



UNITED NATIONS

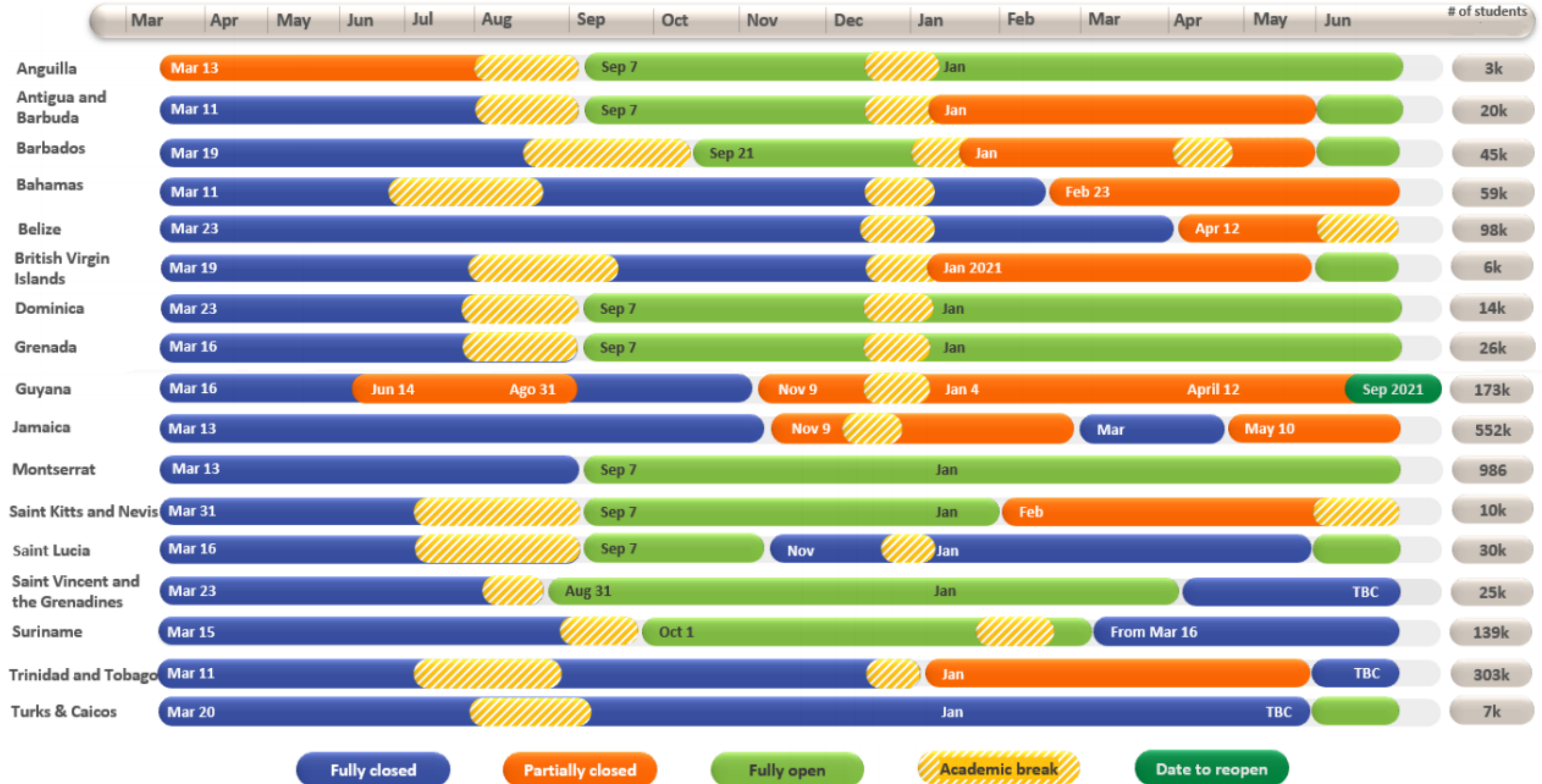
ECLAC

Access to education in the context of Covid-19

**Francis Jones, ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean**

Virtual expert group meeting, 13 August 2021

Closure and reopening of Caribbean schools (Mar '20 – Jun '21)



Source: UNICEF (LACRO COVID-19 education response: update 26, status of schools' reopening)



School closures (complete or partial) have forced all countries to employ multiple remote learning strategies at various times

- Synchronous online classes (live virtual classes)
- Online delivery of learning materials and assignments
- Direct delivery of learning materials and assignments
- Asynchronous online classes (recorded video/audio lessons)
- Use of online platforms to organize learning materials and assignments
- Face-to-face classes for selected groups of students

Virtual Expert
Group Meeting:

Inclusive and
Equitable Education
during the Covid-19
Pandemic

13 August 2021



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

The implementation of remote learning placed huge demands on teachers

- Adaptation of their teaching methods
- Technological challenges and constraints
- Increased workloads
- Additional care responsibilities
- Some teachers were overwhelmed
- Teachers need tools, training and mutual support

Providing devices proved easier than providing internet connectivity

Virtual Expert
Group Meeting:

Inclusive and
Equitable Education
during the Covid-19
Pandemic

13 August 2021



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

- Measures were implemented to facilitate remote learning
 - Distribution of digital devices
 - Online platforms to access learning materials
 - TV or radio educational programs
 - Internet connectivity at home
- In many countries, there was distribution of digital devices, but relatively fewer countries implemented measures to connect households to the internet
- WhatsApp and text messages can be used as substitute means to send materials and videos (but with obvious limitations)
- Remote education reinforces the case for internet connectivity to be regarded as a public good

Virtual Expert
Group Meeting:

Inclusive and
Equitable Education
during the Covid-19
Pandemic

13 August 2021



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

Recommendations on remote learning

- Strengthen programmes that support students' internet access at home
- Support families in the use of technology for remote learning
- Support teachers in adapting to the use of technology
- Support students in their remote learning
- Consider the longer-term role of technology as a tool to improve education for marginalized populations
- Better equip teachers with ICT competencies in teachers' initial training and professional development



Remote learning has mitigated the impact of the pandemic on children, but can never be a substitute for face-to-face schooling

- School closures have negatively impacted on the learning achievements, social and emotional learning, mental health and well-being of children
- Remote education has not reached all children
- The longer children remain out of school, the less likely they are to return
- Achieving high levels of vaccination among teachers (in addition to the wider population) is crucial to successful school reopening

Risk-reducing measures for school reopening

Virtual Expert
Group Meeting:

Inclusive and
Equitable Education
during the Covid-19
Pandemic

13 August 2021



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

- Hygiene measures (frequent hand washing, temperature control at entry)
- Education about the pandemic
- Social distancing
- Mandatory school masks
- Circulation changes (staggered start and finish times, staggered break and lunch times)
- Schedule changes (differentiated days or time of attendance for smaller groups)
- Class size reduction
- Transport arrangements



Thank you