

EDUCATION PROJECT

PROJECT SUMMARY - ACTIVITY 1



OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

The objective of the Education Project (the “Education Project”) is set forth in Section 1.2 of this Compact. To accomplish the Education Project Objective, the Project focuses on addressing the lack of post-primary graduates with the necessary competencies relevant to labor market demands, including numeracy, literacy, 21st Century Skills, and certified technical training.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Education Project is comprised of the following two Activities:

I. Transforming Teaching and Learning in Secondary Education Activity

This Activity aims to improve the overall numeracy, literacy and 21st Century Skills of secondary graduates by improving the capability and accountability of the MoECST, managing authorities, educators, and other actors in the Belizean educational system for providing quality education, which will increase the number of students that complete secondary school with the competencies relevant to labor market demand. This shall be accomplished through legal and institutional reforms to clarify and enhance the mandate and responsibilities of each actor in the system and policy reforms that enable better teacher management, school supervision and support, monitoring of learning outcomes, and accountability for student achievement. Specifically, the Activity supports the following Sub-activities:

1.1 Quality Assurance

This Sub-activity aims to improve accountability for the quality of student learning through the establishment of an educational quality assurance system to assess and improve the quality of management and teaching as well as the achievement of learning outcomes by funding the following interventions:

(1.1.1) Technical assistance to develop and implement a quality assurance framework and a management information system which may include an early warning system linked to the Belize Education Management Information System (“BEMIS”) including modifications to the BEMIS and relevant policies and procedures. The technical assistance will support the management and quality assurance of the education system, as well as the development, implementation, and change management needed to ensure adequate high-quality information and compliance with reporting requirements. The quality assurance framework shall define the standards for schools, managers, principals and teachers, procedures for assessing performance, and guidelines for school improvement planning to ensure sustainability of access and quality student outcomes.*

* Standards for schools will include adult continuing education institutions or other schools providing high school equivalency certification.

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(1.1.2) The refinement and expansion of a national student assessment system to enable accurate measurement of student learning. The national assessment system shall at a minimum include annual tests of, Belizean studies, language arts/English and mathematics for all students for at least standard 1, standard 4, standard 6 and forms 1-4 and of science and technology for at least standards 4 and 6 and forms 1 and 2. These tests would be supplemented by sample-based tests that assess students' mastery of a wider range of competencies, including 21st Century Skills aligned with the national curriculum.*

(1.1.3) Technical assistance to develop and implement the reform of the policies and regulations regarding the licensing, hiring, appraisal and promotion of teachers, and school leaders including, but not limited to: (i) establishing a career pathway for teachers and school leaders linked to performance standards, (ii) revising a teaching licensing process to improve rigor and ensure minimum standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, (iii) revising an appraisal system for teachers and school leaders and a performance-based incentive system to promote school improvement and student achievement, and (iv) establishing a system for dual subject certification for secondary school teachers.

1.2 Equipping Educators

This Sub-activity aims to improve the quality of educational leadership and teaching through capacity building and providing teaching and learning resources by funding the following interventions:

(1.2.1) The refinement and delivery of a leadership training program for school leaders and managers to improve school management, quality of teaching using differentiated instruction, parental and family involvement, and performance-based planning.

(1.2.2) The refinement and implementation of sustainable in-service secondary teacher education programs to: (i) ensure that teachers have the necessary pedagogical and content knowledge to effectively teach the new national competency-based curriculum focused on 21st Century Skills, and (ii) address the educational needs of all students.

(1.2.3) The improvement of pre-service teacher education through the revision of the curricula for teachers and school leaders and the provision of training for teacher educators to ensure that newly trained secondary teachers are capable of effectively teaching the new national competency-based curriculum.

(1.2.4) The provision of high-quality teaching and learning resources to support the competency-based curriculum, services to enhance the 501 Academy** and the procurement of equipment/devices to access electronic learning materials and facilitate active learning.

* Includes the assessment for high school equivalency.

** The 501 Academy, nicknamed "Belize's learning hub," is a website that provides teachers with easily accessible resources and unit plans.