Managing high-stakes exams and assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic

School & University Closure: Options for Exams and Assessments
Global challenges

✓ Prolonged and massive closures of schools and universities

✓ A shift to distance learning

✓ Exams and assessments maintained, cancelled, postponed or what? If so, how?

• Pupils, students, learners ask
  • Teachers ask
  • Schools ask
  • Parents ask
  • Examination boards ask
  • MOEs ask
  • Policy makers ask
  • Media ask

✓ If maintained, same format and administration or how?
✓ If cancelled, how to assess and certify learning?
✓ If postponed, by when?
✓ If go online, how feasible (connectivity, security, proctoring, etc.)?
✓ If implementing alternative assessment strategies, what, how, when...?
Connectivity: Households with ICT access

Households with ICT access at home, 2019
Source: ITU, 2020

- **World**: Internet 57, Computer 50
- **Developed**: Internet 87, Computer 82
- **Developing**: Internet 47, Computer 39
- **LDCs**: Internet 12, Computer 10
Overview of Strategies by Region

Maintaining exams
Cancellation
Postponement/Rescheduling
Organizing high-stakes exams online
Using alternative methods for conducting exams
Lessons from past practices and current crisis

1. **Postponement and rescheduling are common choices** for exams under crisis situations and should correspond with the speed and scale of the outbreak.

2. Regardless of interruption in teaching and learning, **monitoring of student learning still needs to be conducted**.

3. **Formative, continuous assessment can be used as a solution** to cancelled high-stakes exams.

4. Ensuring assessments and exams are conducted in a **fair and reliable way**.
Common challenges

- Not all subjects and competencies can be assessed online or through distance modalities (e.g. telephone)
- Questions of fairness and feasibility in alternative assessment methods
- Inequity
- The need for assessing student progress to identify learning loss/gaps, and remedial and accelerated classes to offset these learning loss/gaps upon school reopening
Important factors for consideration

- Financial cost
- Culture
- ICT infrastructure
- Availability of digital devices
- Availability of digital and non-digital teaching and learning resources
- Capacity
- Complementarity of different strategies
Any decision regarding assessment, recognition and validation of learning during the period of school closures must be guided by concern for equity, fairness and inclusion.
Policy Recommendations

1. **Alignment**
   Ensuring alignment through coordination

2. **Public communication**
   Consulting social partners and ensuring buy-in

3. **Combining multiple assessment modalities**
   Combination of assessment modalities to ensure equity

4. **On-site examinations**
   Due considerations given to sanitary measures in line with guidance provided by national health authorities

5. **On-line examinations**
   Conditions to consider for on-line examinations

6. **Differentiated approaches for TVET**
   Multiple assessment modalities to address specificity of subsector
Thank you

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