The Caribbean Webinar Series n° 3

Impact of COVID-19 on Gender and Education
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What the numbers tell us...

**Student Enrolment**

- **Preschool**: 7,312 students, F: 3,623, M: 3,689
- **Primary**: 64,834 students, F: 31,157, M: 33,677
- **Secondary**: 22,280 students, F: 11,618, M: 10,662
- **Junior College**: 4,617 students, F: 2,741, M: 1,876
- **University**: 5,516 students, F: 3,628, M: 1,888
- **ACE**: 1,085 students, F: 635, M: 450
- **ITVET**: 856 students, F: 182, M: 674

**Number of Schools**

- **Preschool**: 228
- **Primary**: 310
- **Secondary**: 61
- **ACE**: 11
- **ITVET**: 6
- **Junior College**: 11
- **University**: 2

**Number of Teachers**

- **Preschool**: 412 teachers
- **Primary**: 3,418 teachers
- **Secondary**: 1,456 teachers
- **ACE**: 126 teachers
- **ITVET**: 75 teachers
- **Junior College**: 281 teachers
- **University**: 462 teachers

Source: Abstracts of Statistics 2019-2020, Ministry of Education
What the numbers tell us...

Unemployment Rate

10.4%

Male 6.6%
Female 15.7%

16.5% Single Parent Households
31% Households Living in Poverty

Source: Population and Housing Census 2010 and Labour Force Survey September 2019, Statistical Institute of Belize
Impact of COVID-19 on Gender and Education

• Disruption **informal and low wage employment**
  • Economic burdens such as loss of jobs, inadequate food, psychological distress

• **Household structure and composition is also a factor**
  • Level of parental education affects children educational experience
  • living in confinement and limited escape spaces with added triggers become the focus rather than education

• **Loss of adequate childcare** for those who continue to work at the and those who work at home are further burdened

• **Social networks break** and it becomes harder to reach out for help and to identify other resources

• **Breakdown of rule of law.** Status quo changes, army and law enforcement agents have more power, risks for **sexual exploitation and abuse** increase dramatically
Impact of COVID-19 on Gender and Education

• Girls may need to support with household chores and childcare at home, decreasing the time they spent on schoolwork.

• Adults in ACE institutions may also need focus on home responsibilities and not be as engaged in their education as well.

• Boys are not excluded particularly in rural areas where the expectation is for them to help with farming and other tasks to bring food to the home further.

• Children with disabilities loose the valuable support.
Impact of COVID-19 on certain groups at risks

• Individuals with weak immune systems and underlying health conditions

• Assumptions that persons living with disabilities are not at risk

• Women and girls living with disabilities will be at higher risks of GBV

• Survivors of GBV living with intellectual disabilities may not recognize abuse when it occurs.

• Information dissemination formats may not reach persons everyone
Developed Tools consider issues of gender
- Themes of shared responsibility in the home among other are included
- Still missing is the inclusion of men’s reproductive cycle

District Education Officers in each of the districts have increased capacity in gender issues but gap for further integration still exists.

Teacher involvement with families has increased and allows for personalized response

Ask the Experts Sessions discussing education strategies and interventions allowed parents to submit questions and seek clarifications

Festival of Arts restructured format
- Older boys - i.e. late teens 19 - 24 engaged in contemporary dance
- Increase in submission from rural areas
Efforts to Respond to Challenges

Preschool and Primary:

• Daily online lessons and activities on the Ministry’s website
• **Education on the Move!** radio lessons are aired on local radio stations country-wide.
• **Education on the Move! Booklets** for Preschool and Primary students are distributed throughout the country at grocery stores and supermarkets

Secondary and TVET:

• Development of a **Learning Continuity Plan** for students from ITVETs
• **“The Learners’ Link”** published every two weeks is a collaboration between ITVETS and some secondary schools which will hopefully strengthen ITVET perception as secondary school
• To attract students to engage in home gardens a competition to win electronic equipment is being used
Actions for consideration

• Ensure that increased incidents of violence against women and girls is **given high priority by police and judicial institutions** in the context of COVID-19.

• Involve **women in decision making and policy spaces** to ensure responses to crisis address the needs of women and girls in communities.

• Develop **targeted women’s economic empowerment strategies** and extend emergency support to women in vulnerable groups to mitigate the impact the crisis.

• Develop **monitoring mechanisms** that will document challenges and barriers that limit girls and boys from fully participating in their education.
Thank You!