ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO DISTANCE EDUCATION IN 2021

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Education News, 2020

Mar 15   Schools closed
Mar 22   First TV broadcast of lessons by NIE
Apr-Sep   When will schools open?
          When will they hold G5SE?
          When will they hold GCE (A/L)?
          Pictures of children looking for 3G-4G
Oct 11   G5SE held
Oct 12   GCE A/L held (ending on Nov 06)
Dec   When will they hold GCE (O/L)?
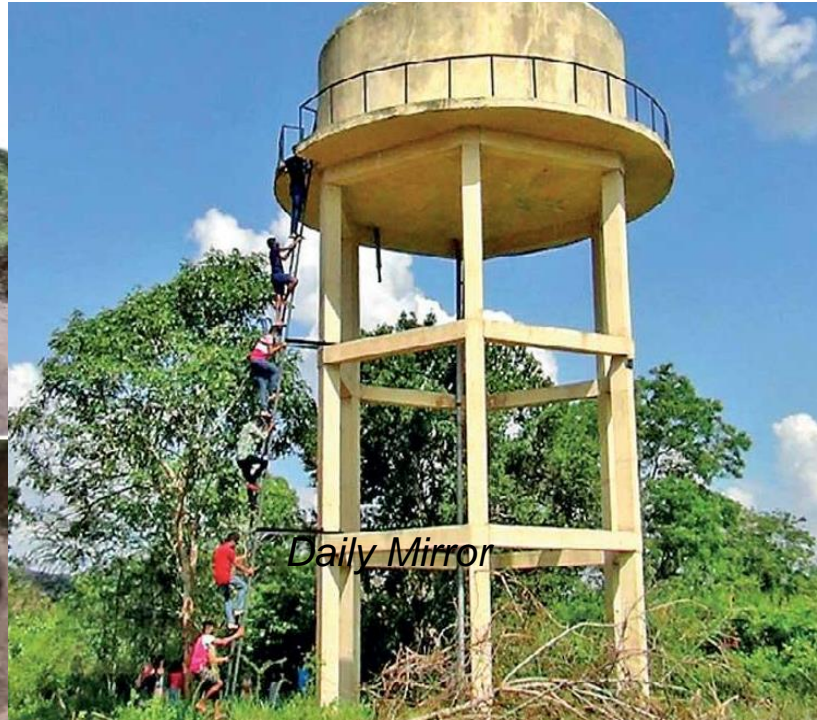
It has all been about:

OPEN CLOSE TUITION EXAMS ONLINE

Jaded
@Jeevanifdo

Children in Baduruliya find a spot on the roads to get 4G signal to join online classes. #dialogaxiata #onlineclasses #4gsignal #notforall @dialoglk

Daily Mirror

5:38 PM · Nov 18, 2020 · Twitter for Android

In this 'Education Theatre,' missing is a comprehensive and evidence-based plan for the new normal, and technology is equated to education

Research Questions

- What percentage of the students could not be reached in 2020 and why?

- How can we reach **ALL** school children in 2021?

- What pedagogical and technological adjustments are needed to ensure this?

Method

SURVEYS:
- Representative sample of 1000+ households, 2018
- Convenience sample of 85+ teachers from all 25 districts, Dec 2020

ACTION RESEARCH /DESK RESEARCH
- Action research with two teachers in Grade 6-9
- Desk research on integrating learning outcomes all 13 subjects for Grade 6

POLICY FRAMEWORK:
- Stages: Inputs-Process-Outputs-Outcomes
- Situations: School, Classroom, Home and Tuition space
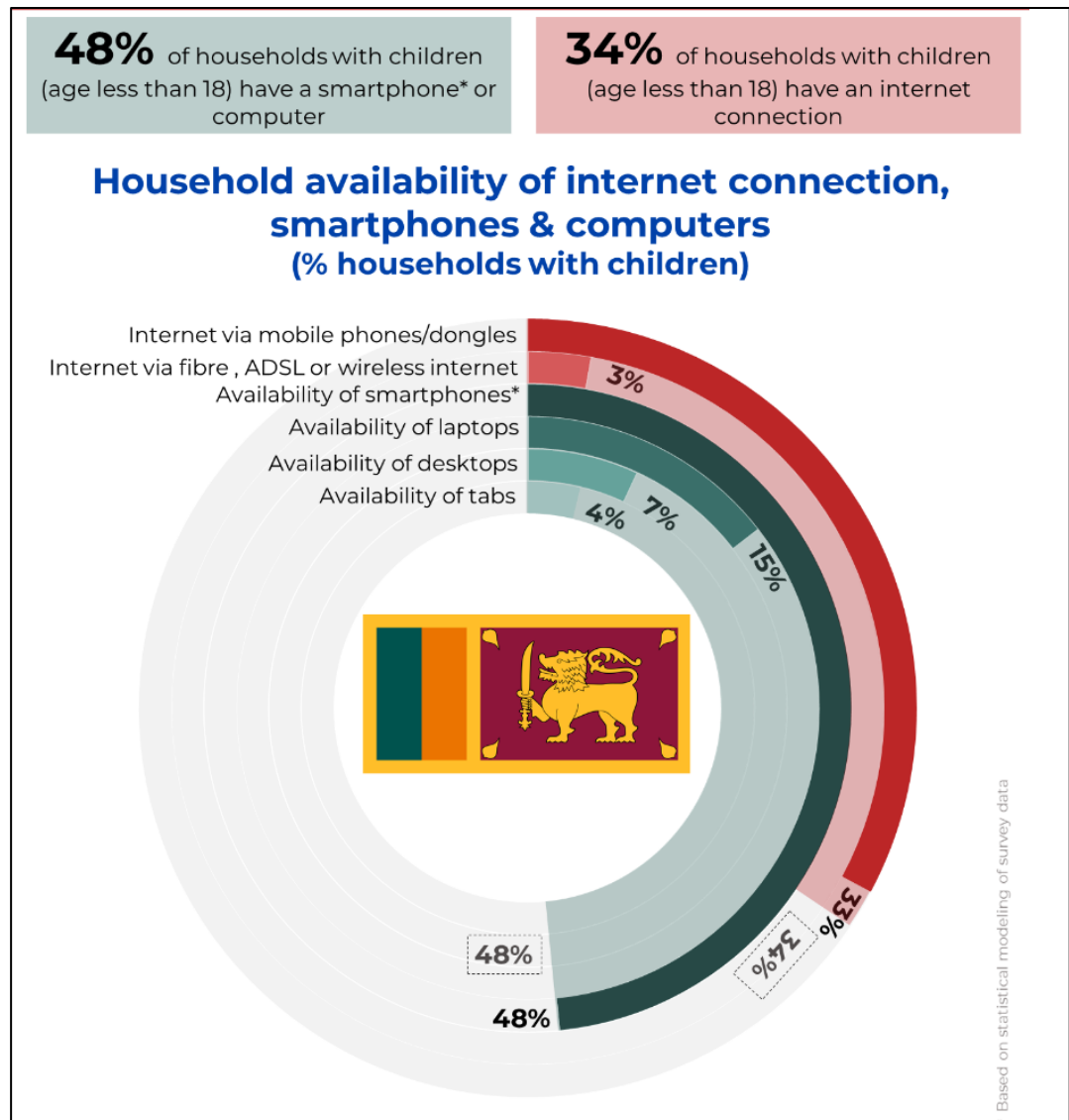- Enabling policy for each stage

Results from 6-Country study of Access and USE of ICTs, LIRNEAsia, 2018 using a base of 1301 households with children under 18

Notes:
Data from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) or Sri Lanka Census Dept concern the full population.

E.g. Individuals in the population using Internet in Sri Lanka:

CENSUS SL, 29% in 2019
ITU, 34% in 2017

48% of households with children (age less than 18) have a smartphone* or computer

34% of households with children (age less than 18) have an internet connection

Household availability of internet connection, smartphones & computers
(% households with children)

Internet via mobile phones/dongles
Internet via fibre , ADSL or wireless internet
Availability of smartphones*
Availability of laptops
Availability of desktops
Availability of tabs

3%
4%
7%
15%
35%
34%
48%
48%

Based on statistical modeling of survey data

Has Access and Use Changed from 2018 to 2020?

LIRNEasia/World Vision Survey of Teachers

Stratified convenience sample of 77 teachers from all 25 districts, Dec 2020;
Ongoing survey; highlighted cells denote the 9 districts completed

| | | Districts by Province | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | WST | | | CEN | | | STH | | | NTH | | | | | EST | | | WMB | | NCP | UVA | | SBG | |
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Urban	Type AB(34)	4	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rural	Other(43)	3	4	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	1

Numbers are proportional to then umber of students in each type of school in each district);
Urban (34, from Type AB schools); Rural (43 from Other schools)

Preliminary Results

32 teachers from nine districts reported on their experience working with 1238 students

- 43% of students in a class on average were contactable using WhatsApp, Viber, Zoom, Team or other Internet-based application
- 45% of the students reported that that they watched one or more TV programs provided by state-run TV

- Households with Internet connections probably increased from 34% reported in 2018 but could not have exceed 50%.

More importantly

- It is relatively easy for a small civil society organization to monitor the demand side or the user side of education, though a stratified random sample of teachers of course would give a more accurate result.

Were there any changes in pedagogy during distance learning?

Good practices surveys

Sri Lanka:
- May 2020: Purposive sample of 33 parents of children in Grade 6-9 from the five districts - Colombo, Gampaha, Kandy, Matale and Trincomalee
- Oct 2020– A convenience sample of 13 teacher from the galewela education zone
- Mar 2020 – Full population of students and teachers participating in a WhatsApp group from Galewela education zone consisting of about 10 teachers and 75 students

Bangladesh:
- Aug 27- Sept 10, 2020 Convenience sample of 30 teachers from seven schools in Dhaka and Chittagong conducted via google form
- Sep 18, 2020: Focus group of 8 teachers at Fulki Sahajpath Bidyaloy, Chittagong

Results

- Same teaching style, but teachers used additional digital material
- Most teachers are open to continue the practice of sharing additional material over WhatsApp

How can we ensure distance learning for ALL in 2021?

Above all, it is essential to:

[T]hink about the educational outcomes that you want to achieve, and only then seek to identify the technological modalities that best suit your context and financial capabilities

[Education for the most marginalized](), UNESCO, 2020

Our Approach

Educational outcomes cannot be limited to success at examinations

Redefining Learning Outcomes

- The learning experience itself is the most important outcome. Results of assessments, formative or summative are secondary.

- A proxy indicator of learning of 21st century competencies by a child is the nature of the learning experienced by a child
- The learning experience of a child should be:
  - Activity-centered
  - Self-directed by student, and
  - 4-C* enabling

In short

the learning experience of a child should be Student Centered**

- Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication
- ** Student centeredness as catchall expression for 21CCs

A framework for optimizing learning experiences
with acknowledgement to the UNESCO-MGIEP in New Delhi

Inputs-process-Outputs-Outcomes

Learning Space	Inputs	Process	Outputs/ Outcomes
School			-
Home			
Tutory			-

Enabling policies

Learning Space	Inputs	Process	Outputs/ Outcomes
School |Home	Tutory			

INPUT 1:
Technology Infrastructure

- [100% Postal services]*
- 96% Mobile phone
- 91% TV
- 71% Radio
- 46% Smartphones
- 33% Internet connection
- 21% Pay TV
- 20% Computers (desktop, laptop and tabs)

Source: LIRNEasia. (2019). After Access: ICT access and usage surveys [dataset]. Colombo: LIRNEasia. https://www.lirneasia.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/E-learning-opportunities-in-the-Asian-Global-south.pdf;

INPUT 2:
Human Capital

For 4.5 million students we have:
- 272, 063 teachers
- An average student to teacher ratio of 17
- 10, 169 schools, with
  - School Development Boards (1993)
  - School Attendance committees (1997)
- 100+ Zonal offices
- 250+ Divisional Offices/DSDs

Source: Annual Report, CBSL, 2019

Input 3:

Content (e-Thaksalawa, Gurugedera, Dp-Math, Openesrilanka.org, Miscellaneous private outputs and TEXTBOOKS)

'Pieces' in use*

When provided as videos on a flash drive, December 07, 2020

*A piece is a colloquial term for any data storage device that you can plug into any digital device;
Note: Bhagya@DP-Math noted that families with USB usable TV tend to have Internet as well,
offline access has the advantage that it avoid the cost of Internet access.

A scenario for optimizing learning experiences for disadvantaged children in G 6-9

Learning Space	Inputs (minimum)	Process	Outputs/Outcomes
School	• TV • 'Pieces' • Textbooks	Student-centered lesson plans	~~Success at Examinations~~
Home	• TV • 'Pieces' • Mobile phone • Textbooks	Student-centered lesson plans	~~Success at Examinations~~

Enabling policies

Learning Space	Inputs	Process	Outputs/Outcomes
School or Home	• TVs to all school • Engage private content providers • Resolve copyright issues	• Give freedom to teachers to innovate • Enable sharing of quality plans	• Priority to assessing the teaching/learning process, not students

Way forward

- Complete the survey
- Prepare and Refine a proposal on
  "Ensuring Distance Education for ALL in 2021"
- Submit proposal to the Ministry

In any event,
- Develop KPIs for education
- Initiate an independent 'Education Monitor'
- Stress the importance of DATA

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SURVEYS

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KII ON DEMAND

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Thank you