

SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

Final Evaluation of the Second Budget Support Programme to Education Sector in Dominican Republic – PAPSE II

FWC BENEFICIARIES 2013 - LOT 9: Culture, Education, Employment and Social

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Relevant sector background

The Dominican education sector has historically been characterized by two conditions: the first, a low investment in the sector and the second, the poor results obtained by the students in the evaluations that have been carried out.

During 2007 and 2008, the Ministry of Education (MINERD) carried out substantive regulatory and legal work creating the framework for reform of the education system. In order to tackle the low performance, the MINERD has drafted the 2008-2018 Decennial Plan. The Plan proposed four main lines of action: (i) educational centers at the heart of the system; (ii) revision and reformulation of the teacher training policy; (iii) compliance with the school year and timetable; and (iv) continuous and systematic investment in education, in accordance with the State's budgetary planning.

However, it was only in 2013 that the financing of the education sector has undergone an important change, since after a wide process of awareness and social pressure, finally the Dominican Government allocated 4% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to education in the National Budget, as stated in article 197 of the General Education Law (66-97). Previously that percentage had been around 2 and 2.5%. The 2017 MINERD budget is about EUR 2.7 billion per year, of which 87.8% is current expenditure and 12.2% capital expenditure, accounting for 18.2% of total public expenditure.

Despite these increases, organized civil society agrees that to achieve development results it is necessary to improve quality of spending.

The country has been advancing in coverage at all levels and has maintained a sustained positive trend. By 2015, the net coverage rate at the primary level was 95%. However, the initial (3-5 years) and secondary level remained at net rates below national targets, with coverage of 37% and 64%, respectively. Higher education has also made progress, with the gross enrollment rate from 31% in 2001 to 45.5% in 2014, but with strong biases in favor of women and urban residents.

However, these achievements are marked by desertion and repetition at school, as well as by the poor quality of teaching. The Dominican Republic has achieved lower scores than expected, both in national and international tests. During the Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (TERCE), the country once again obtained the lowest scores among 15 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, it was the country with more progress in relation to previous tests (SERCE).

Indicators of permanence have improved at a higher rate in primary than in secondary. From the seventh grade the educational system begins to lose its retention capacity; repetition and over-age remain a challenge. However, policies such as the Extended School Day show a significant impact on the reduction of premature exit of the system. Although still far from desired, improvements in the culmination rate of both levels are evident.

Socioeconomic factors of families play an important role in the access and completion of the academic career of students. Access is more equitable for primary school students, regardless of gender, geographic area, and socioeconomic status of households. However, gaps are widening to the initial and secondary levels where children and youth from the lowest income quintile and residents of rural areas are the least advantaged. In terms of gender, women slightly outnumber men in school years, narrowing the gap in recent years.

School autonomy and decentralization have progressed but are limited. Although there is a current regulation that foresees and promotes the joint participation of the community and the families, in 2015 only 20% of the Decentralized Educational Center Boards receive resources directly and the budget they manage is less than 10% of the budget of the center.

In the country there is also a high illiteracy rate. The last census of 2010 registered an illiterate population of 851,396 young people and adults older than 15 years. A new government initiative seeks to literate about 800,000 people in two years. But in addition to this illiteracy, 33% of those over 15 need a higher level of education in order to be able to integrate properly into the labor market.

The Dominican education system counts, since 2014, with Professional and Performance Standards for the Certification and Development of the Teaching Career. However, these are still at the stage of dissemination and implementation of pilot plans in policies such as induction of teaching career. Therefore, its application is not yet complete. Better working conditions and salary increases are attracting more candidates, and even from other professions. However, the effective implementation of a rigorous and independent evaluation and certification are pending issues that are essential to feed back to the system, improve the quality of educators and dignify the teaching profession.

In order to give continuity to educational policies, in 2013 the entire society was called to an extensive process of collective construction that led to the signing, on April 1st, 2014, of the "National Pact for Educational Reform." This Pact represents the most important educational policy agreement made in the country. It was signed by more than 200 actors in society (government, private sector, civil society, political parties, teachers and workers unions, churches, and academia) and defines the long-term strategic lines to be applied until 2030.

A very important element to emphasize is the role played by the organized groups of civil society, in relation to the situation of the educational sector. As a result, the level of awareness of the importance of education for the country's development has been significantly expanded and increased.

In this sense, the implementation of the Dominican Initiative for Quality Education (IDEC) has been outstanding in recent years. Mainly aimed at pre-university education, IDEC is a multi-sectoral initiative, made up of representatives of the official sector and political, business, academic and social institutions and organizations, as well as national and international organizations, including the European Union with an important and active participation. One of its objectives is "to contribute to implement the strategic elements of a roadmap to transform the Dominican educational system". The Initiative emerged at the end of 2012 as a way of reaffirming the commitment assumed by the new president in its Government Program and for the educational reforms proposed for the 2012-2016 management to be made operational through a participatory methodology. After the 2016 elections and the confirmation of a new mandate for the President of the Republic, IDEC has been assigned a new mandate to continue in its work of monitoring and promoting quality education.

Among the different types of education, vocational education and training (TVET) has been gaining in the last years greater importance and attention due to the possibility of contributing significantly to the growth of the economy and the reduction of unemployment in a context of economy in constant growth and with a growing demand from the productive sector of more specialized technical profiles. As a consequence, this subsector has gone from being a neglected educational modality with an obsolete offer to being a priority for the government and the private sector as a key element to improve productivity and job creation. In 2016 this has been manifested mainly in the creation by presidential decree of the Committee for the National Qualification Framework (NMC) of TVET. This committee represents the exemplification of the new interinstitutional and social dialogue and the political will to reform and expand TVET education. In addition, the new Government program (May 2016) mentions the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the renewed TVET offer at all levels as a priority and a key instrument for development and inclusion.

In December 2016 the EDF Committee approved in Brussels the decision to provide sector budget support and technical assistance to the TVET subsector with a EUR 16,000,000 (PRO-ETP II) program for the formulation, validation and implementation of the NMC, curriculum reform and the promotion of the participation of civil society and the private sector in the reform and governance of the sector as well as mechanisms for updating and anticipating training needs. The financing agreement of PRO-ETP II was signed on June 1, 2017 by the National Authorizing Officer.

1.2 The Action to be evaluated¹

The education, particularly pre-university, has been the concentration sector of European Union cooperation in the 25 years of presence in the country, with an investment of over 150 million Euro. Out of these, 110 have been disbursed through the budget support modality in the last 10 years, placing the EU as the most important donor of non-reimbursable aid for the sector.

The Second Budget Support Program to the Education Sector - PAPSE II (Decision No. EDF / 2012 / 22-421), which is the object of this evaluation, was designed to continue supporting the implementation of the Decennial Education Plan initiated with the previous PAPSE program.

The program has basically been implemented in two modalities: through a sectoral budget support (SBS) contract with the Dominican Government (n ° FED / 2012 / 307-056 and FED / 2014 / 338-401) and a Delegation Agreement with the Spanish Agency (EDF / 2013 / 310-355 and FED / 2014 / 338-400) which included the provision of technical assistance to the Ministry of Education. The operation has been implemented under the 10th EDF (2008-2013) and in line with the National Indicative Program (NIP). Initially designed with an operational duration of 48 months and a provision of non-reimbursable resources amounting to 45.5 million euros PAPSE II has subsequently been extended to 60 months and a budget of 54.6 million. Out of this total, 4.1 million were allocated to institutional strengthening, through technical assistance from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). Of the 50.5 million euros of budget support contemplated, 21 million correspond to fixed tranche modality and 29.5 million to variable tranches (Year 1: 7 million fixed tranche, year 2: 6 million fixed tranche and 12 million variable year 3: 5 million fixed tranche and 13 million variable, year 4: 3 million fixed tranche and 4.5 variable tranche). Disbursements have been channeled directly to the Treasury Single Account and managed as State budgetary resources and executed in accordance with the laws and financial management systems of the country.

General conditions for the disbursement of all fixed tranches related to the eligibility criteria for budget support have been defined: satisfactory progress in the implementation of the sectoral policy, maintenance of a macroeconomic policy aimed at stability and implementation of an Action Plan for the Improvement of Public Finance Management. In addition, specific conditions were established for the disbursement of the variable tranches, related to compliance with the indicators of the Financing Agreement. These indicators measure access to education, quality, financing to the sector and processes of participation and transparency.

The General Objective of the operation has been "to provide quality education for the benefit of the Dominican population". It has sought to promote actions aimed at the technical support of ongoing policies related to critical elements, such as the construction of schools and the certification and continuous training of teachers. Likewise, extracurricular activities have been promoted during non-teaching hours in schools and the needs of disadvantaged students have been supported, among others.

The Program also aimed contributing to greater harmonization of donors and better alignment of domestic resources for the education sector. In addition, as indirect products, it has sought better macroeconomic management, improved fiscal discipline and a more efficient allocation of resources for education.

The main expected results of PAPSE II are related to the universalization of initial education up to the second cycle, raising the quality of educational services and greater transparency in the budget formulation process.

Education is recognized as the key development sector in the Dominican Republic. The donor community, the main ones being the European Union (EU), the World Bank (WB) and the Inter-American

¹ The term 'Action' is used throughout the report as a synonym of 'project and programme'.

Development Bank (IDB), have supported major projects in the education sector in general and the education sub-sector basic in particular.

Among the main EU interventions in this sector prior to PAPSE II are the 7th EDF, the "Integrated Primary Education Development Program" (PRIDEP); the 8th EDF financed the project "Reconstruction of Schools Destroyed by Hurricane Georges" (7.2 MMEUR) and the "Support Program for the Development of Technical-Vocational Education (PRO-ETP)" for more than 13.25 MMEUR. The EU also contributed to the financing of a preparatory study for the drafting of the Strategic Plan for the Development of Dominican Education (2003-2012) or PEDED, which formed the basis of the Dominican government's education policy in those years.

The main antecedent of PAPSE II was in 2006 and until 2010 the implementation of another Budget Support Program to the Education Sector in the Dominican Republic (PAPSE I), whose contribution amounted to 63,530,000 euros.

PAPSE II received a single monitoring mission (ROM) during the year 2013. The "Memoria del PAPSE II" is also available, which mainly includes the technical assistance actions provided under the Delegation agreement with AECID. The main antecedent of this evaluation is the Country note on the Dominican Republic made in the framework of the Thematic Global Evaluation of European Commission Support in the Sector Education in Partner Countries (including basic and secondary education), published in July 2010.

1.3 Stakeholders of the Action

The main actor in the EU budget support actions in the country has been the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic (MINERD), which is responsible for all levels of pre-university education. Although sectoral budget support has been directed to the implementation of pre-university education policy as a whole, the following vice-ministries, directorates-general and institutes belonging to the MINERD have had a particular role and attention by the programs for their relevance to the attainment the disbursement indicators and some aspects of the prioritized policies for which they have been the specific object of technical assistance. Among them we mention: the Vice-ministry of technical and pedagogical matters; the Directorate of Professional Technical Education; the Direction of Orientation and Psychology; the National Institute of Training of the Magisterium (INAFOCAM); the Dominican Institute for Evaluation and Research of Educational Quality (IDEICE), among others.

Some institutions linked to educational issues and policies have also benefited of technical assistance provided as the Ministry of Economy Planning and Development (MEPyD) as the entity responsible for monitoring the implementation of the National Development Strategy and the Educational Pact.

DIGECOOM as the office of the Dominican National Authorizing Officer (NAO) plays a key role with regard to both political and technical tasks in relation to the formulation and implementation of the EU programs under the European Development Fund (EDF) is also a key stakeholder for this evaluation. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), for its trajectory and commitment to the development of education in the DR and as an entity in charge of providing complementary technical assistance under the program, has played an important role in the design and implementation phase of PAPSE II.

Other international agencies, particularly the World Bank (WB), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United States Agency for International Cooperation (USAID), the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) have been the main international agencies linked to the education sector in the DR.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT

Type of evaluation	final
Coverage	Entire EU Budget Support to Education Sector in Dominican Republic: - Direct management budget support to Dominican Republic - Indirect management technical assistance (Delegation Agreement with AECID)
Geographic scope	Dominican Republic
Period to be evaluated	2012-2016

2.1 Purpose of the evaluation

Systematic and timely evaluation of its programmes and activities is an established priority² of the European Commission³. The focus of evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the quality and the **results**⁴ of Actions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on **result-oriented approaches**⁵. From this perspective, evaluations should **look for evidence of why, whether or how these results are linked to the EU intervention** and seek to **identify the factors driving or hindering progress**.

Evaluations should provide an understanding of the **cause and effects links** between inputs and activities, and outputs, outcomes and impacts. Evaluations should serve accountability, decision making, learning and management purposes.

Budget support is defined as a method of financing a partner country's budget through a transfer of resources from an external financing agency to the partner government's national treasury. The funds thus transferred are managed in accordance with the recipient's budgetary procedures.

Considering the nature of a budget support operation the evaluation should *assess to what extent and under which circumstances the budget support has enhanced the policies, strategies and spending actions of the partner government so as to achieve sustainable education sector level development outcomes and have a positive impact on poverty reduction and sustainable and inclusive economic growth*.

The main objective of this evaluation is to assess to what extent the SBS concerned have successfully given means to the partner government to implement its sector strategy, the Decennial Education Plan 2008-2017, the provisions included in the National Development Strategy 2030 and the National Education Pact signed in 2014 and enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of its policies, strategies, and spending actions to achieve sustainable outcomes and impacts on growth and development.

² COM(2013) 686 final "Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation – improving evaluation" - http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/docs/com_2013_686_en.pdf; EU Financial regulation (art 27); Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006; Council Regulation (EC) No 215/2008

³ SEC (2007)213 "Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation", http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/docs/eval_comm_sec_2007_213_en.pdf ; SWD (2015)111 "Better Regulation Guidelines", http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/swd_br_guidelines_en.pdf

⁴ Reference is made to the entire results chain, covering outputs, outcomes and impacts. Cfr. Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 "Laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action" - https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financia_assistance/ipa/2014/236-2014_cir.pdf.

⁵ COM (2011) 637 final "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change" - http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/acp/dv/communication_/communication_en.pdf

The evaluation is expected to produce results which:

- ✓ besides their use for accountability purposes, will help to improve donors' support for the partner country's strategies.
- ✓ will give information to the partner country's government for their decision making and for their own accountability to their citizens.
- ✓ will be useful for any other stakeholder involved in or affected by budget support, e.g. citizens of the partner country or institutions located in the partner country.

The evaluation will take stock of what has been achieved with the main purpose to be forward looking and allow for lessons learnt and recommendations to inform on:

- the conditions under which budget support could have the envisaged effects, the risks of negative effects and the possible intensity and nature of such positive and negative effects;
- the design and implementation of future SBS operations in Dominican Republic;
- improvements to be set up by the donors to maximize SBS impacts in Dominican Republic;
- changes in government policies, institutional structures and administrative arrangements in the partner country concerned, which might increase the overall effectiveness and impact of public policy and spending actions, and consequently also of budget support.

The main users of this evaluation will be the Ministry of Education of Dominican Republic (MINERD), the General Directorate for Multilateral Cooperation (DIGECOOM), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the EU Delegation.

2.2 Requested services

2.2.1 Scope of the evaluation

The scope of the evaluation is the budget support design and implementation of Education SBS PAPSE II implemented in the period 2012 - 2016 and financed by the European Commission on the 10th EDF (FED/2012/022-421).

The field phase of the evaluation will take place essentially in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, combined with a limited number of missions inside the partner country where it might be considered necessary.

In particular, the evaluation will regard:

- I. the inputs provided through SBS arrangements over the period concerned;
- II. the identification of possible specificities and complementarities (including specific value added) or tradeoffs among the different donors in SBS design and implementation. The specific effects of such individual donors' features, however, will be further assessed only when differences among donors appear as the cause of specific, identifiable positive or negative effects. This assessment shall never jeopardize the consideration of SBS as a whole.
- III. the performance of the SBS inputs, in terms of direct and induced outputs;
- IV. the changes related to SBS (including level, quality and sustainability) which have occurred during the period under evaluation as regards the outputs, outcomes and impacts of government policies, strategies and actions, and the key causal factors driving those changes;
- V. the extent to which SBS have contributed to the results identified at the outcome and impact levels and the sustainability of these outcomes and impacts, considering both positive contributions to public policy-making and implementation processes and any (unwanted) negative side-effects which may have arisen;

- VI. the overall relevance of the SBS arrangements in view of the evolving partner country and sector specific contexts, the aid policies and the related goals;
- VII. the efficiency of SBS operations, considering both the process and the relation between effects (direct outputs, induced outputs and outcomes) and inputs;
- VIII. the consideration of possible recommendations from previous budget support evaluations, both in the current programming cycle and in the SBS (design and implementation) under evaluation.

The recommendations will have to take into account the four bullet points mentioned at the end of the chapter 2.1.

The evaluation team shall also take into consideration that Dominican Republic is a middle-income country and as such budget support represent only a limited share of government expenditure.

The evaluation team shall furthermore consider whether the following cross-cutting issues: promotion of human rights, gender equality, children's rights, environmental sustainability, people with disabilities, were taken into account in the identification/formulation documents and the extent to which they have been reflected in the implementation of the action and its monitoring.

The specific Evaluation Questions as formulated below are indicative. Based on them and following initial consultations and documental analysis, the evaluation team will propose in their Inception Report a complete and finalised set of Evaluation Questions with indication of specific Judgement Criteria and Indicators, as well as the relevant data collection sources and tools.

Once agreed with the approval of the Inception Report, the Evaluation Questions will become contractually binding.

2.2.2 Indicative Evaluation Questions

The suggested reference methodological framework for the evaluation corresponds to the methodology developed within the DAC/OECD⁶.

The intervention logic model used by this method is based on the following key assumptions:

- the evaluated programs support the government's strategies and contribute (together with other factors internal and external to these strategies) to their achievement in terms of regulatory and institutional changes; and
- the development results are determined by multiple factors involved in the context, including the regulatory and institutional changes made by the government.

The logic diagram has five analysis levels for budget support operations, as follows: Level 1: BS inputs; Level 2: BS direct outputs; Level 3: government induced outputs, directly or indirectly supported by the BS; Level 4: outcomes for beneficiaries; Level 5: impacts on a more general level.

According to this methodology, it is impossible to identify – and would in fact be contradictory to attempt to identify, given the government's appropriation practice and principles – direct links between such complex support programmes and the intended development results. The method therefore involves dividing the evaluation into two parts, plus a summary third part (3 Steps). In the first part, the impact of programmes on the regulatory and institutional changes made by the government is evaluated. In the second part, the relationship between the intended development results and these regulatory and institutional changes is evaluated. Finally, by cross-referencing these two evaluations, the relationship between the support programmes and the development results can be assessed.

⁶ OECD (2012), *Evaluating Budget Support – Methodological Approach*.
http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/Methodological%20approach%20BS%20evaluations%20Sept%202012%20_with%20cover%20Thi.pdf

Step 1: Evaluation of the specific intervention logic of budget support, i.e. the bottom-up process covering the first three levels of the evaluation framework, from SBS inputs (Level 1), through outputs (Level 2), to induced outputs (Level 3).

Step 2: Evaluation of the outcomes and impacts of the government strategy supported by SBS, i.e. the top-down process of the impact (Level 5) and outcomes (Level 4), from the strategy to its determining factors, including the achievement of government strategies in general, and particularly those affected by SBS.

Step 3: Exploration of the links between the processes and results of SBS and the impact of the government strategy.

An indicative list of Evaluation Questions is presented hereafter. The contractor is expected to critically reflect on them during the Inception phase, discuss them with the Project Manager⁷ and propose a final version for approval in their Inception Report.

Step	Level	<u>Key Evaluation Questions</u>
1	1	1.1. To what extent were the design of the BS programme and the allocation of the funds among the different implementation modalities appropriate and relevant in view of the political, economic and social context in the country, the government's education policy framework and the external Development Partners development assistance strategies?
	2	2.1. To what extent has budget support contributed to an increased size and share of external funding subject to the government's budgetary process and to an improved predictability of aid flows?
		2.2. To what extent has budget support contributed to an efficient and effective policy dialogue and to well-coordinated capacity building activities, both focused on strategic education government priorities?
		2.3 To what extent the delegated cooperation through AECID has contributed and added value for the achievement of the results, the policy dialog and the visibility of the action?
		2.3. To what extent has budget support contributed to greater harmonisation and alignment and reduced transaction costs of external assistance in the specific intervention sector?
	3	3.1. Have macroeconomic management and PFM been improved, and to what extent and through which mechanisms (flow of funds, policy and institutional effects, others) did BS contribute to these improvements?
		3.2. Have there been improvements in education sector policy formulation and implementation processes, in the quality of the policies and in democratic accountability, and to what extent and through which mechanisms (flow of funds, policy and institutional effects, others) has BS contributed to these improvements?
		3.3. How has the level and composition of public spending in education sector changed, and with which consequences in terms of allocative and operational efficiency in the provision of public services and goods, and what was the contribution of BS to the observed changes?

⁷ The Project Manager is the staff of the Contracting Authority managing the evaluation contract.

2	4+5	4.1. To what extent have there been changes in the performance and inclusiveness of the education sector as targeted by government and supported by BS? To what extent are these changes due to specific policies, sector reforms and changes in allocative and operational efficiency of public spending and other external and internal factors?
		4.2. To what extent has there been an increase in the provision and use of public education services and what has been the impact on the population, and to what extent can the increased use of public services and improvements in their overall provision be related to changes to government policies or policy processes and/or to other external or internal factors?
		4.3. To what extent have there been changes in income and non-income poverty, and to what extent can these changes be related to changes in economic and social policies, structural and institutional reforms and public spending and/ or to other external or internal factors?
		4.4. To what extent can significant changes be identified in terms of (i) improved confidence of the population in the performance of the Government particularly as regards the budget process and service delivery and (ii) other objectives agreed in the BS agreement (e.g. improvements in environmental protection, democracy, rule of law, human rights and other governance issues), and to what extent can these changes be related to changes in government policies and policy processes and/or to other external or internal factors?
3	All	5.1 To what extent – and through which mechanisms - has BS contributed to the attainment of the development results identified in Step Two? <i>This question has to be answered by comparing the results of Step 2 and Step 1. More specifically by looking at the coherence and complementarity or discrepancies between the results of the two steps</i>
		5.2 What have been the relative levels of importance and weight of each implementation modality (fixed and variable tranches of budget support and direct technical assistance through the delegation agreement with AECID) to contribute to the results of the program taking into account the relative amount of funds allocated to each modality?

2.3 Phases of the evaluation and required deliverables

The evaluation process will be carried out in four phases: an Inception Phase, a Desk Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. Deliverables in the form of reports and slide presentations should be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases as specified in the synoptic table below.

The submission of deliverables by the selected contractor will be performed through their uploading in the E-VAL Module, an evaluation process management tool of the European Commission; the selected consultant will have access to online guidance in order to operate with the module.

2.3.1 Synoptic table

The following table presents an overview of the key activities to be conducted during each phase (not necessarily in chronological order) and lists the deliverables to be produced by the team, including the key meetings with the Contracting Authority and the Reference Group. The main content of each deliverable is described in Chapter 5.

Phases of the evaluation	Key activities	Deliverables and meetings
<u>Inception Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial document/data collection and definition of methods of analysis Background analysis Initial interviews as relevant Reconstruction of Intervention Logic and description of Theory of Change , incl. objectives, specific features and target beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kick-off meeting</i> (via remote conference) Inception Note
<u>Desk Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth document analysis (focused on the Evaluation Questions) Interviews as relevant Identification of information gaps and of hypotheses to be tested in the field phase Methodological design of the Field Phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Note Slide presentation of key findings <i>Correspondence or remote conference with EUD and Reference Group.</i>
<u>Field Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meetings at country level with EUD Delegation, the Reference Group, other key stakeholders Gathering of primary evidence with the most appropriate techniques (interviews, meetings etc) Data collection and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermediary Note. Slide Presentation for the debriefing sessions to be conducted at the end of the Field Mission <i>with the Reference Group</i> and key stakeholders
<u>Synthesis phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final analysis of findings (with focus on the Evaluation Questions) Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations Organisation of the final presentation during the debriefing meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Final Report Executive Summary Final Report Slide presentation <i>Meeting with Reference Group</i>

2.3.2 Inception Phase

This phase aims at structuring the evaluation and clarifying its key issues.

The phase will start with initial background study, to be conducted by the evaluators from home. It will then continue with a kick-off session (it could be via teleconference) between the Reference Group and the evaluators. Half-day presence of core experts is required. The meeting has the purpose to arrive at a clear and shared understanding of the scope of the evaluation, its limitations and feasibility.

In the Inception phase, the relevant documents will be reviewed (see annex II).

Further to a first desk review of the political, institutional and cooperation framework of EU support to education sector in Dominican Republic, the evaluation team, in consultation with the Project Manager, will reconstruct the Intervention Logic of the Action to be evaluated.

Based on the reconstructed Intervention Logic and on the Theory of Change the evaluators will finalise the evaluation methodology, the Evaluation Questions, the definition of judgement criteria and indicators, the selection of data collection tools and sources, and the planning of the following phases.

They will also summarise their approach in an Evaluation Design Matrix, which will be included in the Inception Report.

The limitations faced or to be faced during the evaluation exercise will be discussed and mitigation measures defined. Finally, the work plan for the overall evaluation process will be presented and agreed in this phase; this work plan shall be in line with that proposed in the present ToR. Any modifications shall be justified and agreed with the Project Manager.

The evaluation team prepares a presentation to be submitted to the Delegation of the European Union (EUD) in an **inception meeting** for discussion and agreement. The principal objectives of the inception meeting are:

- to review the main motivations for the evaluation and the key concerns to be addressed;
- to discuss the Intervention Logic, the EQs and the JCs and indicators;
- to collect whatever documentation and data available immediately and make arrangements for the compilation / preparation of data in the areas where there are gaps.
- to identify the sources of additional information necessary for the evaluation;

On the basis of the information collected, the evaluation team should prepare an **Inception Note**; its content is described in Chapter 5. The inception phase will end with the submission for approval of the **inception report** to the EUD.

2.3.3 Desk Phase

This phase aims at conducting most of the documental analysis needed for carrying out the evaluation; the analysis should include a brief synthesis of the existing literature relevant to the action, especially evaluations and research studies carried out by civil society, Government, other donors (especially EU Member States) and the private sector. This is to ensure a more robust approach to identifying information gaps and to ensure complementarity with evaluations that have already been done.

The analysis of the relevant documents shall be systematic and reflect the methodology developed and approved during the Inception Phase.

Selected interviews with the programme management, the EU Delegation and key partners in Dominican Republic can be conducted during this phase as to support the analysis of secondary sources.

The activities to be conducted during this phase should allow for the provision of preliminary responses to each evaluation question, stating the information already gathered and its limitations. They should also identify the issues still to be covered and the preliminary hypotheses to be tested.

Unless already done during the Inception Phase, during this phase the evaluation team shall furthermore define the evaluation tools to be used during the Field Phase and describe the preparatory steps already taken and those to be taken for its organisation, including the list of people to be interviewed, dates and itinerary of visits, and attribution of tasks within the team.

At the end of the desk phase a **Desk Note** will be prepared; its content is described in Chapter 5.

A presentation by the evaluation team to the Reference Group will take place in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. One day presence of relevant experts is required.

2.3.4 Field Phase

The Field Phase starts after approval of the Desk Note by the Project Manager.

The Field Phase aims at validating / changing the preliminary answers formulated during the Desk phase and bringing further information through primary research.

If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation, these elements are to be immediately discussed with the Project Manager.

In the first days of the field phase, the evaluation team shall hold a briefing meeting with the programme management, Delegation and relevant stakeholders.

During the field phase, the evaluation team shall ensure adequate contact and consultation with, and involvement of the different stakeholders; with the relevant government authorities and agencies. Throughout the mission the evaluation team shall use the most reliable and appropriate sources of information, respect the rights of individuals to provide information in confidence, and be sensitive to the beliefs and customs of local social and cultural environments.

At the end of the field phase, the evaluation team shall summarise its work, analyse the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present preliminary findings in a meeting with the EU Delegation and the Reference Group.

At the end of the Field Phase an **Intermediary Note** will be prepared; its content is described in Chapter 5.

2.3.5 Synthesis Phase

This phase is devoted to the preparation of the Final Report and entails the analysis of the data collected during the desk and field phases to finalise the answers to the Evaluation Questions and prepare the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

The evaluation team will present in a single Report plus Annexes their findings, conclusions and recommendations in accordance with the agreed structure (see Annex III); a separate Executive Summary will be produced as well.

The evaluation team will make sure that:

- Their assessments are objective and balanced, statements are accurate and evidence-based, and recommendations realistic.
- When drafting the report, they will acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place.

The evaluation team will deliver and then present in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, the **Draft Final Report** to the Reference Group to discuss the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations.

One day of presence is required of relevant team members.

The Project Manager consolidates the comments expressed by the Reference Group members and sends them to the evaluation team for revision, together with a first version of the Quality Assessment Grid assessing the quality of the Draft Final Report. The content of the Quality Assessment Grid will be discussed with the evaluation team to verify if further improvements are required.

The evaluation team will then finalise the **Final Report** and prepare the **Executive Summary** by addressing the relevant comments. While potential quality issues, factual errors or methodological problems should be corrected, comments linked to diverging judgements may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team should explain the reasons in writing.

2.4 Management and Steering of the evaluation

2.4.1 At the EU level

The evaluation is managed by the EU Delegation to Dominican Republic Cooperation Section and this will be done with the assistance of a Reference Group consisting of members of EU Delegation and Ministry of Education, DIGECCOM, AECID.

The Reference Group members' main functions are:

- To facilitate contacts between the evaluation team and the EU services and external stakeholders.
- To ensure that the evaluation team has access to and has consulted all relevant information sources and documents related to the Action.
- To define and validate the Evaluation Questions.
- To discuss and comment on notes and reports delivered by the evaluation team. Comments by individual group members are compiled into a single document by the Project Manager and subsequently transmitted to the evaluation team.
- To assist in feedback on the findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations from the evaluation.
- To support the development of a proper follow-up action plan after completion of the evaluation.

2.4.2 At the Contractor level

The contractor is expected to oversee the quality of the process, the evaluation design, the inputs and the deliverables of the evaluation. In particular, it shall:

- Support the Team Leader in its role, mainly from a team management perspective. In this regard, the contractor should make sure that for each evaluation phase specific tasks and deliverables for each team member are clearly defined.
- Provide backstopping and quality control of the evaluation team's work throughout the assignment.

2.5 Language of the specific contract

The language of the specific contract is to be: Spanish.

3 EXPERTISE REQUIRED AND ORGANISATION AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Number of requested experts per category and number of working days per expert or per category

3.2 Expertise required

A team of at least 3 key experts is expected, at least 1 (one) category I and 2 (two) category II experts, including both national (from the partner country) and international experts. One member of the evaluation team will be appointed as Team Leader. The minimum requirements of the team of key experts for this contract are as follows.

Minimum requirements of the team:

One among the 3 experts should possess knowledge and expertise in the EU budget support mechanism and to be mentioned clearly in the CV.

Overall the team will combine knowledge of SBS evaluation techniques, knowledge of the partner country in question, expertise in education sector reform programs, macroeconomics, public finance management and econometrics/statistics as well as familiarity with the gender approach in evaluation. One expert can have several thematic and/or sector competences. The availability of expertise on other cross-cutting issues as mentioned in paragraph 2.2.1 as pertinent will be considered an advantage.

Experts must be strictly neutral. Conflicts of interests must be avoided.

Language skills of the team:

All the experts must be fluent in Spanish.

3.3 Presence of management team for briefing and/or debriefing

The presence of member(s) of the management team is not required for briefing or debriefing purposes.

3.4 Specific Organisation and Methodology (Technical offer)

As mentioned at paragraph 2.2.2 the organization and methodology should consist of three steps⁸:

- The first step aims at an assessment of the inputs provided by budget support and their effect on the relationship between external assistance and the partner country's budget and policy processes (direct outputs) as well as the induced changes in the financing and institutional framework for public spending, public policy, policy management and service delivery (induced outputs).
- The second step aims at an assessment of the outcomes (beneficiaries' responses) and impacts (e.g. sustainable growth, poverty reduction, etc.) which are realised by the government policy related to the explicit aims of budget support.
- Finally, based on the findings in step 1 and 2, step three aims at a synthesis and conclusions in which way budget support has contributed to changes in the partner country.

The offer should include the proposed organisation and methodology to undertake the final evaluation of the three programmes.

4 LOCATION AND DURATION

4.1 Starting period

Provisional start of the assignment: January 2018.

4.2 Foreseen duration

Maximum duration of the assignment: 5 months (including time for finalising the final report).

It is assumed that the consultants will work on the basis of a five-day week.

⁸ An in depth description and a more specific methodological guidance for this budget support evaluation are presented in: *OECD (2012), Evaluating Budget Support – Methodological Approach*.
http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/Methodological%20approach%20BS%20evaluations%20Sept%202012%20_with%20cover%20Thi.pdf

4.3 Planning⁹

As part of the technical offer, the framework contractor must fill-in the timetable in the Annex IV (to be finalised in the Inception Report). The 'Indicative dates' are not to be formulated as fixed dates but rather as days (or weeks, or months) from the beginning of the assignment.

Attention is drawn to the fact that sufficient forward planning is needed in order to ensure active participation and consultation with government representatives and national stakeholders.

4.4 Location(s) of assignment

The assignment will take place in Santo Domingo - Dominican Republic, with field visits at decentralised level in order to capture different perspectives and to substantiate findings by the method of triangulation. Furthermore, it will be of utmost importance to capture the perspective of citizens and students as the user of public education services and the beneficiaries of public policy. The opportunity to obtain a genuine field perspective in this respect is essential, especially for gaining knowledge about the outcomes and impacts (level 4 and 5) of budget support. Approaching the evaluation question from different angles and trying to confirm findings will offer the best protection against spurious results and will ensure the quality of the final evaluation.

5 REPORTING

5.1 Content, timing and submission

The reports must match quality standards. The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables; a map of the area(s) of Action is required (to be attached as Annex).

The evaluation team will submit the following reports:

	Number of Pages (excluding annexes)	Main Content	Timing for submission
Inception Note	10 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intervention logic• Methodology for the evaluation• Evaluation Questions, judgement criteria and indicators• Evaluation Matrix• Data analysis and collection methods• Work plan• Stakeholder map• Consultation strategy [as needed]• Field visit approach including the criteria to select the field visits• Analysis of risks and of mitigating measures	End of Inception Phase
Desk Note	20 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preliminary answer to each Evaluation Question, with indication of the limitations of	End of the Desk Phase

⁹ including the period for notification for placement of the staff as per art 16.4 a)

	Number of Pages (excluding annexes)	Main Content	Timing for submission
		the available information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues still to be covered and assumptions to be tested • Methodology for the evaluation, unless defined in the Inception Report • Field visit approach, including the criteria to select the field visits • Analysis of risks and of mitigating measures • Workplan of the following phases, unless defined in the Inception Report 	
Intermediary Report	20 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities conducted during the field phase • Difficulties encountered during the phase and mitigation measures adopted • Key preliminary findings 	End of the Field Phase
Draft Final Report	60 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cf. detailed structure in Annex III</u> 	End of Synthesis Phase
Executive Summary	5 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cf. detailed structure in Annex III</u> 	2 weeks after having received comments to the Draft Final Report.
Final report	60 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same specifications as of the Draft Final Report, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report that have been accepted 	4 after having received comments to the Draft Final Report.

5.2 Comments

For each report, the Project Manager will submit comments within 15 calendar days. The revised reports incorporating comments received from the Reference Group shall be submitted within 10 calendar days from the date of receipt of the comments. The evaluation team should provide a separate document explaining how and where comments have been integrated or the reason for non-integration of certain comments.

5.3 Language

All reports shall be submitted in Spanish.

The Executive Summary shall be furthermore translated into English.

5.4 Number of copies

The final version of the Final Report will be provided in 5 paper copies and in electronic version (MS Word format) on a CD-ROM or flash memory.

5.5 Formatting of reports

All reports will be produced using Font Arial or Times New Roman minimum 11 and 12 respectively, single spacing.

6 INCIDENTAL EXPENDITURE

- Per diem which covers accommodation, meals, intra-city travel and Sunday expenses.
- Prior to the end of the mission, the Evaluation Team will organise one final workshop to present the findings of the Final Evaluation. The workshop will invite approximately 25 persons representing key stakeholders of the action and other invitees as deemed necessary. Coffee break(s) and lunch for workshop participants will be provided during the workshop.
- Rented car with driver costs for a 3 days field visit. The selection of the education districts to be visited will be agreed upon with the Reference Group.

7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of the final report will be assessed by the Project Manager using the quality assessment grid provided in Annex V, which is a tool to review the quality of the Draft and the Final report. Its compilation will support/inform the Performance Assessment required in CRIS, in particular with reference to the third criterion 'Quality of Service' (and should the score be 2 or 3 a synthesis of the QAG comments can be pasted in the Comment box of the Performance Assessment).

ANNEXES

Annex I: Specific Technical Evaluation Criteria

SPECIFIC TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Request for Services n. FED/2017/390-113/1

FWC BENEFICIARIES 2013 - LOT 9: Culture, Education, Employment and Social

EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/multi

1. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Contracting Authority selects the offer with the best value for money using an 80/20 weighing between technical quality and price. Technical quality is evaluated on the basis of the following grid:

Criteria	Maximum
<i>Total score for Organisation and Methodology</i>	50
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of ToR and the aim of the services to be provided	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall methodological approach, quality control approach, appropriate mix of tools and estimate of difficulties and challenges	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organization of tasks including timetable	10
<i>Total score for the proposed team of experts</i>	50
<i>OVERALL TOTAL SCORE</i>	100

2. TECHNICAL THRESHOLD

Any offer falling short of the technical threshold of 80 out of 100 points, will be automatically rejected.

Annex II: Information that will be provided to the evaluation team

- Legal texts and political commitments pertaining to the Action to be evaluated
- Country Strategy Paper for Dominican Republic and Indicative Programmes (and equivalent) for the periods covered
- Relevant national / sector policies and plans from National and Local partners and other donors
- Action identification studies
- Action feasibility / formulation studies
- Action financing agreement and addenda
- Action's quarterly and annual progress reports, and technical reports
- EC's Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Reports, and other external and internal monitoring reports of the Action
- Action's mid-term evaluation report and other relevant evaluations, audit, reports.
- Relevant documentation from national/local partners and other donors
- Any other relevant document

Note: The evaluation team has to identify and obtain any other document worth analysing, through independent research and during interviews with relevant informed parties and stakeholders of the Action.

Annex III: Structure of the Final Report and of the Executive Summary

The consultant is requested to deliver two distinct documents: the Final Report and the Executive Summary.

The Final Report should not be longer than the number of pages indicated in Chapter 5. Additional information on the overall context of the Action, description of methodology and analysis of findings should be reported in an Annex to the main text.

The cover page of both deliverables shall carry the following text:

"This evaluation is supported and guided by the European Commission and presented by [name of consulting firm]. The report does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the European Commission".

Executive Summary

A tightly-drafted, to-the-point and free-standing Executive Summary. It should be short, no more than five pages. It should focus on the key purpose or issues of the evaluation, outline the main analytical points, and clearly indicate the main conclusions, lessons to be learned and specific recommendations.

The main sections of the evaluation report shall be as follows:

1. Introduction

A description of the Action, of the relevant country/region/sector background and of the evaluation, providing the reader with sufficient methodological explanations to gauge the credibility of the conclusions and to acknowledge limitations or weaknesses, where relevant.

2. Answered questions / Findings

A chapter presenting the Evaluation Questions and conclusive answers, together with evidence and reasoning.

3. Overall assessment (optional)

A chapter synthesising all answers to Evaluation Questions into an overall assessment of the Action. The detailed structure of the overall assessment should be refined during the evaluation process. The relevant chapter has to articulate all the findings, conclusions and lessons in a way that reflects their importance and facilitates the reading. The structure should not follow the Evaluation Questions, the logical framework or the evaluation criteria.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

This chapter contains the conclusions of the evaluation, organised per evaluation criterion.

A paragraph or sub-chapter should pick up the 3 or 4 major conclusions organised by order of importance, while avoiding being repetitive. This practice allows better communication of the evaluation messages that are addressed to the Commission.

If possible, the evaluation report identifies one or more transferable lessons, which are highlighted in the executive summary and can be presented in appropriate seminars or other dissemination activities

4.2 Recommendations

They are intended to improve or reform the Action in the framework of the cycle under way, or to prepare the design of a new Action for the next cycle.

Recommendations must be clustered and prioritised, carefully targeted to the appropriate audiences at all levels, especially within the Commission structure.

5. Annexes to the report

The report should include the following annexes:

- The Terms of Reference of the evaluation
- The names of the evaluators and their companies (CVs should be shown, but summarised and limited to one page per person)
- Detailed evaluation methodology including: options taken, difficulties encountered and limitations. Detail of tools and analyses.
- Evaluation Matrix
- Intervention logic / Logical Framework matrices (planned/real and improved/updated)
- Relevant geographic map(s) where the Action took place
- List of persons/organisations consulted
- Literature and documentation consulted
- Other technical annexes (e.g. statistical analyses, tables of contents and figures, matrix of evidence, databases) as relevant
- Detailed answer to the Evaluation Questions, judgement criteria and indicators

Annex IV: Planning schedule

Activity	Location	Team Leader	Expert 1	Expert 2	Indicative Dates*
Inception phase: total days					
• Inception study and note		3	2	2	08-10/01/18
Desk phase: total days					
• Desk Study	Home	3	3	3	22-24/01/18
• Desk note	Home	1	1	1	25/01/18
Field phase: total days					
• Evaluation	Santo Domingo	18	18	18	06/02/18-01/03/18
• Briefing/Debriefing	Santo Domingo	2	2	2	05/02/18 y 02/03/18
Synthesis phase: total days					
• Drafting draft report	Santo Domingo	5	5	5	05-09/03/18
• Presentation of the report	Santo Domingo	1	1	1	12/03/18
• Finalisation of the report	Home	7	5	5	19-27/03/18
TOTAL working days (maximum)		40	37	37	

* The exact dates will be discussed with successful FWC

Annex V: Quality assessment grid

The quality of the Final Report will be assessed by the Project Manager using the following quality assessment grid; the grid will be shared with the evaluation team.

The rates have the following meaning:

- *Very weak* – criteria mostly not fulfilled
- *Weak* – criteria partly fulfilled
- *Average* – criteria mostly fulfilled but not up to expectations
- *Good* – criteria entirely fulfilled as expected
- *Very good* – criteria entirely fulfilled in a clear and original way

In relation to the criteria and sub-criteria below, the evaluation report is rated as:	Rating
1. Meeting needs:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report describe precisely what is to be evaluated, including the intervention logic? • Does the report cover the requested period, and clearly includes the target groups and socio-geographical areas linked to the project / programme? • Has the evolution of the project / programme been taken into account in the evaluation process? • Does the evaluation deal with and respond to all ToR requests? If not, are justifications given? 	
2. Appropriateness of the design:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report explain how the evaluation design takes into account the project / programme rationale, cause-effect relationships, impacts, policy context, stakeholders' interests, etc.? • Is the evaluation method clearly and adequately described in enough detail? • Are there well-defined indicators selected in order to provide evidence about the project / programme and its context? • Does the report point out the limitations, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method? 	
3. Reliability of the data:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the data collection approach explained and is it coherent with the overall evaluation design? • Have data collection limitations and biases been explained and discussed? • Are the sources of information clearly identified in the report? • Are the data collection tools (samples, focus groups, etc.) applied in accordance with standards? • Have the collected data been cross-checked? 	
4. Soundness of the analysis:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the analysis based on the collected data? • Does the analysis focus well on the most relevant cause/effect assumptions underlying the intervention logic? • Is the context taken into account adequately in the analysis? • Are inputs from the most important stakeholders used in a balanced way? • Are the limitations of the analysis identified, discussed and presented in the report, as well as the contradictions with available knowledge, if there are any? 	
5. Credibility of the findings:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the findings derived from the qualitative and quantitative data and analyses? • Is there a discussion whether the findings can be generalised? • Are interpretations and extrapolations justified and supported by sound arguments? 	
6. Validity of the conclusions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the conclusions coherent and logically linked to the findings? • Does the report draw overall conclusions on each of the five DAC criteria? • Are conclusions free of personal or partisan considerations? 	
7. Usefulness of the recommendations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the recommendations consistent with the conclusions? • Are recommendations operational, realistic and sufficiently explicit to provide guidelines for taking action? • Are the recommendations drafted for the different target stakeholders of the evaluation? • When necessary, have the recommendations been clustered and prioritised? 	
8. Clarity of the report:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report include a relevant and concise executive summary? • Is the report well-structured and adapted to its various audiences? • Are specialised concepts clearly defined and not used more than necessary? Is there a list of acronyms? • Is the length of the various chapters and annexes well balanced? 	

	<i>Rating</i>
Considering the 8 previous criteria what is the overall quality of the report?	

Comments on meeting needs (1):
Comments on appropriateness of the design (2):
Comments on reliability of the data (3):
Comments on soundness of the analysis (4):
Comments on credibility of the findings (5):
Comments on validity of the conclusions (6):
Comments on usefulness of the recommendations (7):
Comments on clarity of the report (8):
Comments on the overall quality of the report