Introduction

The outcomes of formal and informal meetings with government and development partners such as technical meetings between UNICEF Programme Officers and implementing partners; mid and end of year and mid-cycle reviews; the wide cross section of collaboration for the development of UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework; thematic group meetings with development partners; review meetings for various reports to UN and other International bodies eg. MDGs; Global Partnership for Education; the partnership to develop the Education Strategy Plan 2014 – 2018 and the continuous training for sub national mangers in Education in MoRES in the Ministry of Education have contributed to the development of the Strategic Note. These meetings and continuous interactions provided fora for UNICEF staff to discuss the content of the strategy note with key partners. This greatly influenced the content and information contained in this note.

Despite progress in primary and secondary education, Guyana and Suriname continue to struggle in their efforts to ensure equitable access to a continuum of quality learning from early childhood through primary, secondary and post-secondary levels. Constraints across all levels include inadequate legislative and policy frameworks especially but not exclusively, in ECD and weak inter-sectoral governance and coordination, inefficient resource allocation and inadequate collection and use of data to support relevant decision-making and policy development.

This programme outcome area will contribute to the realization of the rights of children and adolescents in Guyana and Suriname, especially the most disadvantaged, with the focus on supporting the countries in developing systems to achieved SDG’s commitments toward quality early childhood development and relevant quality basic education through to secondary education. The Programme is cross cutting in nature and utilizes a life cycle approach beginning with quality maternal child health and readiness interventions. It progresses to basic education with emphasis on smooth transitioning and successful completion in primary and secondary education in safe and protective environments. Cross cutting themes such as gender; resilience to climate change; emerging and re-emerging diseases; disabilities and child protection issues will be integral to the programme. The aims of this programme are to reduce disparities; eliminate inequities and enhance inclusiveness including identifying and tracking vulnerabilities to children’s wellbeing and participation.

As such, the programme outcome “improved education and developmental outcomes and equitable and inclusive learning environments across the life cycle for the most disadvantaged boys , girls and adolescents including in emergencies by 2021”, consists of three programme components: (1) Equitable and inclusive early childhood services especially for the most vulnerable girls and boys; (2) Promotion of positive learning and inclusive environment for all children and adolescents; (3) Strengthening institutional for planning, monitoring including disaster risk reduction.
The main government partners are: **Guyana**: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Protection, and Ministry of Public Health; Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs and the Ministry of Communities. In Guyana the expertise and financial capacity of the other international organizations will contribute to supporting the country to achieve results in this area. Organizations like UNESCO, PAHO (with a programme on maternal child health), IADB (with an up-coming loan on maternal child health); the World Bank (supporting quality in primary education). In **Suriname**: the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Presidential Taskforce are the implementing partners. Other partners are the NGOs like The Backlot, Projecta, Fibos. In Suriname IADB will provide a significant loan on education.

**Priority Areas and Issues**

**(1) Early Childhood Development**

With advances in maternal and child health, Guyana and Suriname still have a long way to ensuring equitable and quality ECD access to a continuum of child health and development interventions in various culturally appropriate learning spaces. Despite a decline of 17% since 2000, **Guyana** is still one of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with higher estimates of child mortality (39 per thousand live births) with much higher levels in the Amazon (64). In **Suriname**, under-five mortality rate decreased from 34 deaths per thousand live births in 2000 to 21 in 2015. In both countries around 60 per cent of these deaths occur in the first month of life. Chronic malnutrition remains a barrier to child development with 12 per cent of children under the age of five suffering from stunting in Guyana and 9 per cent in Suriname, but with higher levels in the Amazon region (20 and 17 per cent respectively). Exclusive breastfeeding the first six months after birth is only 23 per cent in Guyana and 3 per cent in Suriname. In addition overweight is an increasing concern in both countries with Guyana having 5 per cent of overweight children under five and Suriname 4 per cent.

In **Guyana** 86 per cent of children of 3 and 4 years old are considered to be developmentally on track, while Suriname stands at 71 per cent, mostly due to low performance on the literacy-numeracy domain. Nursery education programme attendance is 61 per cent in **Guyana** and 85 per cent in **Suriname** but this is much lower for children living in the hinterland (below 50 per cent in both countries). In terms of early stimulation, Guyana’s has a well-structured national nursery education programme for children 3.6 yrs. to 5.9 years. Children aged 4-5 are included in the primary schools education at grade 1-2 that ensures over 90 per cent of pre-primary attendance in this age group. In both countries few services exist for early stimulation for the birth to age 3 (including age 3 in Suriname). Many of these services – more than 80% are privately operated with very little provisions offered to the indigenous children; children living in deep rural and riverine areas and for the children with disabilities and learning challenges. These groups of children are among the poor populations in both countries (10 per cent of

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2. All statistics on education and health are drawn from Guyana MICS 2014 and Suriname MICS 2010, apart from those with the sources specified.
population in Guyana and 15 per cent population in Suriname live in the Amazon hinterland). Both countries have very limited capacity for early detection of disabilities, which has long lasting consequences for children and their families.

The overall goal of the ECD component of the programme is to support national frameworks, policies and standards for ECD including maternal and child health to increase access to high quality, equitable, inclusive and holistic early childhood development, learning and care environments.

(2) Positive learning and inclusive education

Disparities and exclusion in education persist with a downward spiral at the secondary level, primary school attendance ratio are 97 per cent in Guyana and 95 per cent in Suriname, however in the hinterland it is only 90 per cent. Guyana made progress in secondary school attendance, currently with 85 per cent, while Suriname with 59 per cent. Guyana and Suriname struggle to ensure equitable access to a continuum of quality learning environments at all levels beginning at early childhood and throughout adolescents. In both countries notable disparities exist with secondary school attendance between urban/coastal areas and the hinterland.

In Suriname, about 14-17% of students dropped out annually during the period 2008-2012\(^4\) while the primary school completion rate for boys is 39.1% and for girls 53%.\(^5\) The attendance rates in junior secondary education for boys and girls aged 12 and 13 are below the overall averages, because many of them are still in primary school. In addition, around 46,200 overaged children who are in primary or junior secondary schools are at risk of dropping out.\(^6\) In Guyana, about 16% of the projected age appropriate population are out of pre-primary with about 10% or more primary school aged children out of the system. The exclusion worsens at the secondary level between ages 12 and 14 with a percentage of between 14% or more.

In both countries, social and behavioural issues, violence and abuse of all sorts in and around schools and communities are rising. Some children fall into the trap of juvenile delinquency and are further threatened by the limited considerations to provide relevant curricula for continued learning including for children in contact with the law. High poverty levels and the attractiveness of financial gains from especially the extractive industries lure boys away from school and cause young girls to fall prey to the guile of unscrupulous employers and other adults and subjected to the horrors of tracking in persons. Currently teen pregnancy and suicide rates are high. Also, the growing challenges of climate change and ineffective DRR strategies pose burdens on both countries with greater severity imposed on the indigenous children and those with disabilities.

In response to the issues above, this programme component in Positive learning and inclusive education will take a holistic approach for effective basic education through to secondary level. The focus will be on strengthening organizational capacity to deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services specifically to emphasize the following:

- **Effective planning, coordination, data management** for identifying and responding appropriately to inequities at both national level and sub regions and to be able to track progress. The aim is to enhance the sub national teams to create, understand and utilise data

\(^4\)The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (MINOWC) statistics
\(^5\)MICS 2010 and UNESCO (2013)
in the planning and implementation processes; to engage in inter-sectoral planning for the maximization of resources

- **Inclusive education** for all children irrespective of their type of vulnerability. The aim is to promote Child Friendly School approach and cater to the supply and demand inherent in mainstreaming children with any type of special needs and particularly those with disabilities in an enabling environment for employability and lifelong learning.

- **Transitioning from home school: from primary to lower education or alternative education programmes.**

- **Guidance and counselling**

- **Health, Nutrition and Family Life Education** including safe, protective home, school, community environments and life skills education; prevention of teen pregnancy; sexual and reproductive health services for adolescent boys and girls; nutrition in pregnancy; prevention of STIs and HIV;

- **Parenting** throughout the life cycle.

With these thematic areas, it is hoped that this type of intervention will decrease drop-out rates and engender active participation, successful completion and prepare children with good education and skills to further develop their great potentials.

**UNICEF’s Comparative Advantage**

UNICEF’s rights based and equity agenda and its emphasis on monitoring for results across all programmatic areas offer a comparative advantage above other agencies. Its ability to structure monitoring guidance against global and regional standards will be critical in helping the governments to track progress against agreed global commitments. For example, in ECD in Guyana, UNICEF’s emphasis on correct interpretation and accurate tracking of developmental milestones against early leaning development standards globally and across sectors – health, education and child protection will identify bottlenecks, at-risk and successes. It will highlight inequities and likely solutions. It will help to identify strategic combination of interventions at the right time. The cross cutting nature of the Country Programme allows for varied and integrated evidence generation and the use of better administrative data to inform the formation/revision of policy and contribute to the eradication of child poverty.

UNICEF track record as a trusted and ‘on the ground’ partner by the Governments of both Guyana and Suriname and its excellent partnerships with development partners at international, national and sub-national levels including NGOs and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) add to its comparative advantage. For example, UNICEF’s technical support in child friendly schooling earned a sustained partnership with the World Bank and IADB, the two Agencies which offer formal training of teachers and establishment/refurbishment of schools respectively to the Government while UNICEF has much scope to conduct pilots, strengthening capacity, and influence policy. UNICEF in both countries acts as an important convener of partners. It will keep doing so as cross-sectoral cooperation in both ECD and education sectors is still a considerable bottleneck which should be jointly analysed and addressed.

**Theory of Change**

Education is a human right and a wise investment, providing economic, health and societal benefits to the country, its communities and citizens. Denying children the right to quality education beginning at early childhood, has far reaching impacts on the rights and opportunities of future generations to survive, thrive and fulfil their potential.

The theory of change (ToC) for Life Long Learning in UNICEF Guyana and Suriname starts at the impact level, with the understanding that if every child’s right - especially the most disadvantaged -, to quality
education in protective environments is realized then, all boys and girls will access learning suited to their abilities, circumstances and cultural practices, participate fully in learning and increase their performance levels. The ToC therefore sets out to create the environment for developing and implementing a systematic approach to address the major bottlenecks identified in the system namely ineffective implementation of existing policies/frameworks; weak inter-sectoral governance and coordination and quality assurance in all learning and development settings; uneven budgetary allocations across the education and health continuum; inequity in access and quality of quality services; social cultural practices/ beliefs and norms that conspire against good parenting and child rearing practices.

**Outcome:** Improved education and developmental outcomes and equitable and inclusive learning environments across the life cycle for the most disadvantaged boys, girls and adolescents by 2021 including in emergencies.

To accomplish this, UNICEF will focus on delivering results in three programme output areas:

- Equitable and inclusive early childhood services especially for the most vulnerable girls and boys;
- Promotion of positive learning and inclusive environment for all children and adolescents;
- Strengthening institutional for planning, monitoring including disaster risk reduction.

Achieving these outputs will be critical steps towards achieving the outcome.

The theory of change is based on the belief that since basic structures are in place and if development and learning strategies are designed to utilise as far as possible the best education and health practices of the Guyana and Suriname Governments so as to build on what exists, then ownership and sustainability can be guaranteed.

If new strategies are implemented systematically across the life cycle beginning with early childhood, then the desired results are highly possible over a five year period. To contribute to this Outcome, the focus will be on delivering results in three programme output areas and strengthening inter sectoral cooperation.

**Assumptions, risks and mitigation measures**

UNICEF will focus on three outputs which will contributing to the overall outcome. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are series of assumptions and risks in achieving the outcome, largely go beyond UNICEF’s control.

The main assumptions behind the three outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- Evidence based approaches make a difference in the realization of children’s rights. Good succession plans adopted. It is here assumed that the policy proposals will be based on strong evidence and fully implemented.
  - Key risks: Slow government bureaucracy impedes implementation. Thematic policies not implemented. Weak sector strategies impede successful implementation. Lack of data on equity/unwillingness to share by government.
  - Key mitigation measures: Support to improve institutional capacity on programme management. Support to improve the education administrative data collection system.
Generate evidence for improvement of education effectiveness and advocate to maintain the existing commitments and priorities at the appropriate time. Strengthen inter-sectoral cooperation.

- Budgets of all relevant ECD Ministries rationalized to increase support for ECD and basic education. The availability of adequate finance and in a timely manner, to support each country’s contributions to the achievement of these result, is important. This should be thought out and prioritised from the start. Governments should be supported to make the necessary and sufficient allocations and to play a leading role in the mobilisation of resources if necessary.
  - Key risks: Economic crisis may reduce the countries’ capacity in financial investment in children that limits the scope for resource mobilization.
  - Key mitigation measures: Continue advocate to the governments on the importance of investing in children. Support the government to improve investment effectiveness.

- Consensus on importance of partnership continues. In the proposed strategies it is assumed that effective local coordination can harmonize partner support to governments and that information systems across Ministries are established, improved and will contribute to decision making
  - Key risks: Independent education system and lack of interests in cross-sectoral partnership. Reluctance to share data; limited systems and capacity for costing and budgeting and low demand for/use of disaggregated data for decision making
  - Key mitigation measures: Advocate and strengthen the capacity of education ministries on developing integrated education development strategies and support Health in All Policy (Suriname) and other inter-sectoral initiatives.

The Country Office will build on the successes and lessons learned over the recent cycle namely: (1) the convergence approach resulted in the maximization of human and financial resources across programmes namely health, education and child protection; effective inter-sectoral planning and implementation. In both cases, the pilot programmes addressed inclusivity and equity issues for secondary school children in dormitory schools in the hinterland of Guyana and ECD in Maternal health targeting the indigenous populations. (2) Systematic coaching and monitoring interventions for sub regional management levels with linkages to national plans and monitoring systems. Furthermore, the development of SitANs in both countries in 2016 together with UN General Comments on the CRC and CEDAW will be advantageous used to match the vibrancy, forward thinking and political will of the newly installed Governments in Guyana and Suriname. These examples, together with Government’s embrace of and trust in UNICEF’s technical support are the pillars for numerous opportunities to gain results for children in Guyana and Suriname.

**Output 1 - Early Childhood Development:** Strengthened capacity and frameworks for increased access to quality, equitable and holistic early childhood development for girls and boys (ages 0-8) and their families by 2021, including in emergencies

**Rational for Focusing on this output**

The best start for children begins with universal access to quality ECD environments. However, multiple bottlenecks have caused the gaps of development in the early childhood period. The data in both countries are alarming, and a good ECD system can prevent and limit further protection, education and health challenges. Hence this is considered a key inter-sectoral focus of this programme.
Access to adequate services. Insufficient ECD facilities and services - especially for the 0 to 3 age group - with limited human resources, inadequate knowledge and capacity to provide quality ECD services, and lack of intersectorial cooperation are some key bottlenecks. In the two countries, there is an insufficient public provision of ECD, and majority of nursery schools and day care centres are privately run. Additionally, there is less provisioning for the 0-2 year age group as opposed to the pre-school years. Schools and early childhood care and educational environments are not fully inclusive, accessible and welcoming for all, especially for children with disabilities, children with actual or perceived different sexual orientation, those with learning challenges including language barriers, those from Amazon indigenous and maroon group with limited ECD services available in their nearby communities. Main challenges pertain the areas of lacking of comprehensive regulatory and supervisory systems for ECD and pre-schooling services, quality of ECD and pre-schooling personnel training (including inclusive and child-centered pedagogical content). Additionally personnel for ECD and pre-schooling is scarce and inadequately prepared. There is also a need to focus on systematic preparation and participation of families, quality and accessibility of ECD and pre-schooling infrastructure, and, extent ensuring adequate transitions from home to Early learning and School readiness services and to primary school, among others. With the recent outbreak of Zika virus, it has been further identified that lack of capacity of service providers in early detection of children with disabilities, proper growth monitoring and social and psychological support to those children and families with special needs are critically needed.

Social-cultural practices and believes/social norms. Lack of knowledge, inadequate attitude and inappropriate practices of caregivers, communities and societies on early childhood care create gaps in demanding the ECD service. Some bottlenecks include limited understanding of the importance of quality ECD across sectors and among caregivers; improper parenting knowledges, skills and practices that pay little attention to good nutritional, early stimulation and hygiene practices and which encourage and condone punitive disciplinary practices, for instance, in Guyana, 69.7 per cent of children age 1 – 14 years experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment⁷.

Enabling environment which links to inter-sectoral coordination of and budget allocation to ECD programmes that are spread across different ministries is not in place. There are limited data and analysis on public financing for ECD and the situation of ECD in particular for children with disabilities and special needs. Data is neither analysed nor used to support policy and programme development. These bottlenecks combine to stifle access to and demand for quality ECD programming in both countries.

In response to these challenges, the ECD programme, will support the development of integrated ECD policies and strategies for enhancing access to quality culturally appropriate services. It will enhance governments’ capacities to give the birth to three age group (with emphasis on the first 1,000 days of life), the best start in life and the right start to school. Emphasis on ECD inter-sectoral coordination, management of data, research and analysis, parent education will support the scaling up of systematic ECD approaches and effectively monitor the developmental progress of boys and girls.

Key strategies and areas of work in this output

UNICEF Guyana has developed good experience in ECD through involving most relevant sectors in the current programme cycle and therefore in Guyana ,UNICEF will contribute to strengthen countries’

⁷ Ibid
capacity in enhancing access to early childhood development services. Emphasis will be placed in complementing and scaling-up existing local models. The programme will also ensure a focus on early detection of disabilities, and provide families with necessary services and support.

Suriname is at a nascent stage of ECD programming but, with the IaDB’s support, the Suriname Office will focus on integrated coordination mechanism in the country. Emphasis will be placed in complementing and scaling-up existing local models and learn from each other through South-South Cooperation. In both countries, the programme will maximise on advocacy, technical support to government, other partners involved in developing integrated ECD policies and standards, and leveraging of resources. UNICEF will adopt an evidence-based programming by demonstrating models’ effectiveness and advocating for inclusion. In Guyana, the focus will be to build capacity to establish and apply quality standards consistent with child-centred and child-friendly education for ECD, provide ECD leaders to effectively lead to plan and systematically monitor national and subnational programmes, and provide knowledge information to caregivers and service providers to improve knowledge, attitude and behaviours on ECD through development of ECD Communication for Development strategy.

Key areas of work in this output area will include:

- In both countries, advocate and support the development of integrated ECD policies and standard.
- In both countries, develop partnership with development partners and private sectors on Cooperative Social Responsibilities in ECD areas and resource mobilization
- In Suriname, focus on child survival matters
- In Guyana, provide technical support to build institutional capacity building for ECD on coordination, planning, implementation, registration, licencing, monitoring and evaluation/reporting
- Provide technical support and global expertise on capacity building for quality health and stimulation, ELDS and developmental milestones
- In Guyana, support community based pilot initiatives based on existing experience and advocate for scale up. Support to increase public sensitivity and knowledge, attitude and behaviour change for caregivers and service providers.

**Output 2 – Positive learning and inclusive education:** Strengthened national capacities to deliver, equitable, quality and relevant primary and secondary education, including in emergencies, for all children and adolescent with specific focus on transitioning strategies and protective environments

**Rational for Focusing on this output**

Multiple bottlenecks account for the inequity and lack of quality in primary and secondary education: outdated curriculum; limited programmes for inclusive education; unqualified teachers especially at the secondary level; and language barriers to the indigenous and Maroon’s children who must adapt to learning in the national languages.

**Access to adequate services.** The education systems in Guyana and Suriname are challenged to assure quality learning experiences facilitated by strong leaderships and well-trained caregivers and teachers who utilize child-centred teaching methods and foster strong child and parental involvement. The rigid examination systems gives little room to heuristic learning, talent development and, specifically, does
not effectively address the gender differentials. A mis-match of curricula to children’s interests and aptitudes; gaps in services and programmes for children with disabilities and appropriate spaces for adolescents’ informal learning and interaction; rugged terrain and high transportation costs in Guyana and difficulties in reaching secondary schools in Suriname severely impact attendance, active participation and successful completion especially among the most disadvantaged children. In Guyana, inflexible term schedules offer no opportunity to children who miss large portions of learning due to harvesting activities on family farms. Indigenous children in the hinterland who are away from school due to weeks of flooding must fit into schedules for end of term and national assessments conducted at Grades 4, 6 and 9. These assessments, conducted in English or Dutch only, put the indigenous children at the greatest disadvantage when their mother tongue is not considered and where the teachers are un- or underqualified and do not know the mother tongue. This gap in responding to cultural and language diversity is also evident in Suriname where the mother tongue is different from the language of instruction.

Pupils’ support units whose mandate dictate that they cater to the needs of students with learning and social and behavioural challenges are constrained by limited competencies to cope with the new social issues and trauma children face during the tumultuous adolescent phase. This is compounded by insufficient parental guidance, poor coping skills and other protective factors combined. Some children fall into the trap of juvenile delinquency and are further threatened by the limited considerations to provide relevant curricula for continued learning including for children in contact with the law.

Sectoral and bottleneck analyses have shown that ineffective implementation of existing and lack of thematic policies impede children’s participation and progress. The children most affected by such deficiencies are the pregnant girls and teen mothers, children affected by alcohol and substance abuse, behaviour management and natural disasters who, often times, have limited or no opportunity to continue schooling.

Under-performance of the school system in the two countries is partially attributed to poor quality of leadership among school and education managers. There are no systems in place for training in school leadership; no set of standards for education leaders and mangers for appraisal; and, no comprehensive strategy for determining and improving quality/effective school leaders through continuous professional development programmes. Equally, there does not seem to be clear guidelines for the induction and appointment of teachers and education leaders at various levels.

Parents-Teachers’ Associations are not effective and in most cases, meetings are attended by women. The absence of men is a major contributor to the under-performance of boys.

**Social-cultural practices and believes/social norms.** High poverty levels and the attractiveness of financial gains from especially the extractive industries lure boys away from school and cause young girls to fall prey to the guile of unscrupulous employers and other adults and subjected to the horrors of trafficking in persons. Currently teen pregnancy and suicide rates are high. Children with disabilities normally are hidden at home and discriminated. Parents are lack of knowledge and practical measures to take their education responsibilities and address children with learning difficulties and behaviour problems and in Suriname, those children and adolescents are intended to be sent to institutional care.

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8 Adapted from Guyana and Suriname SitAn 2016
Key strategies and areas of work in this output

To support access to inclusive quality primary and secondary education, the programme will address data gaps and identify invisible and excluded children. It will promote access and inter-cultural education in conformity with cultural beliefs and traditions; bilingual education for children belonging to the indigenous and maroon communities, support actual inclusion of children with disabilities; and strengthen capacities of teachers and other professionals on inclusive and inter-cultural education, social cohesion and equity; and reduction of drop-outs. UNICEF will also foster a dialogue among key stakeholders on the quality of education with a particular focus on assessment of learning outcomes and equity gaps and way for improvement.

The programme will provide guidelines and tools and assist in implementing standards and holistic support strategies to achieve children and adolescents’ education, learning and development outcomes. Institutional capacity building on application of child- and adolescents-centred pedagogy in schools. Capacity building for key stakeholders to support families and primary caregivers in strengthening their parenting competencies in providing nurturing responsive learning environments will be undertaken. Capacity building in Education in emergencies and DRR will be implemented to ensure effective response and continuation of education and early childhood services during emergencies. Advocacy and policy dialogue at different levels will be strengthened to secure commitment to improve inter-sectoral policies, coordinating mechanisms and sustainable financing for learning and development programmes. Advocacy and C4D strategies to address key barriers bottlenecks, specifically those relating to the social and cultural norms, including on corporal punishment and gender-related discrimination towards education will be a key strategy. Finally, specific attention will be given to gender issues in order to respond to the widening achievement difference between boys and girls and the regional trend that boys are at higher risk of dropping out of the basic education cycle.

Key areas of work in this output area will include:
Both countries, will:

- Support the Institutionalisation of child Friendly Schools Framework and development/enforcement of national Child Friendly School standards.
- Develop and implement parenting education and strengthening the support systems
- Support children in transitioning across grades, levels and types of schools through overcoming learning barriers and Life Skills Education/ HFLE
- Guyana will support systems strengthening and national programming to address equity/disparities for all children in the school system
- In Guyana, will develop institutional capacity for holistic comprehensive programme for children with disabilities. Curriculum development/adaptation for the deaf and the blind and the establishment and application quality standards consistent with child centered and child adolescent friendly education
- In Guyana, support to well-functioning learning national assessments and responsive mechanisms at primary and secondary levels

**Output 3 - Education Systems Planning:** Increased institutional capacity for inclusive quality education through improved planning, monitoring and DRR efforts

**Rational for Focusing on this output**
The insufficient institutional capacity on development of education sectoral policies, plans, budget and monitoring and evaluation system is one of the key bottlenecks for a sustainable inclusive education system in both Guyana and Suriname.

Enabling environment. The legislation and policy bottlenecks are multifaceted. First, in both countries, the standards and regulations are slow to be fully enacted. The Suriname’s new Education law was drafted over 5 years ago but still yet to be approved. Lack of or failure to gazette standards and regulations impede quality assurance. Secondly, when enacted, there is ineffective implementation of some of these policies, sometimes due to a lack financial resources or lack of political will. Although education budget shares great proportion in the government annual budget plan, most of the funds go for recurrent cost and very few for implementation of policy programmes. Uneven budgetary allocations across the education and health continuum, with personnel costs frequently higher than learning/pedagogical /stimulation related inputs negatively impact learning outputs. This fact contributes to the direct and hidden education costs for parents such as transportation, none core subject books. Thirdly, most Education Acts are explicit in their recognition of corporal punishment – they legalize and facilitate it. In Guyana, the Education Act legalizes and facilitates corporal punishment, giving the power to the head teacher only, to administer same though frequently it is administered by classrooms teachers in cases that may not warrant it or are not specified in Education Act. Finally, there is lack of specific sectoral thematic policies, e.g. bilingual education, re-entry policy for ex-pregnant teens, alcohol and substance abuse, and children in conflict with laws, Disaster and Risk Reduction, etc. Equity in access and quality are compromised by inadequate collection and use of data to support decision making; lack of information of services available and their importance to children’s learning and development and facilities that are not fully inclusive and welcoming for all especially for children with disabilities and those with learning challenges.

Key strategies and areas of work in this output

UNICEF will promote and support the capacity building on generation of knowledge grounded in existing evidence and best practices. This will aim at supporting the design and implementation of appropriate lifelong learning policies and implementation strategies; analysis and mapping of policies, services and monitoring frameworks (including gaps) in lifelong learning and transitioning; evaluate the policy implementation of delivery of existing services for inclusion and equity in line with the best practices and where applicable, propose alternative models, and assess the impact of relevant and sustained budget allocation towards implementation of appropriate lifelong learning and developmental policies and strategies. Where applicable, documenting modelling for evidence / Innovation: a). of programmes that enhance gender participation and learning achievement across the life cycle; b). small-scale community based interventions considering capacity and sustainable funding that could be replicable nationally.

UNICEF will support the capacity building of education counterparts to apply quality standards consistent with child-centred and child- friendly education across the education continuum and beginning in early learning and development; for education and health leaders to effectively lead, plan and systematically monitor national and subnational programmes. Institutional capacity building on application of child- and adolescents-centred pedagogy in schools and school welfare programmes, and education in emergencies and DRR to ensure effective response and continuation of education and early childhood services during emergencies. Capacity building on education planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation will be supported.
UNICEF will support advocacy and policy dialogue at different levels to secure commitment to improve inter-sectoral policies, coordinating mechanisms and sustainable financing for learning and development programmes.

The component will have a strong emphasis on integrating climate change in education, through advocacy with policy makers, integration into existing curricula and education programme, particularly in secondary education, development capacity of teaching staff and staff of organizations involved in formulation and implementation of non-formal education programmes. This will strengthen children and adolescents’ resilience and knowledge to climate change, and their potential impact on reducing climate change. This will aim also at developing pupils’ capacity to be agents for change, including having solid skills to obtain green jobs, and creating innovative ways to reduce climate change.

Key areas of work in this output area will include:
Both countries, will:
• a) provide technical support in building capacity and conducting education research /evaluations to generate evidence for policy discussion and programme planning.
  b) Provide technical support to develop policy and strategy development including thematic education policies on ECD, inclusive education and DRR in education, etc
• Guyana will
  a) Support to establish / strengthen ECD monitoring and tracking systems across sectors – ELDS and developmental milestones
  b) Develop education policy/sector plan that includes, multilingual education to allow children to learn in mother tongue in early years – policy environment, alignment, resource allocation community engagement

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for education outputs

In order to achieve the education programme results, it is assumed that effective local coordination adequately harmonizes partner support to governments. Effective school-community partnerships for monitoring education system should be in place, and a good EMIS systems are established and improved, possibly with the support of other development partners, such as WB and IaDB.

The key risks may include: reluctance to share unfavourable data that might create negative trends, limited systems and capacity for costing and budgeting and low or lack of demand for and use of data for decision making.

In mitigation of the risks, UNICEF will work closely with the education ministries and other development partners to ensure the key assumptions and risks are addressed by either UNICEF or other partners including the government themselves.

Figure 1: Theory of Change – Lifelong learning Programme
Results Structure

The Lifelong learning Outcome includes three output areas: i) Early Childhood Development, ii) Positive learning and inclusive education and iii) education planning, monitoring, evaluation and DRR in education.

Figure 2: Outcome Structure

Activity:
- Institutional Capacity Building for ECD national planning/implementation/registration/licensing/monitoring (Guyana)
- Capacity building for quality health and stimulation, ELDS and developmental milestones (both countries)
- ECD Advocacy, Resource mobilization and CSR (both countries)
- ECD strategy/public sensitization (both countries)

Activity:
- Institutionalisation of child Friendly Schools Framework
- Systems strengthening and national programming to address equity/disparities for all children in the school system (both countries)
- Develop capacity for (1) holistic comprehensive programme for children with disabilities including curriculum development/adaptation (2) establishing and applying quality standards consistent with child centered and child and adolescent friendly education (Guyana)
- Supporting bilingual education
- Transitioning across grades, levels and types of schools (both countries)
- Parenting education (both countries)
- Life Skills Education/ HFLE’ (both countries)
- Support to well-functioning learning national assessments and responsive mechanisms at primary and secondary levels (Guyana)

Activity:
- Research/evaluations (both countries)
- ECD monitoring and tracking systems across sectors –ELDS and developmental milestones
- Develop policies/strategy for quality ECD (Guyana)
- Education and health budget analysis (both countries)
- Develop education policy/sector plan that includes, multilingual education to allow children to learn in mother tongue in early years – policy environment, alignment, resource allocation community engagement (both countries)
Monitoring Outputs and Demonstrating UNICEF's contribution to Outcomes

The results structure of the CPD and the strategy note will give guidance to the flow and review of the progress of programme over the five years. Baseline and annual milestones will allow sequential monitoring and provide quarterly and midyear reviews at national and sub-national levels especially in the decentralised education system in Guyana and tracked against the SMQs; SDGs targets; regional (CARICOM); and national targets.

Techniques such as MoRES in Education; data from the MICS and action research will help to identify inequities and give direction to policy and strategy adjustments. National and sectoral data sources will be utilised to address budgeting for national programmes, targeting etc. These will include the national census; HDIS; evaluations; schools welfare officers data; probation and child services data; police records on children in contract with the law and teen pre and post natal records from the Ministry of Public Health; seminal work such KAPs targeting major social norms on disciplinary measures and child care and nutritional practices; attitudes towards education; Evaluations of programmes implemented for more than 5 years; assessments and reviews of pilot programmes will give direction to addressing the learning and development needs of children. As practical as possible data collection and analyses will be done cross-sectorally with ownership and participation from government partners.

Data gaps include:
- the number and nature of out of school children
- Cost benefit analysis of various child care forms
- The number and types of child care services in both countries
- Child care practices by gender and ethnicity
- Impact of various policy decisions on children’s performance eg. Automatic promotions in Guyana

UNICEF’s rights based and equity agenda and its comparative advantage in monitoring for results in Education, Health and Adolescent Participation; its ability to structure monitoring guidance against global and regional standards will be critical in helping the governments to track progress against agreed global commitments. UNICEF track record as a trusted and ‘on the ground’ partner by the Governments of both Guyana and Suriname and its excellent partnerships with development partners at international, national and sub-national levels including NGOs and FBOs add to its comparative advantage.

Resource Requirements - Guyana and Suriname 2017 – 2021

The structure and interventions of the Lifelong learning programme determine a greater emphasis on Child Survival, ECD and Education components, though the cross cutting components of Adolescent Development and Child Protection are visible. The programme will therefore require human resources with the technical competencies in ECD and Education pedagogy, policy and planning, school management, budget and equity analysis. There will be close cooperation with internal capacity in child protection, C4D, Social Policy, and M&E.

The Governments of the two countries have, when possible, co-shared costs. Other strategies have been to partner with other agencies to achieve planned results. Often funding gaps have widened over the past 3 years. Both countries have tried to cope with the reality of becoming donor orphaned. The achievement of results will depend on a combination of funding from RR and other Resources.
UNICEF will focus more and more in leveraging resources from the governments and other partners. The office will enhance its capacity in doing so adding significant Social Policy capacity (P4 level) so to help both governments to better develop budget for children and target the right beneficiaries through social welfare schemes. Both governments have lamented their need to improve better targeting, rather than lack of funds per se.

The country office will use RR to beef up internal capacity and conduct key support activities (such as evidence based policy making, institutionalizing capacity development, etc). OR funds will be used to support additional capacity, and create and implement pilots enabling to strengthen the capacity to provide services in a fast track manner.

The resource requirements are detailed in the Table below. The programme is also supported by the Programme Effectiveness Outcomes, which ensure (amongst other things) effective programme coordination, communication, partnerships, advocacy and strengthening of monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifelong Learning</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Resources</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>2,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Resources</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>3,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>5,850,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNICEF Guyana and Suriname developed its resource mobilisation strategy in 2013 (being updated), which provides information on donor intelligence and enhanced relationships the availability and distribution of resources in Guyana and Suriname and their directions of flow, as well as their previous patterns. The strategy posits a proactive approach to resource mobilisation for children with the use of investment cases and responding to calls for proposal.

UNICEF Guyana and Suriname is expecting to fundraise 9,200,000 USD over the 5 years CPD’s implementation plan. The office is renewing their resource mobilization strategy which – among others - takes into account:
- The partnerships with the UK and Dutch Natcoms which have been on-going for the past country cycle
- The Country Office focuses on climate change, which is an area in which new fundraising opportunities are arising
- The Country Office has started engaging with the Private Sector
- Both Guyana and Suriname are ‘Delivery as One’ UN Country Teams and they are developing resource mobilization strategies which will benefit UNICEF as other agencies
- The Country Office is part of the MSDF (Multi Country Sustainable Development Framework), which has a resource mobilization group which will raise regional funds to benefit all country teams, and UNICEF offices in the Caribbean.
- The 4 Country Offices in the Caribbean have common goals and outcomes in their CPDs, hence they will do joint regional fundraising
- Guyana and Suriname are parts of the Amazon Region and will join other Country Offices in a joint fundraising strategy
- Thematic funds the office regularly receives from HQ and RO. LACRO – through its internal PFP capacity, and leveraging on resources raised by its 9 offices with a PFP capacity – has managed in the past years to provide thematic funds to other country offices in the region

The Lifelong Learning programme combines health and nutrition, WASH, education, adolescent development and emergency programme. It has various funding opportunities including the global and regional Thematic Funds for Education, WASH and emergency. The programme will require significant technical support from UNICEF at country, regional and global level.

Considering that Guyana has transitioned to a high middle-income status and Suriname to a high middle income UNICEF continues to advocate and leverage resources from traditional and non-traditional partners. For both Guyana and Suriname the potential sources would include the Ministries of Finance (GoG & GoS), National Committees and other donors and Natural Resources eg. Mining, forestry and other private sub-sectors.

Currently UNICEF Guyana has existing funding relationships with the United Kingdom National Committee, and the Dutch National Committee among others. The scope of these relationships will be examined to find potentials for private sectors and other donors. The banks, including the WB, IaDB, IsDB and CDB are possible donors for education sector within their strategy framework of the respective agencies. UNICEF will also work closely with PAHO, UNFPA and UNAIDS in health and ECD areas, and with UNDP and UNEP on emergency and climate change in education.
Figure 3: Monitoring and evaluation framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Level</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Means of Verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 2</strong></td>
<td>By 2021, all boys, girls and adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged among them, improved their education and developmental outcomes and access equitable and inclusive learning environments across the life cycle, including in emergencies.</td>
<td>Percentage of children aged 36-59 months who are on track in at least three of four development domains, total and disaggregated by gender, poorest quintile, urban/rural</td>
<td>86% (Guy); 71% (Sur)</td>
<td>Target: 95% (Guy) ; 80% (Sur)</td>
<td>MICS Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gross enrollment ratio in pre-primary education, by gender</td>
<td>93% (girls) 95% (boys) (Guy); 96% (girls); 92% (boys) (Sur)</td>
<td>Target: 100% for all</td>
<td>EMIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower secondary education completion rate, by gender</td>
<td>Baseline: 49% (boys), 38% girls (Guy); 46% (girls), 35% (boys) (Sur)</td>
<td>Target: 10% increase for all groups</td>
<td>EMIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of students who are overage for grade in primary education, by gender</td>
<td>18% (girls) 22% (boys) (Sur) TBD (Guy)</td>
<td>10% decrease for all groups</td>
<td>EMIS, OOSC study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse</td>
<td>37% (girls), 40% (boys) (Guy); 26% (girls), 26% (boys) (Sur)</td>
<td>10% decrease for all groups</td>
<td>Study and research reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 2.1</strong></td>
<td>Strengthened national frameworks, policies, plans and standards to increase access to high-quality, equitable, inclusive, and holistic early childhood development, learning and care environments for girls and boys (ages 0-8) and their families by 2021, including in emergencies</td>
<td>Early learning policy and early learning programme ensuring parents’ and communities’ involvement - score (1-4)</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Policy and programme documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of policies on inclusive ECD covering particularly children with disabilities and other marginalized children</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>ECD policies inclusive</td>
<td>Policy documents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | % of communities with technical capacity to support systematic early | 0 (Guy/Sur) | 20% (Guy); 10% (Sur) | }
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Level</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Means of Verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>assessments and early intervention programmes for young children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>especially the most disadvantaged</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of a national education strategy/plan that promote equity in</td>
<td>Included,</td>
<td>Fully implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>terms of access and learning</td>
<td>progress (Guy)</td>
<td>(Guy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Baselines:</td>
<td>TBD (Sur)</td>
<td>TBD (Sur)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Target:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 2.2</td>
<td>Enhanced capacity of national and subnational entities in education</td>
<td>Community (including students') participation in school management</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced capacity of national and subnational entities in education planning, collection and use of data, system monitoring and budgeting, to provide equitable, inclusive and relevant education for all children and adolescents by 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced capacity of national and subnational entities in education planning, collection and use of data, system monitoring and budgeting, to provide equitable, inclusive and relevant education for all children and adolescents by 2021</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>indicators can be achieved at least a minimum proficiency level in (a) reading and (b) mathematics by gender and by region and by school</td>
<td>&lt; 50 % boys and girls</td>
<td>70% (Guy); tbd in 2016 (Sur)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National policy framework and strategies on positive behaviour management in the education system available</td>
<td>policy framework development ion progress (Guy); Policy Framework existent (Sur)</td>
<td>In place with effective strategy implemented (Guy, Sur)</td>
<td>Policy documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of learning options that provide instruction to children in their mother tongue and according to their cultural context and fairly measure their learning (country specific)</td>
<td>None (Guy/Sur)</td>
<td>Existence of options to learn in mother tongue (Guy/Sur)</td>
<td>Programme documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existing programmes aiming at</td>
<td>available and in</td>
<td>available and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result Level</td>
<td>Result</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Means of Verification</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>strengthening adolescents’ healthy behaviors and life skills</td>
<td>pilot stage (Guy), XX (Sur)</td>
<td>implemented nationally (Guy), XX (Sur)</td>
<td>Programme documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Baseline:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Target:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of curricula and support from teachers and school administrators that are inclusive of children with disabilities</td>
<td>In plans (Guy); None (Sur)</td>
<td>Existent (Guy/Sur)</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of a Ministry driven strategy to reduce the learning gap between boys/girls, minority/majority population, urban/rural and among ethnic groups by the end of primary and/or lower secondary</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Policy documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Availability of a risk reduction strategy within the Education Sector Plan/Policy - score (1-4)</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Analysis report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of a risk reduction strategy within the Education Sector Plan/Policy - score (1-4)</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EMIS that provides quality and timely data - score (1-4)</td>
<td>No(Guy, Sur)</td>
<td>Yes(Guy/Sur)</td>
<td>EMIS reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EMIS that provides quality and timely data - score (1-4)</td>
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