

# Saint Lucia Presentation

UIS Regional Virtual Meeting

22 May 2020

## *General COVID-19 situation in Saint Lucia*

- First case reported March 13, 2020
- Response strategies include:
  - Closure of all Educational institutions from March 16
  - Closure of all but essential services, curfew, 24 hour lockdown
  - Closure of air and sea ports, zoning within country
  - Physical distancing measures and wearing of masks
- 18 confirmed cases to date
- All 18 confirmed cases have recovered (0 deaths, 0 active cases)

# Impact on Education

- Abrupt end to all face to face instruction
- Blended approach to instruction (online + distribution of paper based packages to students)
- Lack of a harmonized solution to online instruction
- Cancellation of all school activities: e.g sporting, cultural
- Cancellation of national standardized tests (Grade 2, Grade 4)
- Uncertainty around Grade 6 placement exam and CSEC Regional exams

# Challenges of Abrupt school closures

- Unequal access to devices and internet connectivity for students, teachers, administrators
- Many teachers not equipped to transition to online activities
- Limited access to proper nutrition and psychosocial support for marginalized and vulnerable student population
- Inadequate technical and financial resources to support response
- Uncertainty surrounding administration of examinations
- Inadequate collection of data to assess needs of learners and effectiveness of instruction

# Current Status in Country

- Low incidence of local transmission of covid-19
- Strategic approach to phased reopening of the country
- Most sectors have reopened as of May 18 under new protocols
- Repatriation of nationals (with institutionalized quarantine)
- Planned reopening of schools to accommodate students doing terminal exams (Grade 6 and Form 5) from June 02
- Local examinations have been modified to accommodate shortened term, multiple choice only

# Guidelines for reopening of schools

- Working with health authorities and regional agencies to develop guidelines
- Smaller class sizes needed to comply with physical distancing rules
- Continuity of e-learning
- Cancelling all activities which encourage crowding
- Arrangements for flexible attendance and sick leave to encourage students and staff to stay home when sick
- Addressing mental health/psychosocial support needs of staff and students
- Develop procedures to identify and isolate sick students
- Track absenteeism and seek patterns associated with covid-19
- Work with social services to provide services to vulnerable students

# *National strategies for regular data collection?*

Education data collection activities affected:

- Monthly attendance and other data not being collected at schools since the closure
- Obtaining outstanding data from some schools will prove even more challenging

How is Saint Lucia planning to record usual aggregate measures

- Use of monitoring mechanisms of the various learning platforms
- Monitoring of teachers who send assignments and students who submit assignments

*Indicators in the global and thematic indicator framework that will require additional data collection to adequately monitor and report*

Establishing a major monitoring mechanism for

- students accessing the online instructional platform
- teachers playing an active role in delivering subject material



## *Challenges with data collection during Crisis*

- Obtaining data in a timely manner from schools
- Manual processes require school administration to be on site for data capture and submission
- Difficulty in reaching school personnel when schools are closed
- Zoning system and curfews implemented to reduce spread of COVID-19 made it difficult to reach schools
- Multiple requests for data at the local, regional and international level put added burden on limited human resource

## *Suggestions for data production during such crisis*

- Centralized EMIS to facilitate data entry at school level and retrieval at District and Ministry level
- Provide schools with external/cloud storage so data can be accessed from outside the school
- Data sharing among external agencies to avoid multiple requests to countries for the same data