the Programme to the next phase. The conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations are grounded in the evaluation findings and based upon good practices for implementing similar programmes in educational systems.

7.1. Conclusions

Conclusion 1: The three-year Implementation plan for the Programme (2018-2020) was interrupted and impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Training of SOEBGS counsellors, school heads and coaches occurred in 2018-2019, as initially planned. In 2019, coaches began to train other teachers in their schools to implement the Programme; however, activities planned for 2020 were interrupted in March 2020 by the pandemic. Because of the pandemic, SOEBGS management and NGO SAGA Foundation were unable to perform school visits and provide refresher trainings that were initially envisioned. During the pandemic, SOEBGS management and school staff shifted their focus to delivering education to students remotely, largely via television and radio; as a result, teachers had limited contact with students and were unable to assess their learning or use differentiated teaching approaches. When students returned to the classroom, school heads and teachers were focused on reintegrating children into the classroom, delivering curriculum and limiting contact between children to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools. At the time of this evaluation, Programme activities had ended although were not fully completed due to the pandemic, but schools were still implementing the Programme to varying degrees (paragraphs 177-181).

7.1.1. Relevance

Conclusion 2: In 2020, during the pandemic, the MINOWC enacted the Automatic Promotion Policy, a practice of allowing students to progress from one class/grade to the next higher class/grade at the end of the school year regardless of academic performance or educational attainment. The Automatic Promotion Policy has had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the Programme. The challenge is that teachers perceive students as being less motivated to learn, and as a result, teachers are less motivated to expend more time and energy to help to address students learning gaps and needs, because both groups know that the student will be promoted to the next grade at the end of the year, regardless of their learning outcome and academic achievements, or lack thereof (paragraphs 235-237).

Conclusion 3: The Programme was designed and implemented to support SOEBGS to implement differentiated education in their 56 primary schools in an effort to tailoring instruction to students' learning needs. SOEBGS recognized that the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy that has long been at the centre of the country's primary education model was not effective for all students, as many students were having to repeat primary school grades and were not transitioning from primary to secondary education. Given the high rates of grade repetition and school dropout, SOEBGS envisioned that a student-centred pedagogy that relies upon differentiated teaching approaches as a way to meet the learning needs of all students, regardless of differences in their abilities. It was envisioned that the Programme would help to reduce grade repetition and improve academic performance. The Programme was also aligned with educational reforms that MINOWC had been discussing (paragraphs 182-183).

Conclusion 4: The Programme's objectives, strategies and activities were relevant to the national context and primary education. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.3 on a 10-point scale (1=not relevant to 10=very relevant) as being relevant to the national context and primary education. This included strengthening teacher trainings and building teachers' knowledge and skills to apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom to teach all students, and to give additional attention to students who struggled to learn. The aim of the Programme was also to improve student learning and academic performance in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The Programme was also recognized as important at preparing teachers to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.8 on a 10-point scale of importance (1=not important to 10=very important) (paragraphs 184-194 and 197-204).

7.1.2. Effectiveness

Conclusion 5: The Programme was evidence-based and modelled after a similar programme introduced in SOEBGS special schools, in cooperation with NGO SAGA Foundation. To support the Programme, NGO SAGA Foundation developed a Programme manual and workbook for teachers; then trained school head and two teachers (coaches) from each of the 56 primary schools. The coaches were expected to return to their schools and deliver trainings on the Programme to their colleagues, as well as to coach their colleagues to properly develop daily lesson plans, apply a three-star system of categorizing students and use differentiated teaching approaches in the classrooms. Not all coaches followed through with these responsibilities for a variety of reasons, including: lack of commitment or buy-in to use differentiated education in the classroom; lack of understanding of differentiated education based upon the trainings received; lack of capacities and/or time to train and coach their colleagues; resistance from their colleagues; and lack of support from school heads (paragraphs 195-204).

Conclusion 6: There were several advantage and disadvantages to the Programme's teacher trainings. Advantages included: The Programme's teacher training reinforces good differentiated education and teaching that school heads and teachers recognize benefit students and help them to move from one grade to the next, particularly before the pandemic; teachers who were trained to be coaches were provided with a Programme manual and workbook; Programme's teacher training, if delivered properly and in its entirety, can capacitate teacher to understand and apply differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom; and the Programme's teacher training succeeded at capacitating teachers to develop daily lesson plans, to varying degrees (paragraphs 208-213 and 221-229).

In comparison, disadvantages included: SOEBGS counsellors were not fully capacitated or committed to support schools to implement the Programme; there was no clear criteria or guidance provided to school heads for selecting teachers to be trained as coaches to support the implementation of the Programme, and teachers who were selected to be coaches were not clearly informed as to what would be their roles and responsibilities as coaches in their schools; school heads should have received the same trainings that coaches received so that they full understood all components of the Programme, as well as additional trainings on how to manage the Programme's implementation and support teachers education in the classroom; and to varying degree, teachers were capacitated to use differentiated teaching approaches in the classroom, but they were not capacitated on how to use differentiated testing; and the cascade training approach was wrought with challenges (paragraphs 214-220 and 221-229).

Conclusion 7: The Programme helped to improve teacher performance and abilities to address the different needs of students, and to mad teaching and learning more inclusive, but to varying degrees. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not at all to 10=very much) at contributing to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to use differentiate teaching approaches that are focused on improving child learning. Some respondents pointed out that before the pandemic many more teachers were more actively applying the Programme, but now there are new teachers who have never heard of the Programme; thus, they called for more trainings on differentiated education. Some schools have expanded the Programme beyond grades 3-6, as originally planned, and are now trying to implement the Programme in pre-school and the upper grades. At the same time, however, not all teachers are implementing the Programme in the classroom and teachers complain that developing daily lesson plans is a lot of writing and time consuming. As a result, teachers from many of the schools reported that they have reverted back to using traditional teaching-centred pedagogy (paragraphs 235-243).

Conclusion 8: The Programme was 'somewhat effective' at achieving its objectives, including: preparing teacher to identify and assess the learning needs of students; adapting teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities; and preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in more playful and interactive ways. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 5.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not effective to 10=very effective) at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students, and ranked the Programme as a 5.3 on 10-point effectiveness scale at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach students with different learning abilities. Teachers were more likely to rank the Programme at 'not so effective' at accomplishing these the first objectives, due largely to the fact that the cascade training approach was not so effective. As it relates to preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to teach students in a more playful and interactive way, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.2 on a 10-

point scale of effectiveness. Teachers complained, however, that schools lack the resources and materials that teachers need to create their own visual teaching materials (paragraphs 247-267).

Conclusion 9: On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.5 on a 10-point scale (1=not effective to 10=very effective) at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lesson plans. Coaches recognized that spending more time on developing lesson plans improves the way teachers teach and their relations with students; however, not all teachers are developing daily lesson plans or understand the importance of the lesson plans. Many teachers tend to see the lesson plans as time consuming and not very useful. Teachers also complained that they have to pay to photocopy the lesson plan forms and the costs can be high for teachers, particularly those teachers who teach math and language (paragraphs 268-273).

Conclusion 10: This evaluation found that nearly all respondents identified the need more training and training materials (90 percent), as well as educational and teaching materials (90 percent). The majority of respondents also identified the need for better collaboration, coordination and cooperation (72 percent), improvements to the classroom environment (70 percent) and more resources (56 percent). Fewer respondents also identified the need for improvements to the school environment (20 percent), improved Programme management (18 percent) and more Programme monitoring and monitoring tools (9 percent) (paragraphs 277-292).

Conclusion 11: UNICEF and SOEBGS learned that two years was not enough time to implement the Programme to the extent that it was able to change the culture of schools and reform education in primary schools to include differentiated education. Nor was there enough time to really assess the Programme's effectiveness and impacts, or to ensure sustainability. Schools need a longer period of time to be capacitated to possess the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effectively implement the Programme as a whole school approach. SOEBGS schools would benefit from an additional training and technical assistance to implement the Programme, and additional resources to ensure that schools have the training and teaching materials needed to fully implement the Programme in all 56 primary schools (paragraphs 293-295).

7.1.3. Efficiency

Conclusion 12: Given the lost learning time and learning losses experienced by children during the pandemic, additional resources are needed to support programming, such as the Differentiated Education Programme, that aim to help students recover from learning losses and to catch-up from unfinished learning. Ultimately, there is much work to be done, yet the challenges for educators, students and parents are considerable and will require educational reforms and interventions that include a focus on differentiated education and tailored or remedial instruction that focuses on helping teachers to deal with students who are not prepared for the classroom and the materials and at very different levels of understanding (paragraphs 297-298).

7.1.4. Sustainability

Conclusion 13: : This evaluation found limited evidence that the Programme will be sustainable after only two-years of implementation; more time is needed for Implementation. On average, in terms of sustainability, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.0 on a 10-point scale (1=not sustainable to 10=very sustainable). : There were challenge and barriers to Programme implementation that need to be addressed for the Programme to be sustainable. To ensure sustainability, school heads and teachers need additional training on how to implement the Programme, including training on how to develop lessons plans and how to teach using differentiated teaching approaches and testing. They also need educational and teaching materials, and differentiated tests that are aligned with teaching based upon the three-star system. Respondents also recognized that there needs to be better cooperation among teachers in schools and support from school heads to implement the Programme; this is because there is a lot of resistance to the Programme. (paragraphs 299-307).

Conclusion 14: On average, respondents thought it 'somewhat likely' that the Programme will be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. On average, respondents ranked the Programme as a 6.9 on a 10-point scale (1=not likely to 10=very likely) that it has the potential for scaling up and mainstreaming. Schools, however, need to be provided with the resources and educational and teaching materials for the Programme to be scaled up and mainstreamed into all SOEBGS schools. Additional invests also need to be made to ensure that the Programme is implemented in schools in the interior, to ensure that teachers in the interior are properly capacitated and provided with the technical assistance they need, coupled with the resources and educational and teaching materials (paragraphs 308-312).

Conclusion 15: Any effort to ensure sustainability of the Programme requires continued external inputs, including financial support and technical assistance to support a review and revisions to the Programme manual and workbook based upon lessons learned from this evaluation, and the development of improved capacity building trainings and training materials for continued trainings of counsellors, school heads and teachers. This includes financial support to ensure that Programme-related manuals, workbooks and teaching materials are readily available to all teachers in all SOEBGS schools. External inputs are also needed to ensure that schools and teachers have the resources and materials they need to practice differentiated education in the classroom. This includes reusable educational and teaching aids, such as visual teaching materials, blocks and furniture to create reading and math corners in schools and classrooms (paragraphs 318-322).

7.2. Lessons Learned

There were several lessons learned that emerged in the findings from this evaluation. Given the formative nature of this evaluation, the lessons learned are forward-looking with considerations for the short-, medium and long-term. If there are plans going forward to continue to support the Programme's implementation and to scale-up the Programme, these lessons learned will be relevant to SOEBGS, as well as MINOWC and other faith-based school systems in Suriname that plan to implement differentiated education. Lessons learned include:

1. In Suriname, educational institutions and educators are slow to change, including to transition from teacher-centred pedagogy to student-centred differentiated education and teaching pedagogy. Thus, efforts to 'win the hearts and minds' of school heads and teachers to implement the Programme on a daily basis in the classroom requires significant capacity building and technical assistance, as well as a demonstration of results and proper allocations of resources.
2. Counsellors, school heads and teachers all need to be properly capacitated and mentored to implement the Programme and to work together as a team to implement the Programme, as a whole school approach. A whole school approach will increase the responsibility and engagement of all teachers in the Programme. SOEBGS primary schools need school heads and teachers who are willing to champion the Programme.
3. SOEBGS counsellors need to be agents of change and champions of the Programme, and they need to be fully capacitated and certified to train school heads and teachers on all components of the Programme, and to assess its implementation in the classroom. They should also be required to participate in annual refresher trainings related to the Programme and re-certified every five years. Each SOEBGS counsellor should also have an annual plan for visiting schools and deliver refresher trainings and technical assistance to each of the SOEBGS primary schools in their cluster to strengthen the roll out and mainstreaming of the Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools.
4. School heads need to be committed to the Programme and capacitated to support a whole school approach for Programme implementation. In keeping, school heads need to serve as role models to teachers and regularly communicate and demonstrate their commitment to the Programme, and ensure that all teachers are capacitated to implement the Programme. To achieve this, all school heads should receive the same in-depth training that coaches received, as well as additional trainings on how to manage the Programme's implementation and to support teachers to use differentiated education in the classroom. This includes training on how to review and provide feedback on lesson plans to ensure that they are built around differentiated education and teaching pedagogy.
5. There should be clear criteria and guidance for school heads to recruit and select teachers to be coaches, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for coaches. Teacher should know what is expected of them prior to agreeing to be a coach. Also, teachers who are trained to be coaches should be offered an incentive and/or a reduced teaching load to fulfil the defined roles and responsibilities as a coach.
6. All teachers should receive the same training that the coaches received, and should provide refresher trainings on an annual basis. More specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education should also be developed and made available to teachers and school heads.
7. All teachers should be capacitated to develop lesson plans using differentiated teaching approaches, and to align their lesson plans with required learning outcomes as per the subject and grade. These do not necessarily need to be daily lesson plans, which is time consuming for teachers, but could be weekly lesson plans.

8. All school heads and teachers should be provided with a hard and/or digital copy of the Programme manual and workbook, and a copy of these documents should be made readily available in each school library, so that teachers can easily access and/or sign out them for a few days at time.
9. SOEBGS needs to invest more resources in the Programme and identify a cadre of change agents and champions of the Programme and imbed them in schools across the country.
10. SOEBGS needs qualified/certified personnel who can provide trainings and technical assistance to schools heads and teachers on all components of the Programme and how to properly implement the Programme in schools and classrooms.
11. The Programme's trainings and tools should include differentiated testing and tests that teachers can use in the classroom at each grade level. This will help to create more consistency across classes and primary schools as to which students belong in star 1, 2 and 3 groups.

7.3. Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are based upon the evaluation findings and conclusions and lessons learned from this evaluation, and were discussed with UNICEF CO staff, as well as SOEBGS school staff during data collection in the field to understand if they are practical. Recommendations have also been guided by good practices identified through the desk review. The level of participation of UNICEF CO and SOEBGS management and school staff in helping to formulate recommendations was not in proportion to their level of participation in the intervention or this evaluation.

The recommendations presented below aim to support the process of strengthening the implementation of the Programme, particularly given the fact that it was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations also aim to support scaling up and mainstreaming the Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools to encourage the Programme's sustainability. Following the recommendations is a prioritization and classification of each recommendation based upon urgency, impact and difficulty (**Table 7.1**).

7.3.1. Strengthen Differentiated Education Programme-Related Materials

Recommendation 1: SOEBGS should review and revise all of the Differentiated Education Programme-related materials, including training manuals and materials, and workbooks for teachers. Based upon the evaluation findings, now is a good time (following the COVID-19 pandemic) for SOEBGS management to form a working group/committee that will review and revise the Differentiated Education Programme-related materials, including training manuals and materials, and workbooks for teachers. They should also develop additional Programme-related materials to support Programme-related trainings and roll-out of the Programme in all primary school grades, from pre-school to grade 8. The working group/committee should include representatives from SOEBGS management, along with counsellors, schools heads and teachers, including those who have a solid working knowledge of the Programme and are champions of the Programme. The advantage of having a whole of organization approach to reviewing and revising Differentiated Education Programme-related materials is that it will help to support greater buy-in and commitment to the Programme throughout the organization.

It is very important that the working group/committee include one or two technical experts on differentiated education. At least one of the technical experts should be an international expert who can bring to the table international best practices on transforming education from the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy to student-centred differentiated education and teaching approaches. Yet, they must also understand the challenges and barriers, and lesson learned that have already been documented when it comes to rolling out the Differentiated Education Programme in Suriname from 2018-2023, in particularly findings outlined in this evaluation. The technical expert(s) should work very closely with the working group/committee to review and revise Programme-related materials to strengthen them and address their shortcomings, which were brought to the forefront in this evaluation, and will continue into the future (e.g., financial, human and material resources in the education sector).

As part of the review and revise process, the working group/committee and technical experts, should strengthen and expand Programme-related materials (i.e., training materials, manuals and workbooks) to cover pre-school and grades 1-8 (all primary school grades). In keeping with lessons learned, Programme manuals and workbooks need

to be grade-specific to ensure that the curricula, lesson plans and activities are relevant to students of all grades and ages. To accomplish this, Programme-related materials need to advance with each grade and be transformative in ways that promote progression or advancements in student-centred learning in literacy (language) and numeracy (mathematics), as well as social and emotional learning.

Recommendation 2: SOEBGS should develop standardized differentiated testing for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade-level to support the Differentiated Education Programme. This evaluation found that school heads and teachers need standardized differentiated tests that can be used for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade-level, because the current practice of having one test for all students does not allow teachers to properly measure student learning and assess whether star 1 and 2 students are progressing, and when to move students from star 1 to 2 and star 2 to 3. Thus, to improve the Programme, Programme-related materials should include standardized differentiated test for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade-level, along with clear guidance to how such testing should be used in the classroom to monitor student's progression and advancement in literacy (language) and numeracy (mathematics).

Standardized differentiated testing should be developed and built around grade-specific rubrics in education that define the expectations, criteria and quality levels for students performance on a test or assessment. Rubrics are used to promote consistency in evaluation, measuring learning outcomes and to provide feedback to students based upon the national curricula by grade-level, which means that students are judged against a set of standards, not against each other. Standardized differentiated testing will help to ensure consistency in testing across classes and schools, and proper categorizations of students by grade into star 1, 2 and 3 groups, which will help to reduce bias. Differentiated testing should be used periodically throughout the school year to ensure that children's learning progress is regularly assessed during the school year, so student can move from one star group to the another when they are ready to ensure a progression of learning that is aligned with their capabilities, which should improve throughout the school year. Students should not remain stuck in a star group from which they have advanced.

Recommendation 3: SOEBGS needs to establish an annual budget for and invest in purchasing materials that schools and teachers need in the classroom to teach using differentiated education and teaching strategies. This evaluation found that schools were not provided with the materials need to teaching using differentiated education, including materials needed to create educational and visual learning aids that can be used it the classroom to engage children in the learning process. Thus, it is crucial that SOEBGS have a budget for and invest in purchasing materials that schools and teachers need in the classroom to teach using different education and teaching strategies. This includes materials needed to teaching using art, which is a key component of the Programme, and materials to create story boards, words walls, and reading and math coroners. Schools should also be provided with an inventory of reusable visual teaching aids that can be regularly in the classrooms of each grade to teach students language and mathematics. The investment in such materials, including educational and visual aids, will demonstrate and communicate to teachers their commitment to differentiated education and teaching strategies in primary schools.

7.3.2. Strengthen Differentiated Education Programme Implementation and Monitoring

Recommendation 4: SOEBGS should establish a Differentiate Education Programme Unit to strengthen Programme implementation and monitoring. This evaluation found that SOEBGS counsellors have not been effective at supporting or capacitating primary schools to implement the Programme; moreover, the majority of counsellors were not change agents or champions of the Programme. Thus, if SOEBGS is committed to strengthening Differentiated Education programme implementation and monitoring, they should consider establishing a Differentiated Education Programme Unit that would be staffed with change agents and champions of the Differentiated Education Programme. Members of this Unit should be fully capacitated to understand the Differentiated Education Programme and all Programme-related materials and tools. Thy should also be certified to train school staff on the Differentiated Education Programme, and capacitated to monitor how schools are implementing differentiated education. Members of the Unit should work with school heads to develop capacity building plans to strengthen and improve their abilities to implement the Differentiated Education Programme in their schools, in partnership with teachers, and to do so in the proper way using all Programme-related materials. Members of this Unit should be key players in school's capacity building plans, serving as trainers and coaches for school heads and teachers, and monitoring partners.

To improve the Programme and its implementation, member of the Differentiated Education programme Unit should be agents of change and champions of the Programme. Members of the Unit should also be required to participate in annual refresher trainings related to the Programme and be re-certified every five years. Each

member of the Unit should also have an annual plan for visiting schools and delivering refresher trainings and technical assistance to each of the SOEBGS primary schools in their cluster to strengthen the roll out and mainstreaming of the Programme in all SOEBGS primary schools. If a Differentiated Education Programme Unit is not established to fulfil the above roles and responsibilities, then SOEBGS counsellors should be capacitated to do the same.

Recommendation 5: SOEBGS should expand the Differentiated Education Programme to include Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL)¹³⁶, which is a form of differentiated instruction that would help students who have fallen behind in learning due to the pandemic to catch-up, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This evaluation revealed that one of the major challenges teachers are facing in the classroom at the primary level is that students are at very different levels of learning the curriculum, particularly for language (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy), which are subjects crucial to be a productive member of society. As teachers are confronted with students at very different levels of the curriculum, they are often unable to devote the time and attention needed to help students who have fallen behind to catch-up in literacy and numeracy; thus, it is crucial that SOEBGS think about and deal with this situation in a way that supports teachers and benefits students.

To address this situation, SOEBGS should introduce TaRL¹³⁷, an approach that has been proven successful in Africa, and builds upon good practices promoted by the World Bank and UNESCO to address learning losses due to the pandemic. TaRL aims to build foundational skills in math and reading for all students before exiting primary school. At the instruction level, the approach works by assessing children's learning levels using simple tools or tests and then grouping children based on learning levels, rather than age or grade. Students can learn in their grade appropriate classroom for most of the day, but subjects such as language and mathematics, they are not in the classrooms that respond to their age, but in the classroom that respond to their learning level. Thus, classes are rearranged according to basic learning levels and teachers are assigned to teach a group of students at the same learning level, regardless of their age. For instance, all students who have language skills at a 2nd grade level will be grouped together in the same classroom, regardless of their age. This way the teacher that is assigned to teach language at the 2nd grade level can work with a classroom of students with similar language skills, regardless of their age. The same would hold true for mathematics, all children who have math skills at a 4th grade level will be group together in the same classroom, regard of their age. Such as approach, allow students who learn at a lower level than their age can learn with other students who are at the same level, but also student who learn at a higher level than their age can learn with other students who are at the same level.

TaRL focuses on foundational skills, rather than solely on the curriculum and tracks children's progress. Also, TaRL helps to ensure that teacher receive the support that they need to ensure that all children are being taught and learning at the level that is appropriate to their learning level and not their age. If done properly, TaRL will allow children to catch-up and allow teachers to not be overwhelmed in the classroom.

7.3.3. Strengthen Capacity Building Trainings for the Differentiated Education Programme

Recommendation 6: SOEBGS should roll out Differentiated Education Programme-related trainings to all SOEBGS school heads and teachers over a two-year period. This evaluation found that the Programme was integrated to varying degrees in each of the schools, however, none of the primary schools were able to fully implement the Programme in the two-year period. At this stage, the Programme's sustainability is limited in each of the primary schools because they have not had enough time, commitment or buy-in from the majority of school staff to implement the Programme as originally envisioned, i.e., as a whole school approach. Moreover, not all school staff felt that they had been capacitated enough to understand how to implement the Programme. This is largely because a cascade training approach was used, that involved coaches, but did not work well.

To improve Programme implementation, all counsellors, school heads and teachers should be required to complete the same intensive training that was delivered to coaches under the aegis of the Programme. Thus, SOEBGS would benefit from another two years of support to ensure all school heads and teachers are properly trained on the Programme. SOEBGS should consider a combination of Paramaribo-based trainings for school heads and staff who are able to travel to Paramaribo to participate in the trainings, and region- or district-based trainings for school heads and staff who are unable to travel to Paramaribo to participate in the trainings. School heads and staff should

¹³⁶ Retrieved on 2 April 2023 from: [The TaRL Approach - Teaching at the Right Level](#)

¹³⁷ Retrieved on 2 April 2023 from: [The TaRL Approach - Teaching at the Right Level](#)

also receive school-based trainings, where certified trainers come to the school to provide Programme-related capacity building and monitoring to support effective implementation of the Programme.

Recommendation 7: SOEBGS should develop an induction or orientation training on the Differentiated Education Programme for new school heads and teachers.

All new incoming counsellors, school heads and teachers should be required to complete an induction or orientation training on the Differentiated Education Programme. The induction training should be offered one to two times a year by certified trainers for the Differentiated Education Programme. The induction training should be the same intensive training received by all other school heads and teachers (see Recommendation 5). Such induction trainings on the Differentiated Education Programme are important because they will help to ensure that all new school heads and teachers have the relevant information, knowledge and skills needed to teach using differentiated education pedagogy and teaching approaches effectively and to become productive members of the school team. It also helps team adjust to their new work environment and the other teachers and students who are around them. Such an induction training can also help to curb the current practice of teachers who are resistant to differentiated education from negatively influencing new school and teachers through a process of occupational or organization socialization that reinforces resistance to differentiated education.

“Differentiated education is one of the best methods that we have in the educational system, now this should be included in our training for the teachers, it should be included in the teacher training institute. And as school leaders, we should be capable of the training to help guide differentiated education to help apply differentiated education in our own schools, so this is something that needs to be attended to.” (School Head, School 8)

Recommendation 8: SOEBGS should consider developing a full-package of content and ‘how-to videos’ for school staff that will capacitate them on how to roll-out all components of the Programme. This evaluation found that SOEBGS counsellors, school heads and teachers need more resources that will help them to understand the Programme and how to implement the Programme in the classroom, including teaching Programme-related activities from the Programme’s manual and workbook. During the evaluation, the evaluator explored teacher’s interest in having access to a full-package of Programme manuals, workbooks and ‘how to videos’ that would help to build their capacities and show them how to roll out all components of the Programme in the classroom, and to do so properly. School heads and teachers expressed a desire in having access to a full-package of content and ‘how-to-videos’ that can be access by and used by school heads and teachers, both when and as needed, to support school-based capacity building on differentiated education.

Both written and video content should be easy to navigate and consume for the users. This includes content related to, but not limited to: how to identify and assess student’s learning needs; how to teach using visual and teaching aids; how teach and work with students in groups; how to deliver differentiated education in the classroom (what does it look like?); how to effectively support and communicate with students who are having a difficult time learning; how to support and communicate with students who excel academically; and more. Teachers expressed interest in having access to such materials readily available in an online platform, but also built into tablets that can be distributed to schools. Many schools lack access to the internet and to computers; thus, distribution of tablets that are built specifically for this Programme was viewed as a practical and viable way of making sure that all schools have equal access to the same Programme materials and capacity building opportunities. Such video content should be available to all school staff free of charge.

It is recommended that SOEBGS should consider developing a full-package of content and ‘how-to videos’ for school staff on how to roll out and implement all components of the Programme. Such content should include a combination of written, lecture and video content that are available online and/or on tables. The full-package of content and ‘how-to-videos’ should provide very practical guidance on how to implement all components of the Programme, effectively and properly. These how-to videos can be made part of a resource package of materials for school staff and is available online at the Differentiated Education Programme website, and on tablets that are built to contain Programme-specific content and are distributed to schools (one tablet per school).

Recommendation 9: SOEBGS should develop a schedule for delivering refresher trainings related to the Differentiated Education Programme on an annual basis, as well as for more specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education for counsellors, school heads and teachers. Training for the Differentiated Education Programme should not be a one-off, counsellors, school heads and teachers needs refresher trainings on an annual

basis over the next five-year period until student-centred differentiated education and teaching approaches are the norm and standard for all school heads and teachers in primary schools. Refresher trainings should include more specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education, so that capacity building is ongoing and advances and incorporates more complex understanding of how to use student-centred differentiated teaching strategies and to introduce the latest in evidence-based good practices.

Recommendation 10: To improve the Programme, all teachers should be provided with a copy of Programme-related materials, including the manual and workbook for teachers, and a copy of these documents should be made readily available in each school library.

The use of a cascade training approach was a shortcoming of the Programme's design and implementation and approach, which meant that not all counsellors, school heads and teachers were provided with Programme-related materials, including the manual and workbook for teachers. Thus, it is important that going forward all school heads and teachers are provided with a hard and/or digital copy of the Programme manual and workbook for teachers. If SOEBGS plans to review and revise Programme-related materials, they should wait to roll out these new Programme-related materials to all all counsellors, school heads and teachers, until the revised materials are ready and will be used during Programme-related trainings.

"In case of refresher courses, we can monitor if we are doing a good job. Sometimes you forget some things. The refresher courses will help with that and teachers don't always remain at the same school. I might get a teacher from a school where they have not worked with differentiated education, and they are not informed about the system that we use; that is possible. If that is the case, I need to be prepared, either myself or the coach, to train the new teacher on the Differentiated Education Programme. And, sometimes you have new teachers who have never been in front of a classroom and they need to be taught about the Differentiated Education Programme, so it is always good to have a differentiated education training for new staff and those already trained." (School Head, School 9)

In the meantime, each school should have at least one or two copies of each of the original Programme-related materials, including the manual and workbook for teachers, made readily available in their school libraries, so that teachers can easily access and/or sign them out for a few days at a time. In most schools, school heads and/or coaches have one or both of the these documents, which they are not using, and they can be instructed to place in the school's library for all school heads and teachers to use and access. School should inform school staff as to when they are placed in the library with instructions as to how to access them.

7.3.4. Secure External Support for the Differentiated Education Programme

Recommendation 11: UNICEF and SOEBGS should continue to partner in an effort to strengthen and support ongoing rollout and implementation of the Differentiated Education Programme. This evaluation found that the Programme was integrated to varying degrees in each of the primary schools, however, none of the schools were able to fully implement the Programme in the two-year period. At this stage, the Programme's sustainability is limited in each of the primary schools because they have not had enough time, commitment or buy-in from the majority of school staff to implement the Programme as originally envisioned, i.e., as a whole school approach. Moreover, not all school staff felt that they had been capacitated enough to understand how to implement the Programme; in part, this is because the Programme was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For these reasons, SOEBGS would benefit from another three years of support to strengthen and implement the Programme, and to ensure the Programme is sustainable. If UNICEF and SOEBGS decide to no longer continue to support the Programme's implementation, these schools will most likely not continue to implement or scale up the Programme as a whole school approach as originally envisioned.

Recommendation 12: SOEBGS should develop a 'community of practice' for the Programme where counsellors, school heads and teachers can learn from each other, share good practices and lessons learned, and discuss and solve challenges related to Programme implementation. This evaluation found that counsellors, school heads and teachers from primary schools want opportunities to engage with school staff from other primary schools to learn from each other as to how the Programme is being implemented, and to learn more about good practices. Even within schools, school staff wanted to have a school-based community of practice where school staff in a particular school can come together and receive capacity building trainings, develop plans to implement the Programme, address challenges faced and possible solutions, and share good practices and lessons learned. Establishing a Differentiated Education Programme Unit would help to support creating a community of practice.

Given the desire for and benefits of a community of practice among school staff engaged in implementing the Programme, SOEBGS should develop a platform to establish a community of practice and organize exchanges at the national level to support school staff from across schools to strengthen their capacities and commitments to implement the Programme, and to learn from each other and share experiences and approaches. At the national level, the community of practice can be encouraged through an online social media platform and an annual Differentiated Education Programme conference. This requires a budget to support a national community of practices for the Programme.

School staff should also be encouraged and supported with technical assistance and a budget to have a school-based community of practice in which school heads and teachers can strengthen their work as a team, and learn from each other as they implement the Programme. By strengthening cooperation between and among school staff and schools through a community of practice, the Programme will become a larger movement among educators in Suriname, particularly among those who take pride in career development and advancement.

| Table 7.1. Recommendations by ranking of urgency, impact and difficulty, and responsible parties | | | | | |
|--|---|---------|--------|------------|---|
| # | Recommendation | Urgency | Impact | Difficulty | Responsible Parties |
| 1 | SOEBGS should review and revise all of the Differentiated Education Programme-related materials, including training manuals and materials, and workbooks for teachers | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Working Group; Technical Experts Partner: UNICEF |
| 2 | SOEBGS should develop standardized differentiated testing for star 1, 2 and 3 students at each grade-level to support the Differentiated Education Programme | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Working Group; Technical Experts Partner: UNICEF |
| 3 | SOEBGS needs to establish an annual budget for and invest in purchasing materials that schools and teachers need in the classroom to teach using differentiated education and teaching strategies. | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Partner: MINOWC |
| 4 | SOEBGS should establish a Differentiate Education Programme Unit to strengthen Programme implementation and monitoring | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Partner: UNICEF |
| 5 | SOEBGS should expand the Differentiated Education Programme to include Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL), which is a form of differentiated instruction that would help students who have fallen behind in learning due to the pandemic to catch-up, particularly in literacy and numeracy | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Working Group; Technical Experts Partner: UNICEF |
| 6 | SOEBGS should roll out Differentiated Education Programme-related trainings to all SOEBGS school heads and teachers over a two-year period | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Technical Experts; Primary Schools Partner: UNICEF |
| 7 | SOEBGS should develop an induction or orientation training on the Differentiated Education Programme for new school heads and teachers | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Primary Schools Partner: UNICEF |
| 8 | SOEBGS should consider developing a full-package of content and ‘how-to videos’ for school staff that will capacitate them on how to roll-out all components of the Programme | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Working Group; Technical Experts Partner: UNICEF |
| 9 | SOEBGS should develop a schedule for delivering refresher trainings related to the Differentiated Education Programme on an annual basis, and for rolling out more specialized and advanced trainings on differentiated education for counsellors, school heads and teachers | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Primary Schools Partner: UNICEF |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|---|
| 10 | To improve the Programme, all teachers should be provided with a copy of Programme-related materials and a copies should be made readily available in each school library | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Primary Schools Partner: UNICEF |
| 11 | UNICEF and SOEBGS should continue to partner in an effort to strengthen and support ongoing rollout and implementation of the Differentiated Education Programme. | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Working Group; Technical Experts Partner: UNICEF |
| 12 | SOEBGS should develop a 'community of practice' for the Programme where counsellors, school heads and teachers can learn from each other, share good practices and lessons learned, and discuss and solve challenges related to Programme implementation | | | | Lead: SOEBGS Technical Partner: Primary Schools Partner: UNICEF |

 = High
 = Medium
 = Low

ANNEX A: REFERENCES

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ANNEX B: TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

| Title | Funding Code | Type of engagement | Duty |
|---|--------------|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Individual consultant for the formative evaluation of the differentiated education programme:</i> Improving enrolment and learning: transitioning from frontal to differentiated learning | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Part-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time Individual Contractor | Station: Suriname |
| <p>Purpose of Activity/Assignment: The UNICEF Suriname Office has been supporting the programme differentiated approach to learning that responds to specific needs of students since 2019. An evaluation is proposed to determine how the program has been received and what has worked, and to document the lessons learned.</p> <p>UNICEF Suriname is seeking an experienced and qualified consultant to enter into a service contract to conduct an evaluation of the UNICEF-supported differentiated teaching and learning approach in SOEBGS schools in Suriname.</p> <p>The CO has been supporting the program differentiated approach to learning that responds to specific needs of students since 2019. An evaluation is proposed to determine how the program has been received and what the impacts are also what has worked, and to document the lessons learned.</p> | | | |

1. Background

Access to quality education is one of the most effective interventions to empower children and adolescents with the skills to function in and contribute to society. Access to education has broad effects on children and adolescent's development and well-being, including physical and mental health, social development, civic engagement, and protection from hazardous and exploitative practices.

With the adoption of the SDGs, the Government of Suriname has committed to achieving universal completion of primary and secondary education by 2030, with a greater focus on inclusiveness in education, including gender parity. The primary education completion rate in Suriname is comparable with the average primary education completion rate for Caribbean Small States, but lower than the average for Latin American and Caribbean countries. Bear in mind, Suriname does not have an automatic system of promotion from one grade to another.

The Surinamese curriculum in basic education is partly out of date. There is an ad hoc system of strengthening teaching skills and training of teachers. Generally, the teaching methods can be categorized as being ineffective hence the high repetition rates (average repetition rate primary education was 15% in 2019). Students fall behind on their academic performance which is evidenced by statistics. The various teacher training courses have so far not led to a significant improvement in school performance. The data from several studies, (IDB Quarterly Bulletin, World bank, UNESCO institute for Statistics, Onderzoek en Planning, Ministry of Education Science and Culture (MinOWC)), show the following:

8. In the Caribbean region Suriname has the highest number of repeaters: 20% of the pupils in grade 1 of the Primary School (GLO) are repeaters.
9. The national completion rate in primary education between 2012 and 2017 is on average around 54%. Thus, almost half of the number of students in primary education do not pass the final exam to proceed to secondary education.

10. Teachers are insufficiently trained in providing a differentiated approach to learning which responds to the class's dynamic
11. situation, talents and learning differences of pupils. By running a rigidly prescribed lesson plan, teachers are not sufficiently responsive to differences between pupils and thus not all children get an equal opportunity to excel in school and in everyday life

SURINAME EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Suriname, the educational system consists of pre-school, primary school, junior and senior secondary schools, and vocational and tertiary education. Pre-school is a two-year program for children ages four and five and is usually housed in a primary school. Currently pre-school is not compulsory. Compulsory primary school consists of Grades 1 to 6 for children ages 7-12. Completion of primary school was determined by examinations conducted nationwide at the end of Grade 6 until 2020. Children enter lower secondary school at 12 years of age and upper secondary education starts at 16 years of age; neither lower nor upper secondary education are compulsory. The Ministry of Education aims to reform the education system and education legislation which dates to the 1960s when Suriname was a Dutch colony. Reforms would focus on increasing the compulsory schooling for children ages 4-16, which would include pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, bringing compulsory education up to Grade 10. Almost 50% of the schools are faith based subsidized by the ministry and managed by the several religious organizations. The SOEBGS owns and manages the majority of primary schools in the interior of Suriname.

Although some progress in capacity development of teachers has been made in past years through training by the Education Foundation SOEBGS as well as the Ministry of Education, an integral structural policy for teacher's capacity development, which is in line with contemporary best practices on learning, is not yet in place. Existing solutions have mostly been disintegrated refresher training programs which put a lot of pressure on the educational process and is proven to be ineffective especially in the interior and other regions of the country where children do not benefit from "the one fits all solution" as they have a different (ethnic) background, different needs, different language skills. It has been observed that most schools still practice a more teacher-centred pedagogical approach. This traditional approach limits the teachers in identifying the fast from the slow learners (students that take time to understand core concepts or have specific issues why they are lagging behind) and the undertaking of remedial (for slow learners) and enrichment (for fast learners) activities required for the different learning styles. Further, although robust classroom assessments are included in the teacher instruction manuals and in teacher trainings, they do not take place in a structured manner in the classroom and all students are treated the same, with minimal adaptations to the teaching process.

2. OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION: PROGRAM ON DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING

It can be noted that the SOEBGS has made investments in capacity development of teachers in past years through training. However, an integral structural policy for teacher's capacity development, which is in line with contemporary best practices on learning, is not yet in place. Existing solutions have mostly been disintegrated refresher training programs which put a lot of pressure on the educational process and is proven to be ineffective especially in the interior and other regions of the country where children do not benefit from "the one fits all solution" as they have a different (ethnic) background, different needs, different language skills. It has been observed that most schools still practice a more teacher-centred pedagogical approach. This traditional approach limits the teachers in identifying the fast from the slow learners (students that take time to understand core concepts or have specific issues why they are lagging behind) and the undertaking of remedial (for slow learners) and enrichment (for fast learners) activities required for the different learning styles. Further, although robust classroom assessments are included in the teacher instruction manuals and in teacher trainings, they do not take place in a structured manner in the classroom and all students are treated the same, with minimal adaptations to the teaching process.

In light of the above illustrated challenges, the current program on differentiated learning, by emphasizing the mutual relationships between the training programs clearer and by integrating the training subjects, teachers are

strengthened in providing differentiated learning from a more holistic view on education. In 2018 the differentiated learning program was developed which includes: differentiation in the classroom, multilingual support, anti-bullying, creativity, and Activating Direct Instruction (ADI) centred around the taxonomy of Bloom. In the first stage of the implementation 134 teachers received professional development in one module of the program. The goal of the differentiated teaching method is to strengthen the skills and knowledge of teachers to enable transitioning into innovative teaching methods to improve student's learning. Through this program a teachers' capacity development concept was developed and is being implemented in the SOEBGS schools, with associated assessments/evaluations to measure the success of the concept. The school grades of year 2017-2018 serves as a baseline.

Objective of the program on differentiated learning: The creation of an integrated capacity development programme for teachers, training of coaches and supporting staff and the simultaneous implementation of the teaching method to transition to differentiated student learning.

The program aims at achieving the following at the student level:

- By another way of asking questions (Socratic questioning) by the teacher, pupils creative thinking will be activated.
- By differentiated teaching the teacher responds dynamically to the class situation, talents and learning differences of pupils.
- By means of group overview the teachers get a good picture of the learning needs of the pupils and adapt their approach (interpersonal, professional-pedagogical, didactic, and organizational) accordingly.
- Through better understanding of and working with flexible grouping there is more room for the teacher to pay attention to the weak students and by doing so increase their opportunities.

The aim of the programme was to train 117 education staff (110 coaches from the SOEBGS, 5 education counsellors and 2 project leaders), divided into 5 groups, that each received the same training offer (13 training days) simultaneous. The 13 training days were spread over 5 modules in the period November 2018 – July 2019 t which allowed the participants to immediately bring into practice what they had learned. The aim was also to simultaneously implement the programme at the 56 primary schools SOEBGS through peer-to-peer coaching of 224 teachers (see annex 1: Result Framework). The integrated training programme consists of 5 parts, all of which, in addition to the interconnectedness, are all connected with Bloom's Taxonomy (all teachers are already trained in this) that stimulates higher thinking. The program components are:

- Working with non-native speakers (Dutch language development while retaining one's own language).
- Differentiated working in the classroom (use of Active Direct Instruction Model).
- No mek dreigi tron wan soro (Programme on bullying to raise awareness about the consequences and how to stop bullying).
- Substantiated: a structured cognitive learning offer around development material and teaching material).
- Power of Art (Developing game and development materials to support the learning process). Key activities included:
 - Development of the differentiated teaching handbook and tools.
 - Information sessions with key partners.
 - Capacity building of coaches.
 - Peer-to-peer coaching of teachers on the job.
 - Monitoring of teacher development and progress.

Table 1: Number of beneficiaries and stakeholders

| | Cluster Upper Saramacca & Marowijne | Cluster Commewijne | Cluster para-Wanica | Cluster Par' bo centrum-North | Cluster Brokopondo | Cluster Par' bo south-west | Cluster Upper Sur | Total |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Number of students of targeted grades 3, 4,5 and 6 in primary | 519 | 1072 | 1702 | 1536 | 829 | 2372 | 1468 | 9498 |
| Number of schools | 6 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 56 |
| Number of coaches (teachers) trained (Nov 2018- July 2019) | 10 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 12 | 18 | 14 | 110 |
| Number of teachers targeted through on the job peer coaching dec 2018- July 2020 | 11 | 38 | 59 | 57 | 22 | 14 | 33 | 234 |
| Number of counsellors and project leaders | | | | | | | | 7 |

The national stakeholder is the Ministry of Education (division responsible for teacher training CENASU and the inspection department), as well as the board and management of the Moravian Foundation. Local stakeholders other than mentioned in table above include School principals and teachers.

Education in Suriname has been interrupted since March 2020, as a result of COVID-19. More than 139,912 children had been out-of-school as of September 2020, of which approximately 48 percent are primary school students. While local schools instituted distance-learning initiatives, inequalities regarding access to computers/laptops and other electronic devices, as well as the internet have exacerbated inequalities in education. Significant losses with respect to learning and human capital development risk deepening inequalities over the long term.

Programme monitoring and pre- and post-assessment

- Pupil assessments: The effects of the transformation to a different way of teaching have been tracked through administrative data on student performance. For more than 4 years now, St. Onderwijs der SOEBGS is keeping track of the average grades per school, per quarter, at classroom level. The pupil's performance of 2017-2018 serves as the baseline. In the 2 school years (2018-2020) thereafter (the period of the project), the grades / students' performance is compared per school year against the baseline. This to keep track of the progress. Obviously, there are many variables that influence performance of the children, but these assessments are crucial to confirm the success of the concept.

Teacher assessment: Coaches and teachers were assessed through portfolio assessment method and participation in sessions.

3. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

It is proposed to carry out an evaluation that is formative and hence its main purpose will be to learn about enabling factors, bottlenecks and challenges as input for learning and future action for improvement and scale up. As this is a formative evaluation, its main aims are to further gain insight. It is expected that the evaluation will gather information, data and evidence about UNICEF supported schools implementing the Differentiated Education Programme, including data and evidence from before and during the pandemic determining the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.

The evaluation is intended to draw recommendations for further improvement of the programme and exploring potential for scaling up differentiated teaching to other grades, schools and inform national teacher training programmes. Furthermore, provide strategic guidance to UNICEF in sharpening its focus areas of support to the ministry for mainstreaming the differentiated teaching approach in education as well as the overall approach to quality of education.

The intended utilization of the evaluation is to inform the fine-tuning of the ongoing implementation in the Moravian primary schools (SOEBGS), to summatively assess the performance of the approach, and to provide evidence to the national stakeholders on the pedagogical approach which could be incorporated into the national curriculum for education.

The main users of the evaluation will be as follows. Those key stakeholders will be engaged through participatory evaluation methodologies (which will be further determined at the inception phase):

- Management of faith-based schools
- Management of Moravian schools
- Ministry of Education (MINOWC)
- UNICEF
- Counsellors and coaches

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The main objective this formative evaluation is to assess to what extent, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Differentiated Education Programme was successful in improving the performance of the SOEBGS schools supported by UNICEF in terms of targeted components (learners, teachers, programme management and alignment with MINOWC and policy frameworks) considering gender, equity and child rights; and analyze what has or has not been working and why.

Specific objectives of this formative evaluation are the following:

- Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the differentiated student-oriented programme in the 56 SOEBGS schools as a key enabler in promoting child-centred teaching and student's performance considering the interruptions in education during 2020-2021 due to COVID. More specifically:
 - To assess the relevance of the differentiated learning approach in terms of the justification for such an intervention (design relevancy).
 - To assess the efficiency of the implementation process and to assess the cost related with the teaching and learning approach, identifying the different cost components needed to take place to plan/inform budgeting for scaling the programme.
 - To assess the effectiveness of the implementation process of the programme and to see to what extent the differentiated approach has achieved its objectives. Thereby identify areas that need further strengthening in the way that the approach is understood and implemented.
 - To assess the sustainability of the intervention. Is this sustainable and how feasible is the approach to be rolled out to other schools?
 - Assess what has or has not been working in supported schools regarding the components of the Differentiated Education Programme, identify differences and commonalities regarding targeted components among schools before and during the pandemic, and analyse causal factors that explain success, failure, differences and commonalities before and during the current pandemic.
 - Assess how gender, equity and child rights approaches have been applied in the components of supported programme before and during COVID-19

The evaluation needs to document and critically analyze good practices, lessons learned, gaps, bottlenecks and challenges considering pre-pandemic and pandemic contexts. Based on findings and conclusions related to actual performance of the UNICEF supported schools the evaluation needs to propose pragmatic and measurable recommendations for its future improvement considering the pandemic.

5. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Thematic scope: The evaluation will cover all related programme interventions and references – including the developed differentiated learning curriculum and syllabus, materials (lesson plan tool) and delivery mechanism, the level and modality of adoption in schools and classrooms, planning and monitoring mechanism, monitoring reports, awareness and capacity building of stakeholders etc. The focus is on primary education. The evaluation will consider the regulatory Framework, including relevant policies, plans, strategic and legal documents.

Due to unavailability of a comprehensive baseline for all schools and other robust comparable data, the nature of the evaluation being formative, and taking into consideration the disruptions due to COVID the attributable ‘impact’ of the approach will not be assessed and determined in this evaluation. Nonetheless, as specified in the evaluation questions, the evaluation needs to assess how the programme is making a difference in teaching practice and students’ learning behaviour and learning progress¹; as well as any differences among other beneficiaries such as education officials, principals and parents.

Geographic scope: the evaluation will be focused on the (56) SOEBGS (municipality) schools supported by UNICEF located in several districts and interior of Suriname. The municipality schools are autonomous in terms of management and deliver its public services but follow the policies and regulations and national curriculum and is accountable to the ministry of education.

Temporal scope: The period to be covered is the implementation period of the Differentiated Education Programme starting from 2019 to present. This means that this formative evaluation covers part of the previous Country Programme (2017-2021) and includes COVID-19 implications.

Stakeholders: The suggested stakeholders to be consulted include (to be finalized at the inception phase):

- Central level: MINOWC,
- Sub-national level district level MINOWC staff, Management EGBS
- School and community level: teachers, school principals, students, parents
- UNICEF: Suriname office
- NGO SAGA Foundation

6. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND CRITERIA

The assessment will focus on the interventions supported by UNICEF in the ALL-primary schools governed by the Moravian Foundation. The evaluation criteria to be used will be the standards OECD-DAC covering relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Additionally, in line with the guidance of the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG) human rights, gender equality and equity are integrated in the evaluation criteria.² Impact will not be assessed in this evaluation due to lack of baseline and other essential data for measuring ‘impact’, and disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic.

The overarching question is: Whether the approach is relevant, efficient, effective, sustainable and equitable? The specific evaluation questions by criteria are the following:

➤ RELEVANCE

Relevance of the teaching approach for delivering the primary curricula

- How relevant is the differentiated teaching approach for the Surinamese context and the national primary education curricula?
- How does the MINOWC and SOEBGS define Child-centred teaching-learning and how well does the differentiated teaching approach work towards/against the approach they have in mind?
- To what extent are the tools, methodologies and the concept accepted by national and local stakeholders?
- How does the approach work within the existing classroom space and classroom/school environment?

Relevance of the training of teachers in preparing them to adopt the approach in the classroom

- How relevant is the training of teachers in preparing them to adopt the differentiated learning approach in the classroom?
- What are the different approaches/modalities of teacher training applied?
- How relevant are the current contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanism used for the training?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages? How could it be improved?

Relevance of the teaching-learning material used

- What are the different types of material used for implementing the approach?
- How relevant are these materials developed by teachers to achieve the objectives?
- What are the positives and negatives? How could it be improved?

➤ EFFICIENCY

- To what extent does the programme deliver the necessary quality at the least necessary cost?
- What are the different cost elements in implementing this approach in schools (i.e., training, monitoring, material, classroom improvements)?
- Was the approach implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives (training all teachers instead of applying a train/coach the trainer concept)?
- What are the challenges faced in sourcing funds for these costs?
- How can different cost elements be made more cost effective and sustainable?

➤ EFFECTIVENESS

- To what extent and how has the approach achieved its objectives?
 - How well has the approach been integrated and applied into the daily teaching-learning practices?
 - To what extent and how has the programme helped improve teacher performance in effectively addressing different needs of students? And making teaching-learning more inclusive?
 - To what extent and how has the approach helped make difference in students' learning behaviour and learning progress?
 - What and how differences have come about for other beneficiaries – education officials, principals and parents?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievements of the differentiated learning objectives? How can the approach be more effective? (training, materials, class and school environment, resources, monitoring and measurement mechanism and tools, coordination, and governance, etc)?
- Were there any barriers/negativities surrounding the approach by stakeholders? How were these addressed?

➤ SUSTAINABILITY

- To what extent is the differentiated learning approach and interventions sustainable?
 - To what extent did the programme build on and contribute to increasing the existing national and local government capacities in delivering child-centred learning in primary education?
 - To which extent is the approach externally driven and to which extent owned/managed by SOEBGS. How much of a continuous “external input” does it require (e.g., monitoring, training, provision of materials) and what are the implications and requirements for potentially transitioning to a completely SOEBGS run/owned approach?
 - What new capacities within education services have been established or restored?
 - To what extent does SOEBGS has sufficient financial and human resources and capacity to keep up the benefits produced by the programme?
 - To what extent have the stakeholders undertaken the necessary decisions and course of actions to ensure the sustainability of the approach?
 - How have UNICEF and stakeholders ensured SOEBGS and school ownership of the approach (intrinsically driven to apply the approach)?
- To what extent the contents of the approach and its implementation modality have a potential for scaling and mainstreaming? Is there political will to support the mainstreaming of principles and approach in the education system?

➤ EQUITY, GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH (HRBA)

- To what extent have equity, HRBA and gender equality goals and processes been incorporated into the planning documents and resource materials of the Differentiated Education Programme interventions?
- To what extent has the approach been effective to advance equitable access and learning?
- To what extent did the different groups, including children with disabilities and other most marginalised children, benefit in different ways from the approach?

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Applicants for the consultancy are required to present their best ideas as part of the technical proposal. The quality and relevance of the methodology section will determine whether an applicant is deemed technically qualified. Applications should display the ability to identify, conceptualize, and manage a range of methods to answer the evaluation questions. The following is intended to offer useful information on actual or potential resources and limits.

- It is proposed to carry out the evaluation in four phases: i) Inception ii) Data collection iii) Analysis and reporting iv) Knowledge dissemination.
- For the bid, the consultants are requested to provide as detailed technical proposal as possible. The technical proposal should present (not limited to) a detailed strategy for collecting and analyzing data, comprising of both primary and secondary data and utilizing both qualitative and quantitative tools, even if not all the tools or timetables. Other methodological design could be included in the technical proposal as possible, otherwise in the detailed inception report, including: a sampling strategy, the target groups, the sample size and analytical framework; a series of specifically designed tools; and a detailed work plan. An outline of the final report should also be shared during the inception stage if not included in the technical proposal.
- Data should be disaggregated by relevant criteria (wherever possible): age, grade, gender, marginalized and vulnerable groups, etc. All findings to the largest possible extent be triangulated (use of three or more sources of information to verify and substantiate an assessment) and validated.
- Before finalizing the report, a participatory validation workshop should be organized, during which main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be discussed, validated and finalized. This will also be the opportunity to receive clarifications and/or request additional information to fill in data gaps before

the final report is drafted.

- In preparing the evaluation report, the findings should be evidence based and should have clear references to the source. The conclusions and recommendations should be firmly based on evidence and analysis, be relevant and realistic and presented in a comprehensive manner that makes the information easy-to-understand by the intended audience. Furthermore, recommendations need to be actionable and identify the responsible stakeholders to allow for a management response. The final report in hard and electronic copies should be in standard format for printing. A PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key components of the final report should also be presented.

In addition, the final report should contain the following annexes (*to be finalized during the Inception Phase*):

- Terms of Reference for the evaluation
- Evaluation tools
- List of meetings/interviews/focus groups discuss etc. conducted
- Names of Key stakeholders interviewed
- Records of interviews and focus group discussions etc.
- Photos taken during field missions of interventions
- List of documents reviewed
- Any other relevant material

The following core activities will be completed by the evaluation consultant to be selected:

a) Comprehensive desk review: the evaluation consultant is expected to analyze key secondary sources of information related to the program. This critical review must include the current situation of education in SOEBGS schools.

Key documents include training manuals, program design documents, program progress/monitoring reports, tools including lesson plan formats and templates to monitor student progress.

b) Elaboration and submission of a detailed and thorough inception report: based on the results of the desk review, it is expected that the consultant produces a complete inception report (first deliverable), operationalization of proposed evaluation approach, limitation of the scope, specification of methodology, elaboration of a final evaluation matrix (including criteria and questions and sub-questions) and evaluation tools, tentative evaluation schedule (specifying proposed sequence of activities), definition of the structure, length and characterization of the formative evaluation report and other expected evaluation deliverables. More evaluation components could be added to the inception report.

c) Collection, analysis, and triangulation of evidence related to the UNICEF supported program: in addition to the desk review and after the approval of the inception report, the consultant will gather qualitative and quantitative information, aligned to the evaluation purposes, objectives, evaluation criteria and questions, etc., The period dedicated to collecting primary information must be aligned to the proposed timeframe described in the approved inception report. The collection, analysis, and integration of the information to be collected must be defined based on the evaluation matrix (evaluation criteria and questions) which is a key part of the mentioned report.

Its maximum length must be 20 pages (excluding annexes). This document must be approved by UNICEF

The application of quantitative methods can be based on a sample survey and analysis of existing quantitative secondary data. For this purpose, student assessment data (grades per quarter) is available and student star profiling assessment. Participatory approach, what, with whom, when will be further be elaborated in the inception report, and will include semi-structured interviews and focus groups for gathering the views of a selection of participants (coaches and targeted teachers) on topics and issues in the data collection stage. In the

design stage Counsellors at central level will need be involved in instrument development to ensure alignment to local context of schools. Participation at validation stage of analysis and findings will include Counsellors, selection of coaches and teachers.

Program cost data are available and need to be analysed to address the efficiency questions of the evaluation.

d) Elaboration and submission of a draft version of the formative evaluation report: based on the triangulation of the collected (quantitative and qualitative) information and according to the evaluation matrix, the selected evaluation consultant will develop the draft version of the formative evaluation report offering straight forward evidence-based answers to the evaluation criteria and questions and highlighting evidence about how gender, equity, and child rights. The structure of the draft version of the formative evaluation report will be the one proposed and approved in the inception report.

7.2. EVALUATION NORMS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation will be guided by commonly accepted evaluation norms, standards and approaches. Specifically, the evaluation should be guided by the UNEG norms, standards and guidance.³ The evaluation must be external and independent and will be carried out in an objective, impartial, open and participatory manner, based on empirically verified evidence that is valid and reliable.

UNICEF's *Evaluation Report Standards*⁴ should be followed when preparing the evaluation report. Final evaluation report will be with all annexes in digital format incorporating feedback and comments from UNICEF along with specific, simple and achievable recommendations for future policy and programmatic improvement to be made by the government, as well as specific recommendations for UNICEF's assistance to address the key issues highlighted through the evaluation results. The report will be externally reviewed through UNICEF's Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS)⁵, therefore, the evaluation report needs consider the GEROS quality assurance criteria.

Ethical considerations - The UNEG Code of Conduct⁶ and Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations⁷ shall apply to all stages of the evaluation, as well as UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis.⁸ Where the evaluation involves the participation of members of vulnerable groups, children in particular, evaluators must be aware of and comply with legal codes governing interviewing children and young people and the evaluation design and instruments need to be reviewed by an external ethical review board (see UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards). Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. Evaluators must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the relevant individuals are protected from reprisals

The ethical principles that will guide the evaluation are independence, impartiality, credibility, responsibility, honesty, and integrity. Similarly, it is essential for the evaluation team to maintain respect for the dignity and diversity of the individuals interviewed, and to take into consideration respect for human rights, gender equity and equality⁹ throughout the evaluation process. The team will take the appropriate measures to preserve the confidentiality of information and data of the individuals involved, while respecting the right to provide information in confidence. Here, it is essential that informed consent be obtained when the information is collected.

8. EVALUATION WORKPLAN AND DELIVERABLE

| Key activities, Deliverables and Timelines <i>Key Activity</i> | <i>Deliverables</i> | <i>Time Frame (From date of contract award)</i> | <i>Payment schedule</i> |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| Phase I - Inception | | | |
| Phase 1: Inception Report: the key activities expected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kick off meeting - Initial document review and orientation interviews - Development of methodology, data collection strategy and data collection tools in participation with Counsellors of the Moravian Foundation - Development of workplan - Development of inception report, including evaluation matrix | Inception Report | Two weeks | 15% |
| Phase II – Data Collection | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection at sub-national and national level. The collection of information will be based on approved and final version of evaluation tools. The contractor must include the triangulation of different sources of information as well as pilot testing of instruments. | Data collection conducted | Four weeks | 15% |
| Phase III – Analysis and Reporting and dissemination | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis and develop a first draft report in Dutch and English for UNICEF / SOEBGS comments. The structure of the study report must cover and be aligned to the objectives and mentioned evaluation matrix. | First draft report | Four weeks | 25% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Evaluation findings and recommendations in PPT at a UNICEF/SOEBGS organised event. ☐ | One day event/ PPT | One week | 15% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate comments and produce final draft for validation by UNICEF and SOEBGS. Feedback received from UNICEF/ SOEBGS (including inputs from governmental stakeholders must be assessed and smoothly included within the final version of the formative evaluation report. This final version of the formative evaluation must be ready for its (printed / digital) publication and timely submitted to UNICEF for its critical review and approval. | Updated draft report incorporating the comments/ final report | One week | 30% |

Inception report: The outline and content of the inception report need to comply with UNICEF evaluation standards and will be further discussed during inception. Annex 2 includes a preliminary outline of the inception report. The inception report needs to: clarify the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation; specify the

evaluation approach and methodology (including data collection methods and sampling strategy); include an evaluation matrix (including criteria and questions and sub-questions); data collection tools to be used; detailed workplan (specifying proposed sequence of activities) and definition of the structure, length and characterization of the formative evaluation report and other expected evaluation deliverables.

Evaluation report: The report should conform to the UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards and GEROS quality assurance criteria. The report needs to be drafted in English and should not be more than 50-70 pages excluding annexes. The report needs to include an executive summary of maximum 5 pages (complying with GEROS criteria).

Revised versions of the report based on feedback from UNICEF and SOEBGS need to be accompanied by a comment matrix that present who each comment is addressed in the revised version (or justify why the comment is not addressed).

9. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT

The National Evaluator will be working under the supervision of Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist and the Education Specialist. Given the fact that COVID-19 pandemic measures have been lifted or simplified the consultant is expected to carry out data collection mission to the interior to do interviews and propose other data collection methods to collect the data on project interventions. The deputy representative will be the final approver of the evaluation deliverables.

10. ESTIMATED COSTS

Candidates should submit a technical and financial proposal to be considered **Timeframe:** The contract will start from November 2022 and end March 2023.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES ☒ NO If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role YES ☒ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

Child data role YES ☒ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Budget Year: 2022 | Requesting Section/Issuing Office: <i>M&E Paramaribo</i> | Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff: <i>Evaluation needs to be independent and non-biased</i> | |
| Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes No, please justify: | | | |
| Consultant sourcing: | | Request for: | |
| National International Both Consultant selection method: | | New SSA – Individual Contract Extension/ Amendment | |
| Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview) | | | |
| If Extension, Justification for extension: | | | |
| Supervisor: Prya Hirasingh, M&E Specialist <input type="checkbox"/> | Start Date: Nov 2022 <input type="checkbox"/> | End Date: March 30 th 2023 <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of Days (working) 60 days <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Estimated Consultancy fee | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|--|
| Travel International (if applicable) | NA | | |
| Travel Local (please include travel plan) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | To be determined and in consultation with the stakeholders the consultant and UNICEF | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| DSA (if applicable) | To be determined based on the travel plan (yet to be determined) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Total estimated consultancy costs ⁱ | USD 46,000 | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Minimum Qualifications required:</p> <p>Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters PhD Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines</p> <p>Social sciences, Education Sciences,</p> | <p>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated 10 years of experience in conducting high level evaluation work in development, social, education, social protection, etc. matters. An outline of similar work and samples required in submission of proposal. • Demonstrated expertise in designing and managing complex analysis, evaluations, or research in education, and experience in designing and implementing quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and data analysis with a range of UN agencies, multilateral agencies, governmental or private sector, etc. • Proven participation in international and regional networks, events, processes related to Accelerated Education, non- formal education, and education, in general. • Demonstrated experience in working at national and community level engaging multiple stakeholders and dealing with different governance structures. An understanding of or an existing network to critical and relevant stakeholders especially in the education sector, is an asset. • Availability and willingness to take up the assignment on short notice and ability to work under pressure and deliver on deadlines within proposed timeframe. • Proven experience in leading and managing outcome and impact evaluations. Good understanding of evaluation methodologies and UNEG norms and standards for Evaluation. • A good understanding of equity issues • Proven analytical skills and experiences leading to the ability to identify and evaluate best practices and innovative approaches to be utilized by the project • Excellent writing skills • Strong organizational, and presentation skills • Proven knowledge of local context is an asset; knowledge of local languages is an asset |
| <p>Administrative details:</p> <p>Visa assistance required:</p> <p>Transportation arranged by the office:</p> | <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based:</p> <p>If office based, seating arrangement identified: IT and Communication equipment required: Internet access required:</p> |

ⁱ Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures, and will not be entitled to

benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

¹ **Teaching practice:** differentiated teaching by adjusting lesson plans with regards to either the content being discussed, the process used to learn, or the product expected from students to ensure that learners at different starting points can receive the instruction they need to grow and succeed. **Student learning behavior:** active participatory role during the lessons, increases participation and peer-to-peer learning. learning progress: this is based on the student grades as well as growth throughout the 3-star system.

³ UNEG (2016) [Norms and standards for evaluation](#)

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/media/816/file/UNICEF-Adapted-UNEG-Evaluation-Report-Standards.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/global-evaluation-reports-oversight-system-geros>

⁶ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

⁷ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/documents/unicef-procedure-ethical-standards-research-evaluation-data-collection-and-analysis>

⁹ UNEG (2014), [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#).

Annex Table B1: Results framework

| Result statement | Performance indicators | Baseline | Target | Means of Verification ⁱ |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Corresponding result from Country programme/ Humanitarian Response Planⁱ</p> <p>Outcome 3: Strengthened organizational capacity of key stakeholders to design and deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services, transitioning strategies and protective learning environments, including in emergencies, for all children and adolescents within rights based educational frameworks and principles by 2021</p> <p>CPD Key progress indicators, baselines and targets:</p> <p>4. Percentage of students who are overage for grade in primary education, by gender Baseline: 18% (girls), 22% (boys) (Sur) Target: 10% decrease for all groups</p> <p>5. Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination or abuse Baseline: bullying: 37% (girls), 40% (boys) (Guy); 26% (girls), 26% (boys) (Sur) Target: 10% decrease for all groups</p> | | | | |
| Programme Output 1 | Integrated training | Various ad-hoc training parts | Integrated training program together in 1 syllabus | Training map PowerPoint training |
| Training programme (material for teachers in differentiated learning in basic education designed) | Detailed planning that is communicated at all levels | All our projects are equipped with a planning | 1 detailed planning for the duration of the project | 1 Planning schedule |
| Programme Output 2 | Certification based on instructions portfolio | 0% trained in differentiated learning from an integrated (holistic) perspective | At least 75% of participants are internally certified. The coaches can be used both internally and externally for the training other teachers | -Rating portfolio -obtained certificates |
| 119 participants have been trained in an integrated training program for coaching teachers in differentiated learning | Project leaders are coached in 6 meetings in organization, monitoring and management of the implementation | Experience with managing similar programs | 2 project managers completed the 6-day coaching program | Progress report Monitoring files Organizational structure |
| 2 Project leaders have been coached in managing the program | Training participation in the 65 training days | 0% | At least 80% participation realized | Entry list attendance list of participants |
| | Participants assessment of the training program on process content an context | None | At least the rating 7.5 for the implementation of the training and the quality of the training supply | Training evaluation forms and report |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Programme Output 3 On-the-job coaching of basic education teachers in differentiated learning/ instructions completed at 56 schools in basic education | Number of Teachers (minimum 4 per school) are simultaneously coached in differentiated learning | 0% Coached in the new training program | At least 75% of the 224 participating SOEBGS teachers have completed their coaching course. | Teachers completed instructions folder |
| | Number of on-the- job class consultations of teachers | 0% Class consultations carried out | At least 75% of the 672 class consultations have been carried out | Completed forms class consultation and report |
| Programme Output 4 Baseline and effect measurement completed. Project management, monitoring and evaluation for the correct adjustment aimed at achieving results | developed measuring instruments | No measuring instrument No effect measurement | 1 developed measuring instrument & 2 effect measurements carried out | 1 measuring instrument 2 measurement- reports |
| | The learning outcome of students | SOEBGS student completion rate: on average 10%above national ratio for MULO and 6% for LBO | An improvement of 7% for Mulo; LBO consolidation compared to the national average | Test results elementary schools (GLO), 2020 |
| | Project group consultations concerning the continuation | 0% Project group consultations carried out | A minimum of 10 realized project group consultations | Project group reports Attendance list |
| | Photo reports with the visualisation of the running program | All our projects are equipped with photo reports | Realization of 3 photo reports | 3 photo reports |
| | Evaluation reports in which the targets are compared, interim and at the end, to the delivered results | All our projects are provided with interim and final reports | Realization of 1 interim report and 1 final report | 2 evaluation reports, including monitoring files |

Annex 2: Suggest including a preliminary outline of the inception report in annex:

1. Analysis of the context and description of the object of the evaluation
2. Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation
3. Evaluation framework (including evaluation criteria and questions), together with evaluation matrix
4. Methodology, including:
 - a. Description and justification of overarching design
 - b. Data collection methods
 - c. Sampling strategy
 - d. Data collection tools
 - e. Data analysis strategy
 - f. Limitation and mitigation measures
 - g. Ethical considerations and quality assurance
 - h. Integration of gender, equity and human rights
5. Dissemination of the evaluation
6. Workplan and evaluation team
7. Deliverables

ANNEX C: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

| Annex Table C1. Stakeholder Analysis | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------|--|
| Human Rights Role | Stakeholders/ Target Groups | Role in Intervention | Mandate Area(s) | Thematic Areas | Possible Uses of the Evaluation |
| Duty-bearers | UNICEF Suriname CO | Programme Management Funder | Normative Operational Coordination | Cross-cutting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming going forward in the education sector to strengthen and scale-up the Programme • Identify good practices and effective implementation strategies to strengthen and scale-up the Programme • Strengthen accountability for and learning from the Programme • Secure donor funding to support strengthening and scale-up of the Programme |
| | Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MINOWC) | Programme Partner Beneficiary | Normative Operational | Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform educational reforms that aim to improve teaching pedagogies in public schools and student learning outcomes, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy • Identify good practices and effective implementation strategies from the Programme that can be rolled out in public schools |
| | Education Foundation of the Moravian Church (SOEBGS) | Programme Partner Funder Beneficiary | Normative Operational | Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take stock of progress made toward attainment of the Programme goal, objective and aims • Inform educational reforms that aim to improve teaching pedagogies in SOEBGS primary schools and student learning outcomes, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy • Identify good practices and effective implementation strategies to strengthen and scale-up the Programme • Share insights about the implementation approaches and progress made, and plans for steps to be taken to strengthen and scale-up the Programme • Secure donor funding to support strengthening and scale-up of the Programme |

| Human Rights Role | Stakeholders/ Target Groups | Role in Intervention | Mandate Area(s) | Thematic Areas | Possible Uses of the Evaluation |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Rights-holders | Primary school students | Primary Beneficiary | Operational | Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit from improved teach pedagogies in the classroom that aim to improve student learning outcomes, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy Benefit from reforms in the education sector to strengthen and scale-up the Programme |
| | Parents/guardians | Primary Beneficiary | Operational | Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit from improved student learning outcomes, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy Benefit from reforms in the education sector to strengthen and scale-up the Programme |
| Other interest groups who are not directly participating in the intervention but have strategic technical inputs into the intervention | NGO SAGA Foundation | Implementing Partner | Normative Coordination Programme | Cross-cutting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take stock of progress made toward attainment of the Programme goal, objective and aims Identify good practices and effective implementation strategies to strengthen the Programme Share insights about the implementation approaches and progress made, and plans for steps to be taken to strengthen the Programme |
| | UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO) | Secondary stakeholder | Normative Operational Coordination | Cross-cutting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take stock of progress made toward the attainment of the Programme's goal, objective and aims, and good practices and effective implementation strategies related to the Programme Inform planning for UNICEF LACRO to support to Suriname Take stock of this Programme's good practices and effective implementation strategies, and lessons learned and recommendations, and how they are relevant to other countries in the LAC Region seeking to bring about educational reforms around differentiated education |
| | UN Country Teams, key development partners and donors | Secondary stakeholder | Normative Operational Coordination | Cross-cutting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take stock of progress made toward the attainment of the Programme's goal, objective and aims, and good practices and effective implementation strategies related to the Programme Inform planning, programming and donor funding in Suriname to strengthen and scale-up the Programme, and bring about educational reforms |

ANNEX D: EVALUATION MATRIX

| Annex Table D1. Evaluation Matrix | | | | |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|--|
| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
| 1. Relevance | | | | |
| 1.A. How relevant is the differentiated teaching approach for the Surinamese context and the national primary education curricula? | 1.a.1. Degrees to which and ways that differentiated teaching approaches are relevant to the national context and primary education curricula. (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.B. How does MINOWC and SOEBGS schools define child-centred teaching and learning? And, how well does the differentiated teaching approach work towards and/or against the approach they have in mind? | 1.b.1. Degree to which and ways that differentiated teaching approaches support child-centred learning (Quantitative/Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.C. To what extent are teacher and learning concepts, tools and methodologies accepted by national and local stakeholders? | 1.c.1. Degree to which and ways that SOEBGS management and staff accept teacher and learning concepts, tools and methodologies supported by the Programme (Quantitative/Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.D. How does the differentiated teaching approach work within the school environment and classroom spaces? | 1.d.1. Ways that teachers are applying or using differentiated teaching approach in classrooms (e.g., visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way) (Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|---|
| 1.E. How relevant are the teacher trainings to prepare teachers to adopt the differentiated learning approach in the classroom? | 1.e.1. Degree to which and ways that teacher trainings are relevant to prepare teachers to adopt the differential learning approach in the classroom (Quantitative/Qualitative) 1.e.2. Degree to which and ways that teacher trainings are important to preparing teacher to use more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom (Quantitative/Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.F. What are the different approaches or modalities of teacher training that have been applied? | 1.f.1. Different approaches or modalities of teacher training that have been applied (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials. • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.G. How relevant are current contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used for the training? | 1.e.1. Degree to and ways that contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used for the training are relevant (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.H. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the teacher trainings? And, how could they be improved? | 1.h.1. Advantages and disadvantages of teacher trainings, and ways that they can be improved (Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|--|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| 1.I. What are the different types of materials used for implementing the approach? | 1.i.1. Different types of materials developed and used for implementing the approach (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.J. How relevant are these materials developed by teachers to achieve the objectives? | 1.j.1. Degree to which and ways that training materials are relevant to teachers, such as contributes to teacher's ability to identify and assess students' learning needs and to adapt their teaching styles and use materials that contribute to more active student participation and learning. (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 1.K. What are the positives and negatives of the training materials? How could it be improved? | 1.k.1. Strengths and limitations of training materials (Qualitative) 1.k.2. Ways that training materials can be improved. (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 2. Effectiveness | | | | |
| 2.A. To what extent and how has the approach achieved its objectives? | <p>2.a.1. Degree to which and ways that respondents believe the Programme has prepared teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students (Quantitative/Qualitative)</p> <p>2.a.2. Degree to which and ways that the Programme has prepared teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students in the classroom, and to support students who have difficulties learning a subject (Quantitative/Qualitative)</p> <p>2.a.3. Degree to which and ways that the Programme has prepared teachers to take a more active role in developing their lessons plans (Quantitative/Qualitative)</p> <p>2.a.4. Degree to which and ways that the Programme has prepared teachers to use of visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, and to increase their understanding (Quantitative/Qualitative)</p> | <p>Programme documents</p> <p>UNICEF SCO</p> <p>MINOWC</p> <p>SOEBGS management</p> <p>NGO SAGA Foundation</p> <p>Coaches (trained teachers)</p> <p>SOEBGS primary school staff</p> <p>Students</p> | <p>Desk review</p> <p>KIIs and FGDs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 2.B. How well has the approach been integrated and applied into daily teaching and learning practices? | <p>2.b.1. Ways in which more innovative teaching approaches have been integrated and applied in teaching and learning practices (Qualitative)</p> | <p>Programme documents</p> <p>UNICEF SCO</p> <p>SOEBGS management</p> <p>Coaches (trained teachers)</p> <p>SOEBGS primary school staff</p> <p>Students</p> | <p>Desk review</p> <p>KIIs and FGDs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 2.C. To what extent and how has the Programme helped to improve teacher performance in effectively addressing the different needs of students? And to making teaching and learning more inclusive? | 2.c.1. Degree to which and ways that respondents believe the Programme has prepared teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students (Quantitative/Qualitative) 2.c.2. Degree to which and ways that the Programme has prepared teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students in the classroom, and to support students who have difficulties learning a subject (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 2.D. To what extent and how has the approach helped to make differences in students' learning behaviour and progress? | 2.d.1. Ways in which the Programme helped to improve students' learning and progress (Qualitative) | Programme documents EMIS data UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review EMIS data KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of relevant EMIS data • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 2.E. What and how have differences come about for other beneficiaries, such as education officials, principals and parents? | 2.e.1. Benefits of the Programme on education officials and staff and primary schools (Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| 2.F. What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the differentiated learning objectives? How can the approach be more effective (e.g., training, materials, class and school environment, resources, monitoring and measurement mechanism and tools, coordination, and governance)? | 2.f.1. Factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the differentiated learning objectives (Qualitative) 2.f.2. Ways in which the Programme can be strengthened to be more effective (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 2.G. Were there any challenges, barriers or negativities surrounding the approach by stakeholders? How were these addressed? | 2.g.1. Types of challenges, barriers or negativities to Programme implement, and how they are addressed (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |
| 3. Efficiency | | | | |
| 3.A. To what extent does the Programme deliver the necessary quality at the least necessary cost? | 3.a.1. Costs of delivering Programme (Quantitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |
| 3.B. What are the different cost elements in implementing this approach in schools (e.g., training, monitoring, material, classroom improvements)? | 3.b.1. Breakdown of costs to element the Programme (e.g., training, monitoring, material, classroom improvements) (Quantitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| 3.C. Was the approach implemented in the most efficient way, compared to alternatives (e.g., training all teachers instead of applying a train/coach the trainer concept)? | 3.c.1. Additional funding and costs needed to implement the Programme (Quantitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |
| 3.D. What are the challenges faced in sourcing funds for these costs? | 3.d.1. Challenges faced in sourcing funds to implement the Programme (Quantitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |
| 3.E. How can different cost elements be made more cost effective and sustainable? | 3.e.1. Ways in which the Programme can be made more cost effective and sustainable (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation | Desk review KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII data with comparison by target groups |
| 4. Sustainability | | | | |
| 4.A. To what extent is the differentiated learning approach and interventions sustainable? | 4.a.1. Degree to which and ways that differentiated learning approaches and interventions are sustainable (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.B. To what extent did the Programme build upon and contribute to increasing existing national and local government capacities to deliver child-centred learning in primary education? | 4.b.1. Degree to which and ways that the Programme contribute to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to deliver more innovative teaching approaches that are focused improving child learning and academic performance (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|--|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| 4.C. To which extent is the approach externally driven and owned or managed by SOEBGS schools? | 4.c.1. Ways in which the approach has been externally driven and owned versus managed by SOEBGS schools (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.D. How much of a continuous “external input” does it require (e.g., monitoring, training and provision of materials) for sustainability? | 4.d.1. Type of ongoing external inputs and support are needed for the Programme to be sustainable (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.E. What are the implications and requirements for potentially transitioning to a completely SOEBGS- run/owned approach? | 4.e.1. Implications and requirements for transitioning the Programme to a completely SOEBGS-run/owned approach (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.F. What new capacities within education services have been established or restored? | 4.f.1. Different types of new capacities within education services have been established or restored (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.G. To what extent does the SOEBGS have sufficient financial and human resources and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme? | 4.g.1. Availability of SOEBGS financial and human resources and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme (Qualitative) | UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|---|
| 4.H. To what extent have the stakeholders undertaken the necessary decisions and course of actions to ensure sustainability of the approach? | 4.h.1. Decisions and actions taken by stakeholders to ensure sustainability of the approach (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.I. How have UNICEF and stakeholders ensured SOEBGS and school ownership of the approach (i.e., intrinsically driven to apply the approach)? | 4.i.1. Steps taken by UNICEF and stakeholders to ensure SOEBGS and school ownership of the approach (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 4.J. To what extent the contents of the approach and its implementation modality have a potential for scaling and mainstreaming? Is there political will to support the mainstreaming of principles and approach in the education system? | 4.j.1. Degree to which and reasons why the contents of the approach and its implementation modality have the of being scaled up and mainstreamed (Quantitative/Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| 5. Equity, Gender Equality and Human Rights-Based Approaches | | | | |
| 5.A. To what extent have human rights-based approaches and gender equality goals and processes been incorporated into planning documents and resource materials of the Programme interventions? | 5.a.1. Ways in which human rights-based approaches and gender equality goals and processes been incorporated into planning documents and resource materials of the Programme interventions (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) | Desk review KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials. • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| 5.B. To what extent has the approach been effective to advance equitable access to education and learning? | 5.b.1. Degree to which and ways that differentiated education approaches have been effective at advancing equitable access to education and learning (Qualitative) | Programme documents UNICEF SCO MINOWC SOEBGS management NGO SAGA Foundation Coaches (trained teachers) SOEBGS primary school staff Students | Desk review EMIS data KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials. • Analysis of relevant EMIS data • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |
| Evaluation Criteria and Questions | Indicators | Data Sources | Methods of Data Collection | Data Analysis Methods |
| 5.C. To what extent did the different groups, including children with disabilities and other most marginalised children, benefit in different ways from the approach? | 5.c.1. Number of students from different groups, including children with disabilities and other most marginalized children (e.g., children from the rural interior) benefit in different ways from the approach (Quantitative) | Programme documents EMIS data UNICEF SCO SOEBGS management and staff | Desk review EMIS data KIIs and FGDs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of desk review materials. • Analysis of relevant EMIS data • Analysis of KII and FGD data with comparison by target groups |

ANNEX E: EVALUATION WORK PLAN

| Annex Table E1. Evaluation Work Plan | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Steps | Description of Deliverables | Responsibilities | Estimated Number of Days and Location | Evaluation Team Deliverables (Submission Dates) |
| Phase 1 – Inception | | | | |
| Inception Report | Draft and finalize inception report, including key activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick off meeting Initial document review and orientation interviews Development of methodology, data collection strategy, data collection tools in participation with counsellors of the Moravian Foundation Development of workplan Draft and finalize Inception Report, including evaluation matrix Submit for ethical review and receive ethical approval | Dr. Robin Haarr (Evaluator) | 9 days / remote | <u>Inception Report</u> Date: 31 January 2023 |
| Phase 2 – Data collection | | | | |
| Data Collection in the Field | Data collection at sub-national and national level. Collection of information will be based on approved and final version of evaluation tools. The evaluator must include the triangulation of different sources of information, and pilot testing of instruments. | Dr. Robin Haarr (Evaluator) | 27 days / in-country | <u>Data collection in the field</u> Dates: 12 February – 11 March 2023 |
| Phase 3 – Analysis, Report Writing and Dissemination | | | | |
| Data Analysis and Report Writing | Data analysis and develop a first draft report in English for UNICEF and SOEBGS comments. The structure of the study report must cover and be aligned to the objectives and mentioned evaluation matrix.. | Dr. Robin Haarr (Evaluator) | 19 days / remote | <u>Draft Evaluation Report (in English)</u> Date: TBD |
| Presentation | Presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations in PPT at a UNICEF/SOEBGS organised event. | Dr. Robin Haarr (Evaluator) | 5 days in-country | <u>Presentation</u> Date: 3 April 2023 |
| Final Evaluation Report | Incorporate comments and produce final draft for validation by UNICEF and SOEBGS. Feedback received from UNICEF/ SOEBGS (including inputs from governmental stakeholders must be assessed and smoothly included within the final version of the formative evaluation report. This final version of the formative evaluation must be ready for its (printed / digital) publication and timely submitted to UNICEF for its critical review and approval. | Dr. Robin Haarr (Evaluator) | | <u>Final Evaluation Report (in English)</u> Date: 3 April 2023 |
| | | | Total: 60 days | |

ANNEX F: CONSENT FORM FOR KIIs

Agreement to Participate in the Evaluation of the Steps Together Programme

(For use with UNICEF, MINOWC, SOEBGS, NGO SAGA Foundation and School Staff)

Who are we and why are we conducting this evaluation?

The evaluation is being conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is necessary for the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme, which has been implemented by UNICEF Suriname, in partnership with the Education Foundation of the Moravian Church schools in Suriname since 2018. I have been contracted by UNICEF to conduct the evaluation, but I am not an employee of UNICEF.

The purpose is to obtain an independent evaluation of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme which is being implemented in 56 schools across Suriname. The aim is to understand the programme's relevance, effectiveness and results achieved by the Programme. The evaluation is expected to support strategic learning and decision-making with regard to improving the Programme, and its eventual scale-up and sustainability.

What will be your involvement?

Your opinion and point of view are very important to us; thus, we invite you to participate in this interview and share your perspectives, opinions and experiences related to the Programme. This will allow me to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Programme.

You are just one of more than 150 people that will be interviewed as part of this evaluation. Everyone who participates in this evaluation is guaranteed confidentiality to protect their privacy. No names or identifiers will be included in any documents or reports. Only summary data for all respondents will be presented in the evaluation report. It is also important that you know that participating in this interview will cause **no risk** to you.

The interview will take about 1 hour, and your participation is voluntary. The evaluator will take detailed notes during the interview on their laptop; the interview **will not** be audio recorded. If you are participating in a small group interview with others from your institution/school, you are obliged to keep information confidential that is discussed during the interview.

How will the information collected be used?

While you will not benefit immediately from taking part in this interview, findings from this evaluation will be used to support efforts to strengthen the Programme in the future. The evaluator will **not provide** financial reimbursement **nor** gifts of any type for participation. Refusal to participate **will not impact** you in any way. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer or stop the interview at any point without penalty. You can contact UNICEF in Paramaribo if you have questions.

How do I give permission for my participation in this evaluation?

You can give your permission to participate by checking the 'Yes' box. If you do not give your permission to participate, check the 'No' box. You should also sign and date this form, and return it to evaluator before you begin the interview.

- ☐ Yes, I agree to participate in the interview for this evaluation
☐ No, I do not agree to participate in the interview for this evaluation

Signature _____ Date _____

If you have questions about this evaluation, you can contact Faisel Tjon-a-loi, UNICEF Education Specialist, at etjionaloi@unicef.org

ANNEX G: UNICEF AND NATIONAL PARTNER QUESTIONNAIRE

| UNICEF and National Partner Questionnaire (For use with UNICEF SCO, MINOWC, SOEBGS management and counsellors/project leaders, NGO SAGA Foundation Inc.) | |
|--|--|
| Introduction/Directions | |
| <p>Introduce yourself and explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. Review the informed consent form with each participant. Get each participant to sign the informed consent form prior to beginning the interview. Keep the signed copy of the informed consent form and leave them an unsigned copy.</p> <p>THE INTERVIEW SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 60 MINUTES</p> | |
| Background/Demographic Information | |
| Date | |
| Location (city/district) | |
| Institution/Agency/School | |
| Number of participants | |
| Number of males | |
| Number of females | |
| Names & Titles (of each participant) To be collected during the interview, then assigned an ID number, after which names will be removed and stored in a separate master list | |
| Have you obtained a copy of the signed consent form from each participant prior to beginning the interview? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes → Proceed to interview <input type="checkbox"/> No → Do not interview |
| Familiarity with the Programme | |
| 1 | What has been your involvement with the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme, that UNICEF has supported? |
| Relevance | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the relevance of the Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 2 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how relevant is the differentiate teaching approach to the national context and primary education curricula? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 3 | In what ways has the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme helped to strengthen teacher training? |
| 3a | I understand that the 112 teachers who were selected to act as peer coaches/trainers were a key part of the Programme. Can you tell me more about who those 112 coach teachers were selected? Capacitated? Trained other teachers? What were the strengthens and limitations of this approach? |
| 4 | In what ways has the Programme helped to build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom which would improve student learning and academic performance? |

| | |
|---|--|
| 5 | In what ways has more innovative teaching concepts, methods and tools, which were introduced by the Programme, been accepted by SOEBGS? Schools and teachers? Has there been any resistance? Can you tell me about that? How can this resistance be overcome? |
| 6 | In what ways are these more innovative teaching approaches and materials being used in SOEBGS primary schools and classrooms? How have they been relevant to teachers? And to students? |
| 7 | In what ways do you think the Programme has fallen short of its planned goal (i.e., to strengthen teacher training programmes and build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom which would improve student learning and academic performance)? What can be done to strengthen the Programme? |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the trainings for teachers provided by the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme.</i> | |
| 8 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how important has the teacher training developed as part of the Programme been to preparing teachers to use more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 9 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how relevant were the contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used in these teacher trainings? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 10 | What, if anything, can be done to improve the contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used in the teacher trainings to better prepare teachers to adopt differentiated teaching approaches? |
| 11 | In what ways, if any, have teachers applied these trainings in the classroom? Can you tell me more about that? |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the teaching and training materials that are part of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme.</i> | |
| 12 | What are the different types of teaching and learning materials that have been provided to teachers by the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme? How are these materials being used in schools and classrooms? |
| 13 | What are the benefits and strengths of these teaching and learning materials? |
| 14 | Are there any limitations or weaknesses with these teaching and learning materials? How can they be improved? |
| <u>Effectiveness</u> | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the effectiveness of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 15 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme been at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 16 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students in the classroom, and to support students who have difficulties learning a subject? Why did you give it a ____? |

| | |
|--|--|
| 17 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lessons plans? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 18 | In what ways, if any, more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials being used on a regular basis in the pilot schools and classrooms? Can you tell me more about that? |
| 19 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to use of visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, and to increase their understanding? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 20 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped to improve students' learning and progress? Can you tell me more about that? |
| 21 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped children who are slow learners? And to support children with varying language skills? |
| 22 | In what ways, if any, have children with disabilities benefited from more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? In what ways, have other marginalized children benefited from the more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? |
| 23 | Are there any other factors have had a positive influence on the ability of SOEBGS and its primary schools to implement the From Classrooms to Differentiated Education Programme? |
| 23a | <p>How can the Programme be strengthened? Is there a need for more effective:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Training materials</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Class environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and measurement mechanisms and tools</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Coordination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Management and governance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> |
| 24 | What challenges and barriers need to be addressed to strengthen the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme? To strengthen the use of more innovative teaching and learning approaches in primary schools? |
| Efficiency | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the Programme's efficiency. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 25 | To what extent has the Programme been delivered in an efficient and economical way? Were there any budget shortfalls? |

| | |
|---|--|
| 26 | Were there any challenges faced when it came to funding the Programme and its roll-out in pilot schools? What type of funding is needed to support the Programme? |
| 26a | <p>Is there a need more funding for:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher trainings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Training materials</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Class improvements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Coordination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Management and governance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> |
| 27 | Is there anything that can be done to make the Programme more cost effective and sustainable over time? |
| <u>Sustainability</u> | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the Programme's sustainability over time and its scale-up. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 28 | On a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent did the Programme contribute to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to deliver more innovative teaching approaches that are focused improving child learning and academic performance? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 29 | In what ways, if any, is the Programme owned or managed by SOEBGS schools? To what extent is the Programme externally driven? What impact will this have on sustainability? |
| 30 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how sustainable are the use of differentiated teaching approaches and in schools to meet the needs of students with different learning abilities? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 31 | What decisions and sections have been taken to ensure sustainability of the Programme? |
| 32 | What are the barriers or challenges for sustainability of the Programme? |
| 33 | What type of ongoing external inputs and support (e.g., monitoring, trainings, provision or materials) are needed for the Programme to be sustainable? |
| 34 | To what extent does the SOEBGS have sufficient financial and human resources, and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme? |
| 35 | What are the implications and requirements for transitioning the Programme to a completely SOEBGS-run/owned approach? |
| 36 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely is it that the contents of the Programme's approach and implementation modality will be scaled up and mainstreamed in the education system? Why did you give it a ____? |

ANNEX H: SCHOOL STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

| School Staff Questionnaire (For use with school principals/deputy principals and coaches (teachers) trained) | |
|--|---|
| Introduction/Directions | |
| <p>Introduce yourself and explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. Review the informed consent form with each participant. Get each participant to sign the informed consent form prior to beginning the interview. Keep the signed copy of the informed consent form and leave them an unsigned copy.</p> <p>THE INTERVIEW SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 60 MINUTES</p> | |
| Background/Demographic Information | |
| Date | |
| Location (city/district) | |
| Institution/Agency/School | |
| Number of participants | |
| Number of males | |
| Number of females | |
| Names & Titles (of each participant) To be collected during the interview, then assigned an ID number, after which names will be removed and stored in a separate master list | |
| Have you obtained a copy of the signed consent form from each participant prior to beginning the interview? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes → Proceed to interview <input type="checkbox"/> No → Do not interview |
| Familiarity with the Programme | |
| 1 | What has been your involvement with the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme, that UNICEF has supported? |
| Relevance | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the relevance of the Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 2 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how relevant is the differentiate teaching approach to the national context and primary education curricula? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 3 | In what ways has the Programme helped to strengthen teacher training? |
| 4 | In what ways has the Programme helped to build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom which would improve student learning and academic performance? Can you tell me more about the classroom consultations done by coaches? How often were class consultations conducted? What impact did they have? |
| 4a | Can you tell me more about the class consultations conducted by coaches? How often were teachers coached? What happened during the class consultations with coaches? |

| | |
|---|--|
| 5 | In what ways has more innovative teaching concepts, methods and tools, which were introduced by the Programme, been accepted by schools and teachers? Has there been any resistance? Can you tell me about that? How can this resistance be overcome? |
| 6 | In what ways are these more innovative teaching approaches and materials being used in SOEBGS primary schools and classrooms? How have they been relevant to teachers? And to students? |
| 7 | In what ways do you think the Programme has fallen short of its planned goal (i.e., to strengthen teacher training programmes and build teachers' knowledge, capacities and skills to apply more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom which would improve student learning and academic performance)? What can be done to strengthen the Programme? |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the trainings for teachers provided by the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme.</i> | |
| 8 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how important has the teacher training developed as part of the Programme been to preparing teachers to use more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 9 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how relevant were the contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used in these teacher trainings? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 10 | What, if anything, can be done to improve the contents, methods, materials and delivery mechanisms used in the teacher trainings to better prepare teachers to adopt differentiated teaching approaches? |
| 11 | In what ways, if any, have teachers applied these trainings in the classroom? Can you tell me more about that? |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the teaching and training materials that are part of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme.</i> | |
| 12 | What are the different types of teaching and learning materials that have been provided to teachers by the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme? How are these materials being used in schools and classrooms? |
| 13 | What are the benefits and strengths of these teaching and learning materials? |
| 14 | Are there any limitations or weaknesses with these teaching and learning materials? How can they be improved? |
| <u>Effectiveness</u> | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the effectiveness of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 15 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme been at preparing teachers to identify and assess the learning needs of students? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 16 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students in the classroom, and to support students who have difficulties learning a subject? Why did you give it a ____? |

| | |
|--|--|
| 17 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to take a more active role in developing their lessons plans? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 18 | In what ways, if any, more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials being used on a regular basis in the schools and classrooms? Can you tell me more about that? |
| 19 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the Programme been at preparing teachers to use of visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, and to increase their understanding? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 20 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped to improve students' learning and progress? Can you tell me more about that? |
| 21 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped children who are slow learners? And to support children with varying language skills? |
| 22 | In what ways, if any, have children with disabilities benefited from more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? In what ways, have other marginalized children benefited from the more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? |
| 23 | Are there any other factors have had a positive influence on the ability of primary schools and teachers to implement the From Classrooms to Differentiated Education Programme? |
| 23a | How can the Programme be strengthened? Is there a need for more effective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Training materials <input type="checkbox"/> Class environment <input type="checkbox"/> School environment <input type="checkbox"/> Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and measurement mechanisms and tools <input type="checkbox"/> Coordination <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation <input type="checkbox"/> Management and governance <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| 24 | What challenges and barriers need to be addressed to strengthen the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme? To strengthen the use of more innovative teaching and learning approaches in primary schools? |
| Efficiency | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the Programme's efficiency. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 26 | Were there any challenges faced when it came to funding the Programme and its roll-out in schools? What type of funding is needed to support the Programme? |
| 26a | Is there a need more funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher trainings <input type="checkbox"/> Training materials <input type="checkbox"/> Class improvements |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Coordination <input type="checkbox"/> Management and governance <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Sustainability | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the Programme's sustainability over time and its scale-up. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 28 | On a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent did the Programme contribute to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to deliver more innovative teaching approaches that are focused improving child learning and academic performance? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 30 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how sustainable are the use of differentiated teaching approaches and in schools to meet the needs of students with different learning abilities? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 31 | What decisions and sections have been taken to ensure sustainability of the Programme? |
| 32 | What are the barriers or challenges for sustainability of the Programme? |
| 33 | What type of ongoing external inputs and support (e.g., monitoring, trainings, provision or materials) are needed for the Programme to be sustainable? |
| 34 | To what extent does the SOEBGS have sufficient financial and human resources, and capacities to maintain the benefits produced by the Programme? |
| 36 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely is it that the contents of the Programme's approach and implementation modality will be scaled up and mainstreamed in the education system? Why did you give it a ____? |

ANNEX I: CONSENT FORM FOR FGDs

Agreement to Participate in the Evaluation of the Steps Together Programme

(For use with Teachers)

Who are we and why are we conducting this evaluation?

The evaluation is being conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is necessary for the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme, which has been implemented by UNICEF Suriname, in partnership with the Education Foundation of the Moravian Church schools in Suriname since 2018. I have been contracted by UNICEF to conduct the evaluation, but I am not an employee of UNICEF.

The purpose is to obtain an independent evaluation of the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme which is being implemented in 56 schools across Suriname. The aim is to understand the programme's relevance, effectiveness and results achieved by the Programme. The evaluation is expected to support strategic learning and decision-making with regard to improving the Programme, and its eventual scale-up and sustainability.

What will be your involvement?

Your opinion and point of view are very important to us; thus, we invite you to participate in this focus group and share your perspectives, opinions and experiences related to the Programme. This will allow me to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Programme.

You are just one of more than 150 people that will be interviewed as part of this evaluation. Everyone who participates in this evaluation is guaranteed confidentiality to protect their privacy. No names or identifiers will be included in any documents or reports. Only summary data for all respondents will be presented in the evaluation report. It is also important that you know that participating in this interview will cause **no risk** to you.

The focus group will take about 1 hour, and your participation is voluntary. The evaluator will take detailed notes during the focus group discussion on their laptop; the interview **will not** be audio recorded. If you agree to participate in the focus group with others from your institution/school, you are obliged to keep information confidential that is discussed during the focus group.

How will the information collected be used?

While you will not benefit immediately from taking part in this focus group, findings from this evaluation will be used to support efforts to strengthen the Programme in the future. The evaluator will **not provide** financial reimbursement **nor** gifts of any type for participation. Refusal to participate **will not impact** you in any way. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer or stop the interview at any point without penalty. You can contact UNICEF in Paramaribo if you have questions.

How do I give permission for my participation in this evaluation?

You can give your permission to participate by checking the 'Yes' box. If you do not give your permission to participate, check the 'No' box. You should also sign and date this form, and return it to evaluator before you begin the interview.

- ☐ Yes, I agree to participate in the focus group for this evaluation
- ☐ No, I do not agree to participate in the focus group for this evaluation

Signature _____ Date _____

If you have questions about this evaluation, you can contact Faisel Tjon-a-loi, UNICEF Education Specialist, at etjonaloi@unicef.org

ANNEX J: FGD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

| FGD Guide for Teachers (For use primary school teachers who benefited from peer-to-peer coaching) | |
|--|---|
| Introduction/Directions | |
| <p>Introduce yourself and explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. Review the informed consent form with each participant. Get each participant to sign the informed consent form prior to beginning the interview. Keep the signed copy of the informed consent form and leave them an unsigned copy.</p> <p>THE INTERVIEW SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 60 MINUTES</p> | |
| Background/Demographic Information | |
| Date | |
| Location (city/district) | |
| Institution/Agency/School | |
| Number of participants | |
| Number of males | |
| Number of females | |
| Names & Titles (of each participant) To be collected during the interview, then assigned an ID number, after which names will be removed and stored in a separate master list | |
| Have you obtained a copy of the signed consent form from each participant prior to beginning the interview? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes → Proceed to interview <input type="checkbox"/> No → Do not interview |
| Familiarity with the Programme | |
| 1 | Are you familiar with the From the Classrooms to Differentiated Education Programme that aims to develop teacher's abilities to use differentiated teaching styles and approaches to encourage children's learning in SOEBGS primary schools? You are probably familiar with this programme from the coaches in your school, these are the teachers who were trained to use differentiated teaching styles and approaches, and are here to coach you on how to do the same. |
| Relevance | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the relevance of the Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 2 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how relevant is the differentiated teaching approach to the primary education curricula? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 4 | In what ways have coaches helped to build teachers' knowledge and skills to use more innovative teaching approaches in the classroom to improve student learning and academic performance? |
| 5 | In what ways have these more innovative teaching approaches (introduced by the coaches) been accepted by teachers? |

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| 5a | Has there been any resistance? Can you tell me about the resistance? How can this resistance be overcome? |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the trainings for teachers provided by the UNICEF-support Differentiated Education Programme.</i> | |
| 8 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how important have coaches been at preparing teachers to use more innovative teaching approaches and materials in the classroom? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 12 | What are the different types of teaching and learning materials that coaches provided you with? How are you using these teaching and learning materials in the classroom? |
| 9a | On a scale of 1 to 10, how important have these teaching and learning materials been to improving student learning and academic performance? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 13 | What are the benefits and strengths of these teaching and learning materials? |
| 14 | What are the limitations or weaknesses of these teaching and learning materials? How can they be improved? |
| <u>Effectiveness</u> | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the effectiveness of the Differentiated Education Programme. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 15 | My understanding is that coaches have taught you to identify and assess the learning needs of students, is that correct? On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective has the guidance provided by coaches been at preparing you to identify and assess the learning needs of students? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 15a | Sometimes you have a child that is a slow learner or has difficulties learning. How do you know when you is a slow learner or having a difficult time learning? Do you talk to the child about it? Do you talk to the child's parents about it? |
| 15b | When you have a child that is a slow learning or having a difficult time learning, do you try to help the child learn the subject or to catch-up with their classmates? Can you tell me how you do that? How does that help the child? |
| 15c | Sometimes you have a child that is a fast learner. How do you know when you have a fast learner? Do you talk to the child about it? Do you talk to the child's parents about it? |
| 15d | When you have a child that is a fast learner, do you give the child additional teaching materials or more difficult activities to challenge them and keep them engaged? Can you tell me about that? How does that help the child? |
| 16 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective have coaches been at preparing teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to teach different types of students, such as to support students who are slow learner? Why did you give it a ____? |
| 19 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective have coaches been at preparing teachers to use visual teaching materials during lesson plans to engage and teach students in a more playful and interactive way, and to increase their understanding? Why did you give it a ____? |

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|---|--|
| 20 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped to improve students' learning and progress? Can you tell me more about that? |
| 21 | In what ways have more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials helped children who are slow learners? And to support children with varying language skills? |
| 22 | In what ways, if any, have children with disabilities benefited from more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? In what ways, have other marginalized children benefited from the more innovative teaching approaches and learning materials? |
| 24 | <p>What challenges and barriers need to be addressed to strengthen the use of more innovative teaching and learning approaches in the classroom?</p> <p>How can this be strengthened? Is there a need for more effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Training materials <input type="checkbox"/> Class environment <input type="checkbox"/> School environment <input type="checkbox"/> Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and measurement mechanisms and tools <input type="checkbox"/> Coordination <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation <input type="checkbox"/> Management and governance <p>Other</p> |
| Sustainability | |
| <i>I want to ask you about the Programme's sustainability over time and its scale-up. If you do not know the answer to a question, we can skip it.</i> | |
| 28 | On a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent did coaches contribute to increasing the capacities of SOEBGS primary schools to deliver more innovative teaching approaches that are focused improving child learning and academic performance? Why did you give it a ___? |
| 30 | On a scale of 1 to 10, how sustainable is the use of differentiated teaching approaches in schools to meet the needs of students with different learning abilities? Why did you give it a ___? |

ANNEX K: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Agreement for Child's Participation in the Evaluation of the Differentiated Education Programme

Parental Consent Form for Children's Participation

Who are we and why are we conducting this evaluation?

The evaluation is being conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is necessary for the From the Classroom to Differentiated Education Programme, which has been implemented by UNICEF Suriname, in partnership with the Education Foundation of the Moravian Church schools in Suriname since 2018. I have been contracted by UNICEF to conduct the evaluation, but I am not an employee of UNICEF.

The purpose is to obtain an independent evaluation of the Differentiated Education Programme which is being implemented in 56 schools across Suriname. The aim is to understand the programme's relevance, effectiveness and results achieved by the Programme. The evaluation is expected to support strategic learning and decision-making with regard to improving the Programme, and its eventual scale-up and sustainability.

What will be your child's involvement?

Your child's opinion and point of view is very important to us; therefore, we want to invite your child to participate in a focus group and share their perspectives and experiences with different teaching and learning activities in the classroom that aim to support child-centred learning. We will ask them questions about teaching and learning activities in their classroom. This will allow us to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Differentiated Education Programme.

Bear in mind, your child will be just one of more than 100 primary school students (grades 3-6) what we will be meeting with and talking to as part of this evaluation. Everyone who participates in this evaluation is guaranteed confidentiality to protect their privacy. No names or identifiers will be included in any documents or reports. Only summary data for all respondents will be presented in an evaluation report of the Differentiated Education Programme. It is also important that you know that participating in this focus group will cause no risk to you or your child.

We anticipate the focus group discussion will take about 45 minutes.

Is it mandatory for your child to participate in this focus group discussion?

It is up to you and your child to decide whether your child will participate in this focus group; their participation is voluntary. If you decide that you do not want your child to participate in this focus group, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving any reason why. Even if you agree that your child can participate in the focus group, we will also ask your child if they want to take part in the focus group, so that they can decide for themselves. It will be explained to your child that they can stop their participation at any time without reason, and they can answer only those questions that they want to answer.

About 18-24 primary school students (grades 3-6) from your child's school will be asked to participate in one of three focus groups that we have scheduled (6-10 students per focus group).

Who will have access to the data from this focus group discussion?

The focus group is designed to protect your child's identity. All information collected as part of the focus group will be held as confidential by the evaluator. Only the UNICEF-contracted evaluator will be allowed to examine focus group responses. All information from focus groups will be stored on a password protected computer, which is accessible only to the evaluator.

How will the anonymous answers given by your child in this focus group discussion be used?

The answers given by your child in the focus group will be used to evaluate how the Differentiated Education Programme was implemented in your child's school. We are interested in the general responses shared by all students who participate in focus groups. We plan to conduct a total of 24 focus groups in 8 SOEBGS primary schools in Suriname. Your child is one of more than 100 primary school students (grades 3-6) who have been asked to participate in a focus group.

HOW DO I GIVE PERMISSION FOR MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVALUATION?

You give permission for your child to participate by checking the 'Yes' box and signing the form. If you do not give your permission for your child to participate, check the 'No' box. You should fill out the below information and sign and return this form to the evaluator before your child participates in the focus group (on the day of the focus group).

☐ **Yes, I agree to have my child participate in the focus group for this evaluation**

☐ **No, I do not agree for my child to participate in the focus group for this evaluation**

Child Name (please print) _____ Age _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

If you have questions about this evaluation, you can contact Faisel Tjon-a-loi, UNICEF Education Specialist, at etjonaloi@unicef.org

ANNEX L: FGD GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

| FGD Guide for Students | |
|---|---|
| Introduction/Directions | |
| <p>Have you obtained a copy of the signed parental consent form for each child prior to beginning the focus group?</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes → Proceed to obtain verbal assent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No → Do not obtain verbal assent, take a break and have the child leave the group</p> |
| <p>Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. Let the children know that they are only one of a large number of children who are being interviewed in 8 primary schools in Suriname.</p> <p>Read the following script before starting each interview:</p> <p>Your participation in this discussion is voluntary which means that you can choose not to participate if you do not want. It also means that if you choose to participate that you can skip questions or end your participation at any time. It is also important to understand that participation in this discussion is not a requirement of the school. If you choose not to participate in this discussion or choose to end your participation it will in no way impact your grades in school.</p> <p>There are no right or wrong answers, and <u>no one</u> at the school will know how you answered any of the questions. I will not share this information, but I also ask that you do not share the answers with persons outside of this group.</p> <p><u>No names</u> will be used during the report writing process and <u>no</u> information that you provide will be attached to your name. Each of you will be assigned a number to guarantee your confidentiality.</p> <p>I will take detailed notes on my computer during our discussions.</p> <p>Do I have your permission to continue with the discussion?</p> <p>THE DISCUSSION TAKE NO MORE THAN 45 MINUTES. Make sure to monitor your time.</p> | |
| <p>Obtain verbal consent from each child as to their willingness to participate in the focus group</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes → Proceed with FGD</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No → Take a break and have the child leave the group</p> |
| Background/Demographic Information | |
| Date | |
| Location (city) | |
| Type of FGD | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Girls</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Boys</p> |
| Grade (check all that apply) | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade 6</p> |
| Number of participants | |
| Number of males | |
| Number of females | |

Everyone is encouraged to participate. You may be asked to share what you think or I may ask for comments from those who haven't spoken. It is always OK to "pass" when you are asked to share a comment.

Familiarity with and Relevance of the Programme

Let's get started. I want to ask you some questions about the Steps Together Programme.

I know that in your classroom, your teacher has used different activities and lessons to teach you the subject matter. I also know that student learn at different paces, some student learn very fast and other students need a bit more time to learn and understand the subject, and that is okay. For instance, some students are good at math, but other students have a difficult time learning math and need more time and practice. Also, some students are good at reading, but other students have a difficult time reading and need more time and practice. I want to hear about the different types of activities and lessons learned in the classroom that have helped you to learn subjects, such as reading, writing, math and more.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | What are some of the activities or lessons that you have done in the classroom with your teachers that have enjoyed and they have helped you to learn? It could be his year or last year. |
| 2 | What did you like about those activities or lessons? Are they commonly used or rare? |
| 3 | Sometimes we are slow to learn a subject or we are having a hard time learning. When you are slow to learn a subject or are having a hard time learning, does your teacher know this? How do they know this? Do teachers talk with you to make sure that you learning okay? Has your teacher been able to understand why you are having a hard time learning? Were they kind about it and willing to help you? |
| 4 | When you are slow to learn a subject or have a hard time learning, what did your teacher do to try to help you learn the subject and to catch up with your classmates? Can you tell me about that. Did that help you? |
| 5 | Sometimes we are fast to learn a subject, maybe you are a good reader or good at math, or good at art. When you are learning fast and find classroom activities and lessons to be easy, does your teacher know this? How do they know this? Do they talk to you about it? Were they kind about it? |
| 6 | When you are learning fast and find classroom activities and lessons to be easy, does your teacher give you additional teaching materials or activities to help you to keep learning faster? Can you tell me about that. Did that help you to keep learning fast, without getting bored? |
| 7 | Whether you are a slow learner or a fast learner, what type of activities and lessons help you learn in the classroom? |
| 8 | Are there any classroom activities and lessons that do not help you learn? Maybe they are boring? What would you change in the classroom to make learning more fun? |
| 9 | Do you have any thoughts on how to improve classroom activities or lessons to help you learn better? Do you want the teacher to provide more explanation? Do you want more activities that you can do with your classmates, so you can learn together? Do you want more activities to do with your hands? |

Wrap-up and Closure

I want to thank you for participating in this discussion today. I really appreciate you taking the time to come and talk with me and share your views and opinions. This information is very useful to our evaluation. It is important to UNICEF to hear the views of children. Please let me know if you have any questions.