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ANNEX II

Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Repair, and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E) Executive Summaries Research Line 2

Research on strategies for specific educational needs that allow retention
in the educational system and learning recovery.

(Document prepared by the Technical Secretariat at the request of the CIE officers)

**Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Repair, and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E)**

**Executive Summaries Research Line 2**

Research on strategies for specific educational needs that allow retention in the educational system and learning recovery

a. Pandemic, impact and assessment

**Belize: The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education Outcomes in Belize**

**Keywords**: COVID-19, learning losses, remote education.

**Reference framework**

In Belize, school buildings were closed for approximately 170 days. When schools closed suddenly and unexpectedly, principals and teachers were tasked with the implementation of remote learning to allow students to continue their education. Selecting and implementing a remote education strategy was challenging in Belize since students’ access to internet service and digital devices at home is very limited. This is especially true for migrant students, students of low socioeconomic status, and students in rural areas.

In view of these limitations, the Belize Ministry of Education focused on implementing a wide range of remote learning strategies in an effort to support all schools in the months following school closures. These included: a) synchronous online classes; b) recorded video/audio lessons; c) online delivery of learning materials and assignments; d) direct delivery of printed packets; e) TV or radio educational programs.

**Purposes / Objectives**

This study draws on national standardized exams and specific achievement testing to assess pandemic-related learning losses at the primary education level. Based on administrative data, the study also analyzes changes in student enrollment, dropout rates, and grade repetition at the primary and secondary levels.

**Methodology**

The analysis of student dropout and grade repetition rates uses Ministry of Education data obtained from primary and secondary schools for the school years 2016/17 through 2021/22.

The data used in the analysis were sourced from national standardized tests administered over the five years preceding school closures and from post-COVID assessment tests administered in the years following complete school closures. In addition to the test data, the study uses administrative data at the school level provided by the Belize Ministry of Education.

**Results / Trends**

The analysis shows that the impact of the prolonged school closures on learning at the primary level of education was significant, especially in English language and mathematics. Also, average student repetition and dropout rates surged at the secondary level after prolonged school closures.

Not only did the COVID-19 pandemic cause learning losses for students at all levels, but it also increased the risk of students falling behind and repeating grades or dropping out of school. During the pandemic, students were allowed to automatically transition to the next grade level.

The findings are worrisome since students did not learn what they would have learned in face-to-face classes; instead, moved on to the next grade less prepared and lacking necessary knowledge and skills for that level. The resulting learning gaps may affect their performance in higher grades and even put them at higher risk of repeating grades or simply dropping out of schools because they are not able to catch up.

The first step in trying to correct these shortfalls is to reintegrate all students in schools as soon as possible. The second step involves implementing initiatives to prevent students from dropping out of school or repeating grades.

One such strategy is adaptive instruction, which uses alternative instructional strategies and materials to create a learning environment that targets the individual needs of all students. Another strategy that can help students with greater learning losses is accelerated learning, a technique that allows students to learn grade-level content in a shorter period with help when they need it (“just-intime” support). Accelerated learning focuses on the basic grade-level skills that a student must learn.

These are only a few of the steps and strategies being implemented by governments in the region to close the learning gaps among students in primary and secondary schools in Belize. In the analysis presented here, we have sought to identify the characteristics of the schools with greater learning losses and higher student dropout and grade repetition rates, all to support Belize’s government to develop targeted programs for students most in need.

**Chile: National Pandemic Educational Monitoring Survey: Perceptions of parents/guardians of students.**

**Key words:** parents/guardians, educational reactivation, pandemic, survey, ENMEP, attendance, learning, socioemotional well-being, school operation

**Frame of reference**

The document presents the main results of the National Pandemic Educational Monitoring Survey (ENMEP) conducted among parents/guardians of schoolchildren.

**Purposes/Objectives**

The purpose of the measurement was to learn about experiences and perceptions related to the educational process of their students by examining four key areas in the context of educational reactivation: attendance, learning, socioemotional wellbeing, and school operation.

**Methodology**

The questionnaire was designed by the research team, in order to ensure thematic consistency with the inquiries carried out at educational facilities in the first half of 2023 (in April and June). In addition to characterization questions, the survey included the following dimensions:

* Attendance: focuses on the main reasons for student absenteeism and explores the beliefs of parents/guardians in that regard.
* Learning: focuses on perceptions of the level of development and skill acquisition in different areas, as well as examining the perceived impact of the pandemic on those areas. Perceptions of different teaching strategies were also explored, as was their level of engagement in the educational process.
* Socioemotional well-being: the aim is to determine the frequency at which different behaviors associated with this area are reported.
* School and educational reactivation: the objective was to know the opinions of parents/guardians about different areas of the school’s operation. Also examined was their level of engagement—and that of their student—in areas related to the process of post-pandemic reactivation of the education system.

The questionnaire, which was applied online in June 2023, was sent to a random sample of 18,904 people selected from among applicants to the 2022 School Admission process and was answered by 4,827 people.

**Results/Trends**

In relation to the perception of the student’s school, more than 75% of parents/guardians rated their school positively in each of the areas consulted.

The areas with the highest ratings were student-teacher relationship (88%); teacher-parent/guardian relationship (82.4%) and faculty attendance (82%). Conversely, the areas with the lowest proportion of positive evaluations were coexistence among students, school infrastructure, and student attendance. Nevertheless, more than 75% still rated these areas as good or very good. More than one third of the sample reported having participated in school activities in 2023 to encourage attendance, improve socioemotional health, or stimulate educational reactivation.

Regarding student attendance, the greatest cause of non-attendance was related to student health problems (70% of the sample), followed by other causes, including fear of infection with respiratory diseases and adverse weather conditions (16%). About one-third of the sample believes that high absenteeism does not negatively impact their student, their learning, development of social skills, or future opportunities.

Regarding learning, more than 85% of the sample considered that their students’ learning in mathematics and language was similar to or higher than in 2022. Some 43% of those who took part in the study reported perceived lags in their student’s learning as a result of the pandemic. Of this group, 71% believed that the gap could be closed within two years. Among those who perceived learning gaps, 56% reported that students had support from the school to address them, especially in the first cycle of basic education, and also that they were highly confident that they would be able to close the learning gap; 86% of parents/guardians reported being equally or more engaged in their students’ education compared to before the pandemic (2019). The aspect reflecting a greater level of engagement is study and homework support.

As regards student well-being, 26.6% of the sample indicated that their students often or very often had difficulty concentrating and studying. The proportion of parents/guardians who reported this situation increased for students in the second cycle of basic education. More than half of the sample reported that their students often or very often manage to work independently or autonomously (58%).

**PIOJ. (2020). Post Disaster Needs Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Jamaica: Draft Phase 1 Report (March to June 2020). Kingston, Jamaica: Planning Institute of Jamaica.**

**Keywords:** COVID-19 pandemic, disruption in the education system, recovery strategy.

**Reference framework**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented and deleterious impacts on the Jamaican society and economy. After the first COVID-19 case was identified on March 10 and prior to the World Health Organization’s (WHO) declaration of the virus as a pandemic on March 30, the government introduced several measures to contain the spread of the virus.

These included the declaration of the country as a disaster area; the closure of all schools; the closure of air and seaports to incoming passenger traffic; imposition of travel restrictions on selected countries; and the imposition of a Work From Home mandate for all non-essential workers in both the public and private sectors. These measures were bolstered by an aggressive communications and behavior change campaign encouraging the public to adhere to COVID-19 protocols.

**Purposes / Objectives**

The purpose of this report is to provide an objective, comprehensive and government-led assessment of the post disaster damage, losses and recovery needs, and paving the way for a consolidated recovery framework.

**Methodology**

The methodology used was the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) which was developed collaboratively by the UN Development Group (UNDG), the World Bank (WB) and the European Union (EU). It allows for the standardized and comprehensive multi-sectoral assessment in the post disaster period.

The information was collected by the Impact Assessment Core Team comprising representatives from key MDAs with portfolio responsibility for the sectors examined. These representatives would have also been trained in the use of the methodology. The Core Team has always used the Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) methodology to prepare post disaster impact assessment reports but were recently trained in the PDNA methodology.

This is the first time that the PDNA methodology was used to do an assessment. The report was prepared with the assistance of PDNA guidance documents which are drawn from and incorporates the various assessment and planning techniques.

**Focus on education**

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a major disruption in the education system brought on by the closure of schools on March 13. This impacted students at all levels of the education system.

The closure of schools due to the pandemic forced the system to operate in an unfamiliar manner which required rapid creative and innovative responses to ensure the continued education of all students. It also underscored the need for a digital transformation of administration as well as the teaching and learning processes at the school level. The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force report noted that COVID-19 risks widened the disparity in academic performance between students based on income inequalities due to issues of access to technology/online platforms, as well as lack of parental support which tends to be higher among poorer households.

**Recovery strategy**

In response, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) developed and implemented several strategies to minimize the disruption to teaching and learning during the period of school closure. The delivery of education was done largely through a wide range of distance learning strategies including accessing teaching and learning activities online, via television and radio.

Suggested strategies to close the gap and address the disparity include:

* Provision of tablets for students that need access to online resources.
* Subsidizing WiFi access for students in PATH households.
* Enhancing the school feeding programme.
* Broadening the reach of the school transportation programme.
* Strengthening remedial education offerings.
* Eliminating application and processing fees for Student Loans for 2020/21.
* Revising practicum assignments at Teachers’ Colleges to foster greater involvement in providing support to schools when they reopen, especially in aiding students to catch up.
* Restructuring of school/study hours that will continue to integrate technology and specially cater to students who are behind.
* Shortening of face-to-face teaching for students who have kept pace with online learning, to encourage semi-independent learning and reduce the need for the shift system.
* Redirecting/re-assigning of teacher-student contact hours to students who require additional assistance.

Consistent with educational responses during disaster periods, the MOEYI launched its Education in Emergencies Response Plan which focused on addressing the learning, wellbeing, nutritional, safety and parenting needs of learners at all levels of the education system. The plan also outlined existing and proposed measures to be undertaken for the roll-out of the new school year which was scheduled to start in September.

**Peru: Implementation of the Laboratory for Cost-Effective Innovation of Education Policy: MineduLAB**

**Keywords:** innovation laboratory, learning, public policy evaluation.

**Frame of Reference**

MineduLAB seeks to promote innovative interventions informed by scientific evidence to address the challenges facing education policy in Peru.

This paper describes, firstly, MineduLAB, its organizational structure, and the activities that are part of the laboratory’s innovation cycle. Next, it details the activities carried out by different actors for the successful establishment of this mechanism. Third, it presents the innovations that MineduLAB has designed and/or implemented to date. Lastly, the paper proposed next steps in the consolidation of the mechanism and concludes with a recap of contributions and acknowledgements.

**Purposes/Objectives**

The purpose of this paper is to describe the experience and efforts of the Ministry of Education of Peru (Minedu), the participating researchers, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL LAC), and the Peru country office of Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA Peru), leading to the implementation of a laboratory for cost-effective innovation in education policy in the Office of Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation, which is part of Minedu’s Secretariat for Strategic Planning: MineduLAB.

**MineduLAB: operation and lines of research**

MineduLAB is made up of a team of professionals with experience in monitoring and evaluating public policies. It also has the technical support of a Board of Researchers comprising leading academics in educational economics, in order to ensure the rigorousness of the evidence used, generated, and managed by the laboratory.

The MineduLAB team works to identify low-cost innovations with high potential impact to address educational policy challenges in Peru, which are piloted and evaluated using experimental methods based on Minedu administrative data to determine their effectiveness before they are scaled up at a very low cost to the sector.

Innovations are identified in three ways: (a) via a request from a Ministry directorate or organizational unit that has an innovative idea; (b) via a request from the Office of the Minister to address a priority problem; (c) via an initiative from a researcher or academic body that addresses a public education program.

Prioritization of innovations is the responsibility of the Secretary for Strategic Planning. Once the innovations prioritized to address them have been identified, the MineduLAB team works with invited researchers to develop the intervention design and rigorously evaluate the innovations in coordination with the areas of the ministry in charge of implementation.

During and after the implementation of the innovations, the team leads the monitoring and impact evaluation in coordination with researchers, as well as working to identify lessons learned for public policy purposes. The link between MineduLAB and the academic world is key in that it enables the ministry to ensure high quality standards in the evaluation of innovations and identify cutting-edge issues that can be tested through the tool before scaling them up.

This paper summarizes motivations, innovations, and evaluations in the following lines of research:

1. Decisions for a Better Future: providing information on the returns to secondary education to reduce dropout.
2. Text messaging to improve educational management.
3. Providing parents, teachers, and principals with information on the performance of the educational institution to improve learning achievements.
4. Enhancing teacher performance through non-monetary incentives.
5. Improved feedback to public educational institutions on key management indicators of the School Traffic Light to impact educational outcomes.
6. Weekly SMS campaigns with public school teachers for informative and motivational purposes.
7. Intervention to provide information to first- and second-year secondary school students about the potential to develop intelligence through effort and to reinforce this concept with reflection exercises on the text in class (“Growth Mindset”).
8. Intervention to highlight the frequency and cost of absenteeism for teachers.

**Conclusions**

In the almost two years since the first discussions between Minedu, the principal investigators, J-PAL, and IPA for the development of this initiative within the MineduLAB framework, a set of educational policy innovations have been completed or are in the process of being designed, implemented and rigorously evaluated.

Such innovations will enable the implementation of proven policies with the potential to improve educational services for millions of students, parents, teachers, and education staff nationwide.

It is also hoped that this experience will serve as a precedent for other entities at the national and international level that seek, through the creation of synergies between government agencies and academia, to harness the potential of innovation and systematic rigorous research to enhance public policies.

b. Rural communities

**Argentina Secondary education in rural areas: Quantitative analysis of recent trends**

**Key words**: rural secondary, effective promotion, repetition, and dropout.

**Frame of Reference**

In Argentina, the National Education Law (LEN) defines education as “a public good and a personal and social right, guaranteed by the State” (Art. 2), and secondary education has been mandatory since its enactment in 2006.

Within this framework, it has become necessary to review the offering at this level in all its modalities and orientations, and under this new configuration a context conducive to the continuity of educational trajectories becomes visible.

**Purposes/objectives**

To learn about recent developments in secondary education in rural areas, the analysis focuses on the one hand, on a study of state educational system resources within the common education modality, and on the other hand, on the trajectory of students in the teaching and learning process, in order to have a clear idea of the specificities of rural education.

**Methodology**

This study analyzes the secondary education offering in rural areas through a descriptive and quantitative analysis of service units and sections from 2006 to 2017.

A service unit refers to the “offering of an educational service at a location (site or annex) of a facility”; a section refers to the “organized school group, made up of students who attend the same or different grade or years of study, in the same space, at the same time, and with the same teacher or educational team.” (DINIECE,[[1]](#footnote-1) 2003: 30; 37.)

The study of secondary education from the point of view of system resources focuses on the organizational dimension, taking into account the behavior of the supply of secondary education in the period 2006-2017, based on service units and sections. The study of the process based on student trajectories is approached via an analysis of young people’s access to the education system (taking into account possible variations in attendance percentages in the period 2001-2010 and secondary enrollment between 2006 and 2017), as well as the flow of students through efficiency indicators (effective advancement, repetition, and dropout) in the period 2007-2016.

The analysis logic includes a comparison of regions and provinces, in order to investigate different trends in education in rural areas. Specifically, the analysis of attendance and flow indicators uses a general comparison by area to more clearly identify the specificities of rural education. As for the specific analysis of secondary education, this strategy considers two cycles (Basic and Oriented) of three years each.

The selection of schools follows the criterion used by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), according to which, a rural area is a locality with 2,000 inhabitants or less.

**Results and trends**

The efficiency indicators defined for this study—advancement, repetition and dropout—improved slightly for rural areas in the period 2007–2016, except for the repetition rate in the Basic Cycle (12 to 14 years), which showed a small increase.

The educational offering is undergoing a transformation in terms of its composition and volume. On the one hand, service units are decreasing while their composition is being reconfigured to give way to a greater development of schools offering full secondary education. On the other hand, the sections are increasing and are being reconfigured depending on the type of section.

Specifically, the following trends are noted: (a) growth in independent sections, mostly in the Oriented Cycle (15 to 17 years); (b) stability (in absolute terms) in the volume of multiple/multi-year sections (although they are declining relative to independent sections); (c) decrease (both absolute and relative) in multilevel sections.

Regarding access to secondary education through school attendance in the rural population, percentages have increased in the population group theoretically linked to the Basic Cycle compared to the group associated with the Oriented Cycle.

Secondary school attendance increased during the period covered, particularly in the 15- to 17-year-old group. Although the gap between groups in terms of access narrowed as the period progressed, the percentage of absenteeism remained significant in the group linked to the Oriented Cycle. The difference in the percentage of attendance between rural and urban areas is smaller for the 12- to 14-year-old group; however, the rural-urban difference in the 15 to 17 age group fell by more over the period.

Enrollment in secondary education in rural areas increased significantly between 2006 and 2017, mainly due to higher enrollment in the Oriented Cycle.

The average advancement rate in the Basic Cycle is lower than in the Oriented Cycle, the opposite being true for urban areas. At the same time, the average repetition rate is higher in the Basic Cycle than in the Oriented Cycle. In both cycles repetition rates are lower in rural areas than in urban areas.

Lastly, there is a higher incidence of dropout in the Basic Cycle than in the Oriented Cycle. However, the average dropout rate in the Basic Cycle is higher in rural areas than in urban areas, while for the Oriented Cycle the average dropout rate is higher in urban areas.

**Chile: Analysis of rural education in Chile**

**Key words**: rural education, educational reactivation, attendance, disengagement.

**Frame of reference**

In the context of Chile’s territorial diversity, rural education is a concrete response to the need for access and the right to education for all students, regardless of their place of residence.

Rural education in Chile is mainly provided at elementary schools, which, depending on the number of classes taught, may be complete (up to eighth grade) or incomplete (up to sixth grade). In turn, depending on the number of teachers, they may be classified as single-, two-, three-, or multi-teacher schools. Lastly, depending on how courses are organized for the education process, they may be multigrade (i.e., grouping students from different levels in the same classroom) or regular.

**Purposes/Objectives**

In order to better understand the characteristics and changes that rural education in Chile has undergone, this document analyzes key statistical variables in recent years by means of two indicators: attendance and disengagement, comparing the years 2018 and 2022.

**Methodology**

Based on the state of rural education in Chile, the study begins with a brief background description, presenting the context and current challenges faced by rural schools, which have increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Next, a statistical characterization of rural education for 2022 is made, emphasizing the size and distribution of enrollment and facilities.

There follows a longitudinal descriptive analysis of various education system indicators during the last decade (2012-2022), with the objective of showing the changes in the school system in the face of a series of social phenomena and educational policies, particularly with regard to rural education, with an emphasis on two key indicators—attendance and disengagement—for the educational reactivation policy, in order to show how they have evolved at rural facilities of different sizes.

Given that the reality of schools is heterogeneous and, therefore, the way in which they dealt with the effects of the pandemic (school closures, social distancing measures, changes in the school day, etc.) was diverse, it was decided to develop profiles or typologies for rural schools only, according to their number of students.

Once these profiles were constructed, two key indicators were analyzed: percentage of annual attendance and number of students disengaged from the school system, since they are part of the metrics of the Educational Reactivation Plan and, in turn, enable a first approach to the impact of the health measures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in rural schools, based on their enrollment.

**Results/Trends**

In general, rural education has undergone different changes relative to urban education. For example, whereas school enrollment in urban areas rose over the last decade (3.4%), the reverse was true for enrollment in rural areas (-6.5%).

The analysis reveals a decline in the number of educational facilities, particularly in rural areas, where the number of schools fell from 3,987 to 3,247 (-19%).

In terms of vulnerability, measured as the proportion of priority students to the total enrollment, it was found to be higher in rural schools: almost 3 in 4 students in rural education belonged to the bottom three income deciles in 2022. In turn, one of the main characteristics of rural education is the size and particularities of the teaching staff.

The analysis showed that, over the last decade, the number of teachers went up by 23.8%, resulting in 31,808 teachers in 2022.

Average attendance was higher at rural facilities than in urban facilities, even after the pandemic (91.7% versus 87.8% in urban facilities). An analysis by facility profile showed that the smallest facilities were least affected in terms of average pre- and post-pandemic attendance.

Regarding disengagement rates before and after the pandemic, the analysis found that this phenomenon was more acute in urban facilities than in rural ones. However, a comparison of the situation before and after the pandemic found that there was a small increase in dropout, with 3,052 students dropping out in 2022 in rural areas. In turn, the analysis by profile revealed that it was the smaller schools where the disengagement rates increased between 2018 and 2022.

A review of the theoretical evidence and statistical studies suggests the need to consider specific perspectives and actions for rural education, with “rural” understood as a broad concept that encompasses a great diversity of schools. It is essential to continue generating evidence on the implications, scope, and consequences of the pandemic in other aspects beyond attendance and disengagement, such as school coexistence, emotional well-being, and mental health, among others.

**Jamaica: Understanding the Specific Challenges experienced by Principals, Teachers, Students and Parents from Jamaican Remote Rural Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic**.

**Keywords**: COVID-19 pandemic, remote rural schools, challenges of teaching and learning.

**Reference framework**

The Ministry of Education, and Youth (MoEY), Jamaica, along with its partners has undertaken a number of initiatives (such as mobile intervention programme, distribution of devices to teachers and students, audio and audio visual programmes as well as the use of learning kits) to increase the resources needed for students to learn remotely.

Assessing the extent to which these initiatives have closed the teaching and learning gaps continue to be hampered by inadequate reporting from the evaluations and surveys carried out. This was more significant for schools from the remote rural areas across Jamaica as some remote rural schools were not fully represented, especially in the parishes of Clarendon, Hanover, Manchester, St. Ann, St. James, St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland.

**Purposes / Objectives**

The purpose of this research survey is to ascertain the more specific challenges that were unique to the principals, teachers and students at rural schools in the remote teaching and learning process, and identified issues and challenges faced in those areas.

**Methodology**

A survey research was conducted among leaders/principals, teachers, students and parents from twenty-five percent of the total number of schools (42 schools) classified as remote rural across the seven educational regions. This included all school leaders, teachers, students and parents who were at the selected schools during the academic year 2020/2021 and engaged in the distance teaching and learning or using the blended approach in lesson delivery.

Data were collected between May 30 and July 4, 2022, using several online surveys. An introduction to the survey research, explaining its background, objectives and survey links were sent to participants by way of letters to principals’/school leaders and regional directors soliciting their most efficient media for disseminating information to their staff and school population.

The questions reflected the multiple choice format, where questions required one correct answer, a selection of all responses that apply and short answers where recommendations were requested.

**Results / Trends**

Respondents from the categories surveyed indicated the challenge with poor or unreliable connectivity that affected teaching and learning. Other related challenges are reported by category of participants.

The suggested recommendations from survey respondents were:

a) Principals /School leaders: capacity building, greater internet connectivity and school board and parental support were the most frequently reported responses from principals.

Principals recommended capacity building in the areas of numeracy and literacy skills, digital literacy and boys’ education. There was also recommendation for sustained counselling for teachers and students.

b) Teachers: suggested the need for improved internet connectivity island wide to ensure reliable internet service at educational institutions for teachers to be able to execute their online classes from their classrooms. It was also suggested that increased digital and computer training for students and teachers be offered.

c) Students: recommended that there be more face to face classes for students, and time spent with their teachers online. There was also recommendation for greater internet connectivity in the community and support with data or Wi-Fi services. There were also recommendations for more reliable online platforms or learning Apps of Jamaican origin and assistance with data service.

d) Parent: recommended that internet be placed in communities, there be greater internet connectivity; differentiated instructions be provided for student.

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1. . National Directorate of Information and Evaluation of Educational Quality (DINIECE), part of the Undersecretariat of Educational Planning. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)